

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HEMSWELL CLIFF PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hemswell Cliff, Gainsborough

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120491

Headteacher: Mrs A Hunter

Reporting inspector: Mr R Fry  
21073

Dates of inspection: 15 – 17 January 2001

Inspection number: 196457

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Capper Avenue Hemswell Cliff Gainsborough Lincolnshire
Postcode:	DN21 5XS
Telephone number:	01427 668383
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Oakley
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

### Glossary

Pupils aged *five to seven* years old are referred to as Key Stage 1 or infant pupils.  
Pupils aged *seven to eleven* years old are referred to as Key Stage 2 or junior pupils.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21073	Roger Fry	Registered inspector	<p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Science</p> <p>Information and communication technology</p> <p>Physical education</p> <p>Design Technology</p>	<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>How high are standards? - The school's results and pupils' achievements</p> <p>How well are pupils taught?</p> <p>How well is the school led and managed?</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p>
19575	Alan Sanders	Lay inspector		<p>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.</p> <p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
21420	Paula Allison	Team inspector	<p>English as an additional language</p> <p>Foundation stage curriculum</p> <p>Mathematics</p> <p>Art</p> <p>Music</p> <p>Religious education</p>	<p>How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?</p>
21666	Andrew Margerison	Team inspector	<p>English</p> <p>Special educational needs</p> <p>Geography</p> <p>History</p>	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Hemswell Cliff Primary is a below average sized school for boys and girls aged between four and eleven years. The school serves surrounding villages and the armed services housing that makes up the majority of Hemswell Cliff village. It has 114 pupils on roll. The school has an exceptionally high turnover of pupils because service families regularly join and leave the area. Children's attainment on entry to the school is well below what is typical of children nationally. No pupils are known to qualify for free school meals, which is well below the national average. Thirty two per cent of pupils have special educational needs, an above average figure. Three pupils do not have English as their first language, but all pupils speak English.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Hemswell Cliff is an effective, happy and caring school. It makes good provision for all pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language. Pupils make good progress. The teaching is consistently good and the work that pupils are set is usually demanding. All staff work well together and seek to improve further the standards of pupils' work. The cost of educating pupils is above average but similar to other schools of this size nationally. In this context, the school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The leadership and management skills of the headteacher, staff and governors are very good.
- Pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve well.
- The teaching is good and pupils are very well managed.
- The provision for children under five years of age and for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to work in lessons and their responses to all aspects of school life are good.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

#### **What could be improved**

- Pupils' standards of work in English, mathematics and information and communication technology do not reach national expectations.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in June 1997. The school at that time was placed in 'special measures,' which meant it was failing to provide a satisfactory education for pupils. By November 1998, the school had already made good progress towards achieving the improvements required of it. Her Majesty's Inspectors felt that the school was providing a satisfactory education in late 1998 and 'special measures' were lifted.

Over the last three and a half years, the school has made very good improvement. The teaching has improved considerably. More than half of lessons in the 2001 inspection were considered to be of good or better quality and none were found to be unsatisfactory. Pupil's attainments in several subjects have improved, such as in religious and physical education. The headteacher and other staff now evaluate teaching and learning in lessons very effectively. Spending generally, and changes to what is taught, such as the introduction of literacy lessons, are also carefully evaluated. The school has developed effective systems to record pupil's attainment and progress. This information is used mostly effectively to help teachers plan lessons.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now good. It is well planned and the daily acts of collective worship are interesting and meet statutory requirements. The school is now effective in promoting pupils' positive relationships with each other and with adults. Pupils are given more tasks, for example in science, in which they can investigate ideas of their own. There has been a huge improvement in the partnership with parents. This was strongly evident at the meeting for parents. The school is clear about its priorities for the future and staff, governors and parents work together effectively. The provision made for children under five has improved greatly. For example, the curriculum is now firmly based upon the 'Areas of Learning' recommended for young children and there is full time extra adult support to help children.

## STANDARDS

Pupils make good progress from the point when they join the school until they leave it. Young children's attainment on entry to the school is well below standards typically found nationally. At five years old they attain standards that are below those of children nationally but make good progress in all the 'Areas of Learning' they study. At the end of Year 2 last year, pupils' National Curriculum test results were below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. Results in English for Year 2 over the last four years have varied between above average and well below average in comparison with all schools.

Hemswell Cliff has a very high turnover of pupils during the year. For example, half the pupils in Year 6 last year changed and this pattern is present in all years. In addition, the number of pupils in each year is very low, which means that National Curriculum Test results cannot be relied upon as true indicators of the school's performance. In National Curriculum Tests last year, Year 6 pupils' standards of work in English were below average and in science were well below average. Standards in mathematics were in the lowest five per cent nationally. English results improved in Year 6 last year. The school exceeded its target in English in Year 6 but did not reach the target for mathematics.

During the inspection, pupils' standards of work were below average in English and mathematics and were close to the national average in science, at seven and eleven years old. In all three subjects, pupils were found to be making good progress. Pupils have not achieved the standards expected in information technology at eleven years old. Pupils currently make the best progress with, for example, reading and listening skills, and in music and swimming. There is evidence this year that pupils' standards of work are improving, for example, in mathematics.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils make much of what they are offered and they show a keen interest in school life. There has been a big improvement in pupils' attitudes over the last three years. Higher attainers enjoy extra challenges in lessons when they are provided.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and at playtimes. Movement around the school is also good. Pupils are reliable and enjoy working together.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils work very well together, for example, in numeracy lessons and take turns properly when using equipment. Pupils' progress is enhanced because they get on well with each other.
Attendance	Satisfactory; attendance matches the national average. Parents' responses to the questionnaire show that pupils like going to school.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

The teaching is consistently good across the school. The teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to very good. In sixty two per cent of lessons throughout the school, the teaching was good, and in ten per cent, it was very good. English (literacy) and mathematics (numeracy) are effectively taught. The good organisation of literacy and numeracy lessons has led to pupils' good progress, for example, in reading.

Teachers have a wide spread of knowledge and skills. They explain ideas clearly and teach pupils important skills. The teacher's close attention to young children's individual needs in the reception class is good. Support staff throughout the school make a particularly valuable contribution to pupils' learning, for example, by working with small groups of pupils on the sounds of letters and the use of words in sentences. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school. Pupils listen attentively to teachers and each other during lessons. Pupils' capacity to learn is extended effectively. The needs of all pupils are met in most lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively taught. However, not enough emphasis is given to providing the higher attainers with harder work in some lessons or to recording comments and targets in pupils' books that help pupils improve their standards of work.

There is a purposeful atmosphere in classrooms; pupils enjoy working hard and receiving praise for what they have done. Pupils are particularly effectively managed; little time is wasted and consequently pupils make good progress. Pupils who join the school during the school year soon integrate effectively. Young children under six years old and older pupils are taught progressively more difficult ideas in a logical order. Pupils and young children acquire knowledge, skills and ideas effectively. They show interest in their work; their powers of concentration are good. All pupils, for example, learn to investigate ideas in science and learn to calculate in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language make good progress and teachers meet their needs effectively.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught. High priority is given to literacy and numeracy, which support pupils' work in all subjects. Until recently the curriculum for information and communication technology has been limited for older pupils, but the school has very recently installed a modern computer suite and has good plans to improve the curriculum in this subject.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Teachers and support staff help pupils effectively in lessons and all pupils are well integrated into school life.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional	Good. The school welcomes pupils who speak different languages and ensures that they receive the extra attention they need. Pupils receive good support from

language	the teaching staff and from outside agencies when needed.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. All pupils have the opportunity to take part in everything the school does. There is a calm and orderly atmosphere throughout the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Procedures for assessing what pupils know, understand and can do are good. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are very effective. Pupils new to the school are quickly integrated into the daily routines.

The school works very effectively in partnership with parents.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has had a very positive effect on the school. Since the last inspection, the school has made a very effective response to what needed to be done. New staff have been successfully appointed. The headteacher and staff have gained the confidence of parents and pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is closely involved with everything that the school does. They understand its strengths and what still needs to be done, and fulfil their duties with enthusiasm.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Since the last inspection the school has closely evaluated its successes and weaknesses and followed its good plans for improvement closely. The evaluation of pupils' progress during lesson observations is particularly good.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school has made good use of the money available to it. For example, there are now many modern computers in the school for pupils to use. The school applies the principles of 'best value' well by employing a consultant.

The school is well staffed, the accommodation is spacious and books and equipment for lessons are good.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children like going to school very much and make good progress with their work.</li> <li>Behaviour is good.</li> <li>The right amount and quality of homework are set for children of different ages.</li> <li>The teaching is good.</li> <li>Parents feel very comfortable when approaching the school with a question or problem.</li> <li>The school has high expectations of children.</li> <li>The school works closely with parents.</li> <li>The school is very well managed and led.</li> <li>The school helps children to mature and become responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents are very pleased with all the school offers.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' very positive views.

## **OTHER INFORMATION**

The governing body is responsible for drawing up an action plan within 40 days of receiving the inspection report, showing how the school will tackle the improvements needed. This action plan will be circulated to all parents at the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve well. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below what is typical of young children nationally. Although pupils leave the school with lower than expected standards of attainment in English and mathematics, this indicates good progress. Pupils' standards in science are close to those expected nationally. Pupils with special educational needs and English as a second language make good progress towards their targets and achieve well. The main reasons for the improvement in pupils' progress are the consistently good teaching and the vigorous management over the last three years that has confronted the school's earlier shortcomings. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been well implemented and they are having a positive effect on standards as well.
2. By the time children are ready to enter Year 1, many achieve standards in line with what is expected in creative, physical and social development. In the areas of language and numeracy, mathematical understanding, and knowledge and understanding of the world the attainment of many children is below what is expected. Children with special educational needs are soon identified and are very well supported. They make good progress because, for example, the curriculum is well organised, there are enough adults to give children plenty of individual time and the staff understands the needs of young children.
3. Hemswell Cliff has a very high turnover of pupils during the year. For example, half the pupils in last year's Year 6 changed and this pattern is present in all years. In addition, the number of pupils in each year is very low, which means that National Curriculum Test results cannot be relied upon as true indicators of the school's performance. In common with many Lincolnshire schools, very few pupils take up free school meals, so results appear to compare unfavourably with 'similar' schools. The school also has an above average proportion of pupils with special education needs. These four factors have a profound effect on the school's results.
4. National Curriculum test results have varied between 1997 and 2000. For example, results for eleven year olds in English in 2000 were below average in comparison with all schools but in previous years they were well below average. Pupils' results in all subjects in 2000 compared with all schools in England were low. The trend now is for gradually improving results, particularly in mathematics because, for example, the school continues to organise itself ever better and it also has a settled teaching staff. The targets the school set in 2000 for eleven-year-olds were realistic and took account of the capabilities of the year group at the time they were set. The English target was achieved but the target for mathematics was not achieved, a reflection of the many changes of pupils during the year. Boys and girls achieve similar standards of work.

5. Results of seven year olds' National Curriculum tests show a wide variation, from above average to well below average. From 1997 to 1999 pupils' reading, writing and mathematics results have been below average overall. Pupils' standards of work at seven years old observed during the inspection were below those expected in English and mathematics and close to the national average in science. They indicate that pupils make good progress.
6. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' standards of attainment at the age of seven in reading, writing and speaking and listening are below national averages but are improving, particularly in writing. At the age of eleven, pupils' attainment is better with standards close to the national averages in speaking and listening and reading, although they are below national averages in writing. However, from a low starting point when pupils join the reception class, they achieve well as they move through the school in developing skills and knowledge in all three aspects of English. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from effective support in classes and in withdrawn groups. They make good progress in developing their skills and understanding in reading and writing.
7. Standards observed during the inspection are below average at seven and eleven years in mathematics. A very high rate of pupil mobility and a high level of pupils with special educational needs within a small year group have to be taken into account when considering these results. Currently Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are working at a level just below national expectations. Targets set for the year are challenging, but it is likely that they will be reached. Most pupils achieve well through the school. They make good progress in the carefully structured lessons and pupils build on their prior learning effectively.
8. Pupils make good progress in science throughout the school. Consequently, pupils in Years 2 and 6 this year are attaining standards close to the standards expected nationally. There are particular strengths in pupils' observation and investigative skills. There has been a considerable improvement in the teaching of science, in the attitudes of pupils in lessons in all classes and in the quality of resources since the last inspection. Better lesson planning and a more consistent quality of teaching through the school are features of science teaching now. The very good management by the headteacher has been an important factor in bringing about improvement in all areas of the school's work.
9. The school is effective in teaching skills that are relevant in many subjects. This has a positive effect on standards of pupils' work. Reading skills are used well in most subjects. For example, junior age pupils know how to use an index of a non-fiction book. In history and geography, pupils use their research skills effectively to locate and use information from textbooks and other printed sheets. In design and technology, pupils accurately record lists of things they need in Year 2. In science lessons pupils record short sentences and phrases in, for example, tables of results but pupils' writing skills are not used as much as they might be, especially by higher attainers. Junior age pupils successfully use some computer word processing skills, such as to change the size and type of letters, underline sentences and correct spellings. Teachers ensure that numeracy skills are used in many subjects. Years 5 and 6 pupils measured in Newtons and fractions of Newtons successfully in a science lesson about forces. Other pupils use their numeracy skills effectively to plot rainfall graphs and to compare different places in geography. In history, pupils' understanding of number allows them to comprehend aspects of time, such as some events occurring before others. In design and technology pupils have learned to estimate amounts and measure accurately so that their model rooms are made to scale. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn

to handle numerical information by making, for example, graphs of different types of footwear.

10. Pupil's standards of work in information and communication technology are below those expected nationally at eleven years and they have not made the progress expected. Pupils are not taught enough about controlling devices, monitoring information such as about the weather or about simulations which mimic, for example, real life situations and require pupils to make sensible choices and decisions. At the age of seven, pupils' standards of work meet those expected. In order to raise standards, the school has just installed a very good computer suite with a much improved range of computers and other equipment. Teachers are about to undergo thorough training in information and communication technology and the school has good plans for developing the curriculum in the coming months.
11. Pupils reach the standards in religious education expected by the locally agreed syllabus. There are currently strengths in pupils' knowledge and understanding of different religions. Year 2 pupils know about Jewish customs and especially the significance of the holy day of Shabbat. Year 4 pupils know about the festival of Divali and understand the significance of the story of Rama and Sita. Year 6 pupils have developed a greater understanding of both the Hindu and Jewish faith and can explain the significance of Advent to Christians.
12. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in skills, knowledge and understanding so that by the age of eleven they achieve well in relation to their capabilities. In the small group withdrawal sessions, they benefit from working with specialist teachers or trained support staff and this has a positive effect on their learning.
13. Standards in all other subjects match those expected at seven and eleven. Teachers give an appropriate level of time and attention to all subjects, which is reflected in the standards achieved. Pupils' achievements, taking account of their prior attainment, are good. In art pupils reach a satisfactory standard, with a strength in observational drawing. In design and technology, Years 5 and 6 pupils have evaluated the taste and texture of several sorts of bread from different countries. In history and geography, pupils' research skills develop satisfactorily. They use a range of sources such as textbooks and artefacts to find evidence about specific topics. In geography, pupils develop a broader understanding of how the physical landscape and climate varies in different parts of the world. There is a strength in musical performances that pupils perform. In assemblies, pupils sing tunefully and with enthusiasm. Year 5 and 6 pupils successfully swim many widths of the local swimming pool and refine their front crawl and back strokes effectively. Pupils' attainment is enhanced by the good quality of the teaching by the classteacher and instructors.
14. At both key stages, pupils make good progress and achieve well. They effectively gain skills and develop their knowledge and understanding. In literacy and numeracy lessons, pupils are placed in groups within their class of pupils of similar capability. Teachers challenge pupils with work at an appropriate level in the main. However, higher attainers are not always challenged with tasks that allow them to take their thinking forward, such as in mathematics. Insufficient use is made of short-term targets for pupils to achieve to further boost their progress. Pupils with special educational needs achieve appropriate standards and make good progress towards targets set in their individual learning plans. Individual and group work is often well supported by the teacher or classroom assistant.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

15. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. There were many examples of pupils, including the under fives, settling well to lessons, showing good concentration and being very interested in what was going on in class. Pupils enjoy asking and answering questions; they are interested and keen to get on. They settle quickly and work hard. They are eager to learn and the school provides a good working atmosphere for this to happen. Behaviour, which was an issue at the last inspection, has improved greatly. This is due to the implementation of an effective behaviour policy, which the school has developed in consultation with pupils, parents, governors and staff. Pupils make better progress in lessons because, for example, they listen closely to what teachers say.
16. A code of conduct forms part of this new policy, which is consistently applied throughout the school. The school staff deals with any behavioural problems promptly in a quiet and efficient manner. The behaviour policy is good, children know the rules and staff know just when to intervene. The atmosphere in the school, which was oppressive at the last inspection, is now friendly and pupils relate very well to each other and to adults. There were no instances of bullying behaviour seen and parents all agreed at the parents' meeting and the parents' questionnaire that behaviour is good.
17. Pupils' personal development is very good. The teachers' calm manner influences pupils' behaviour and attention to tasks. Pupils are expected to behave well in and out of school and they do so. Pupils make many contributions to the life of the school, for example, by representing their school at RAF Hemswell Day. Most children are sensitive to the needs of others and it is common for older pupils to help younger ones. For example, when a younger pupil fell in the playground, older pupils gave prompt and caring assistance. Older pupils respond very well to the duties they have and enjoy them.
18. Attendance is in line with the national average. Pupils arrive promptly, in spite of many pupils having long distances to travel to school. Lateness is not an issue.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

19. The quality of teaching in the school is good. Parents' positive views are justified. All the teaching seen during the inspection was at least satisfactory; in 62 per cent of lessons the teaching was good; in 10 per cent of lessons, the teaching was very good. The teaching now is a huge improvement over the last inspection in 1997, where the teaching was unsatisfactory or worse in two thirds of lessons. More effective teamwork, better planning and higher expectations of what pupils can do have led to much greater consistency in the quality of teaching. The good quality of teaching has a positive effect on the learning that takes place and has resulted in pupils making better progress. Checks on teaching by the headteacher have speeded the pace of improvement.
20. The teaching in all the 'Areas of Learning' in the reception class is good and this has a positive impact on the good progress children make. The teacher has a good understanding of the needs of young children and she is well supported by the classroom assistant. The classroom is a secure, happy environment in which children develop confidence and gain skills. Children with special educational needs are soon identified and are very well supported. They make good progress.

21. Teachers throughout the school are competent in teaching basic skills in English and mathematics. They have effectively implemented the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and these lessons result in pupils gaining new skills and building on their previous learning well. For example, the emphasis placed by infant teachers on pupils' personal skills and behaviour enables teachers of older pupils to organise lessons that make full use of all parts of the literacy lessons.
22. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. When the teachers' knowledge and understanding are especially good, their teaching produces good quality learning. For example, in science in Year 5 and 6, the teacher's breadth of knowledge and interest helped her to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of forces and of measuring in Newtons. The music teaching by the reception teacher has a significant good effect on pupils' learning. She co-ordinates the opportunities for pupils to follow their own interests, for example, in taking part in lunchtime drum and recorder groups, or taking piano tuition from a visiting teacher.
23. Teachers carefully plan and organise lessons. There are clear learning targets, which are often communicated to pupils, so they know what they are learning about and understand what they are doing. A weakness in some lessons is the lack of opportunity for older and higher attaining pupils to develop the quality of their writing. Sometimes teachers do not provide enough opportunity for pupils to write for themselves, for example in science and geography. Higher attainers are not always challenged with harder work as a matter of routine, for example in mathematics. A good pace to lessons keeps pupils involved and busy. For example, the Year 5 and 6 teacher is clear in her expectations and often gives time limits for tasks, so pupils know what they have to do and how long they have to do it. This ensures that they work at a good pace and complete tasks they have been given to do.
24. Teachers are enthusiastic in their approach to work, and the range of methods that they use to bring about learning is wide. These inspire them to work hard. In particular, the practical approach is a strength of the teaching in such subjects as science, geography and art. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils go on nature trails and look for creatures and pupils begin to learn about the different animals found in different habitats. They learn enquiry skills as they ask questions about why certain animals live where they do. Pupils' listening, speaking and numeracy skills are put to good use. They learn new technical terms and to count accurately.
25. The support staff makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning. They know pupils very well and contribute in many ways to the smooth running of the school. Pupils with special educational needs receive extra help with reading and the support staff member was well prepared and taught the skills competently. In a science lesson for Year 1 and 2, the assistant recorded pupils' thoughts as they walked around the building looking for sources of light. She talked with pupils and gave them time to express their thoughts. Pupils' skills of observation were advanced through this care and attention to pupils' ideas. The school is well equipped. Teachers make good use of resources, such as the use of the school environment in science and the locality in history and geography. Often in this kind of work teachers need the support of other adults, and volunteers such as parents are well briefed so they can make a valuable contribution to lessons and pupils' learning.
26. In lessons, pupils are managed very well and a purposeful working atmosphere is created in which pupils can concentrate and learn. In these lessons, teachers have high expectations of the kind of behaviour to be accepted and are consistent in their

approach to inappropriate behaviour. Pupils respond and concentrate with enthusiasm on what they have to learn. For example, in English lessons pupils behave well, they are able to discuss ideas, concentrate well and work with a minimum of supervision. They make good gains in learning skills. For example, pupils concentrate in handwriting lessons and what they learn makes a good contribution to the quality of pupils' handwriting style. Teachers use homework appropriately. For example, research tasks are sent home and this extends the work in class and helps pupils develop independent study skills.

27. Sound assessment procedures are now in place and they are often used well, particularly in English and mathematics. Teachers know their pupils well and they make accurate assessments of their achievements. Careful records are kept and information from assessment is used for grouping pupils. Teachers mark pupils' work diligently but not enough use is made of thought provoking comments or short-term targets to speed up pupils' rate of progress further.
28. The teaching of pupils who have special needs is good. At the last inspection, withdrawal of pupils from lessons was judged as inappropriate. The school has reviewed the practise. The withdrawal sessions are integrated into the rest of the curriculum so pupils have equal access to other subjects. Rota systems for groups have been introduced so that no pupil misses the same subject or topic each week. When pupils are withdrawn for specialist support or to work with classroom support staff on their individual programmes, the teaching is tightly organised and focuses on the pupils' individual difficulties. Consequently, in these sessions pupils make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding in literacy and in the improvement of their behaviour.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

29. There have been considerable improvements made to the curriculum since the last inspection, when the curriculum offered was weak and was a reason for pupils' unsatisfactory progress. Now the quality and range of the curriculum overall is satisfactory and in some aspects it is good. Information and communication technology is still weaker than other subjects.
30. The curriculum for children in the reception class is very much improved since the last inspection. There is now a well-planned range of activities and experiences, which meets the needs of young children. There are particular strengths in the provision for children's personal, social and emotional development. The class is effectively managed and the adults create a secure atmosphere in which the young children feel confident and make good progress.
31. The curriculum for infant and junior age pupils is now broader and sufficient time is allocated to all subjects. Subjects such as history, geography, music and art and design have been given higher status in the school, are well managed and are developing in a positive way. Religious education is planned to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and offers a better quality of experience for pupils than was the case in the past.
32. Planning is more consistent through the school and pupils learn new ideas in a logical order. The strategies for literacy and numeracy have been effectively organised and this is leading to an improvement in standards. There is a good emphasis on pupils'



personal, social and health education; this has been part of the school's strategy for improving attitudes and behaviour and helping pupils become more responsible and independent.

33. The information and communication technology curriculum is weaker. It is limited, especially for Years 5 and 6 where it does not meet statutory requirements. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to gain the skills and confidence they need in order to achieve as they should be doing. Computers and other technology are not used sufficiently to help pupils learn in other subjects. However, the school has good plans for improvement and the computer suite has just been completed.
34. The curriculum is effective in meeting the needs of all pupils in the school. Pupils are treated as individuals and their particular needs are known and catered for in the caring environment of the school. Boys and girls have equal access to all activities and they achieve in a similar way. Since the school was last inspected, the provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved; it is now good. The school has established a comprehensive policy that is reflected in lessons and complies with the requirements of the Code of Practice. There are individual education plans (IEPs) for each pupil on the register of special educational needs with targets that are specific and can be measured. The IEPs are reviewed termly and parents and any other adults involved are invited. The IEPs provide good guidance for class teachers and are used well to plan individual work for pupils when they are working with the support staff.
35. The school has a very high level of pupil mobility and the pupils who have moved from different schools are supported effectively. Assessments are carried out to find out what new pupils know, and their curriculum is altered to meet their needs. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are supported appropriately and they achieve well alongside their peers. Lower attaining pupils are well provided for by the way in which work is carefully explained and tasks are given that meet their needs. Higher attaining pupils can sometimes find the work they are given is not sufficiently challenging and they do not then make the progress of which they are capable.
36. The curriculum has sufficient breadth. Activities and experiences are relevant to pupils' interests and offer them the opportunities to learn about the world in which they live and extend their experiences beyond the local community. For example, visits are made to Lincoln Castle as part of a history topic. Sometimes pupils are involved in whole school activities, for example the Christmas concert in which every pupil took part. There is a good focus on music and extra-curricular activities are offered in this area, for example drum and recorder groups. The school maintains a positive liaison with the local community and feeder schools.
37. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is considerably improved from the last inspection in all aspects. Strengths in pupils' personal development have had a positive impact on behaviour and attitudes and on the improvement in the whole school ethos. Pupils make better progress because these important areas of school life are better managed.
38. Pupils' spiritual development is good and much improved from the weak position at the last inspection. Acts of collective worship are now of a good quality and contribute well to pupils' spiritual and social development. Assemblies are special times and occur in a calm atmosphere and they provide pupils with opportunities for reflection. For example, in one assembly pupils were encouraged to think about resolutions they had made and whether they were keeping them. Religious education lessons also contribute to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils learn about religions and the

significance of beliefs on people's lives. They are also given the opportunity to reflect on their own thoughts and feelings, for example when pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class looked at the candlelight and considered what it meant to them.

39. The positive relationships in classes and the enthusiasm with which teachers approach their teaching help create an atmosphere in which pupils are open and interested in their learning. This is a good basis for their spiritual development. For example, in the reception class there was a sense of wonder when the toymaker visited the class and showed them the toys he had made.
40. Pupils' moral development is good and had made a positive impact on the improved behaviour and attitudes in the school. There is now a clear code of conduct in place, which is consistently adhered to by teachers and other members of staff. This provides pupils with a secure framework for their behaviour and helps even those who find it difficult to behave responsibly to think of the impact of their actions on themselves and others. The use of the code of conduct starts effectively in the reception class where the expectations of the teacher are high and children learn what is acceptable behaviour.
41. Pupils have opportunities in whole-class ('circle-time') discussions to talk about issues in school and consider what can be done. For example, the Year 3 and 4 class discussed some problems in the playground and thought about solutions to them. In this way pupils learn about the consequences of their actions and are finding ways of dealing with difficult situations. The provision for moral development has been one of the most valuable improvements in the school and the impact on attitudes and behaviour has been considerable.
42. Pupils' social development is good. Relationships are positive and supportive and pupils are treated as individuals. Members of staff provide good role models; they work as a team and support each other. Pupils have opportunities to work together and help each other. For example, in a Year 5 and 6 mathematics lesson pupils were encouraged to work together in solving problems. Assemblies are positive experiences where the community element is emphasised. For example, in one assembly pupils' achievements were identified and celebrated. The school encourages pupils to take responsibility. This starts in the reception class where, for example, young children are expected to help with tidying up after activities and to think about others when they work as a group. Older pupils have responsibilities in classes and in the school as a whole. For example, some pupils prepare the hall for assemblies, others help to ensure the children who use the school buses are organised, and generally help in the day to day running of the school.
43. Pupils' cultural development is good and is improved from the last inspection. The school promotes the pupils' own cultural background and that of the local community, for example, in its celebration of the RAF heritage of Hemswell and the value placed on the collection of artefacts linked to this. Visitors are welcomed into school and pupils visit other places, for example concerning historical studies. Music plays a strong part in the life of the school and art is developing well also. Pupils study world religions and features of their art and culture. Visitors from other countries are welcomed into school. In literacy lessons pupils study poetry from around the world. The attention the school gives to the curriculum motivates pupils and they make better progress because they are interested in their studies.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

44. The school cares well for its pupils and relationships are good. The attention pupils receive allows them to settle well in lessons and make good progress. There has been a great improvement in the consistency of care for pupils since the last inspection.
45. The procedures for child protection work well in practice. There is a named responsible person who ensures that training is provided regularly for staff, for example, that any changes in procedure are dealt with in the correct way. Health and safety procedures in the school are good. Governors regularly monitor this aspect and the services of the local education authority are used to ensure that safe working practices are maintained. The accident book is up to date and there is an evacuation drill every term. The school's equipment is checked annually. The school works well with other agencies, such as the school nurse and the transport co-ordinator.
46. The school's behaviour policy has clearly set out guidelines with an emphasis on praise for pupils doing the right things. The policy is effectively linked to the school's aims and full consultations with parents were held before it was adopted. The good behaviour seen around the school is in part due to the consistent implementation of this policy. Children are encouraged to solve their own problems when they can and this helps them to mature and grow. The sex education policy has clear aims and is linked to science lessons at appropriate points in pupils' lives. There have been three exclusions in the last year and no oppressive behaviour amongst pupils was reported or observed. The school's approach to developing relationships is effective and it helps pupils make good progress in lessons.
47. Pupils are integrated well into the school and are all included in everything the school does. The school keeps parents well informed about the curriculum and the progress of their children. However, the annual pupil progress reports do not include reference to pupils' targets for the future so that they know what they need to do to improve. The school has regular consultation meetings to enable teachers to talk to parents about their child's progress. The school has very good relationships with parents and other agencies, who all work together for pupils' benefit.
48. Pupils learn about other cultures and values and the school's links with the local community and the charity work undertaken help to foster good citizenship skills. There are good extra curricular activities, which pupils fully support. There are effective procedures to monitor and promote good and punctual attendance. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection in this area. Procedures for monitoring attendance and marking of registers, which were unsatisfactory at the last inspection, are now good. The school works well with outside agencies to promote good attendance.
49. Assessment procedures were judged as unsatisfactory at the last inspection. The school has developed its procedures well and they are now good, especially in English and mathematics. They provide teachers with a good basis to plan lessons and group pupils. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced tests into Years 3, 4 and 5 to supplement the statutory assessments for pupils aged seven and eleven. It has also established a test for pupils when they enter the school in the reception class. In addition, pupils are tested regularly from reception class onwards in mathematics and reading using nationally recognised tests. The school uses this information to evaluate the progress of individual pupils. Teachers have begun to involve pupils in setting their own targets for improvement. This is an area for improvement for the school so that standards can be raised further. Higher attainers are not always challenged fully with

tasks in lessons that match their capabilities. The school is developing the assessment systems suggested in the national subject guidelines for its own use.

50. The school does not have formal procedures for monitoring pupils' personal and social development, but all adults know pupils very well. There are consistent expectations of behaviour in classrooms and around the school. Assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs ensure that they receive appropriate support in lessons. The approaches taken by adults with pupils with behavioural difficulties are sensitive to the individual pupils.
51. The impact of adult support on pupils with special educational needs in the classroom is positive. The support staff has good relationships with pupils and uses this effectively to encourage, guide and support their academic and personal development. They have a good awareness of the personal as well as the academic needs of their pupils. There is a safe and secure environment for them. Close links have been established with a range of external support agencies for pupils with specific difficulties. They meet regularly with the school management, work with pupils, conduct assessments and provide good advice and support.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

52. Relationships with parents are now very good. This is a great improvement since the last inspection, when they were not. Parental involvement in the school is encouraged and welcomed in support of pupils' learning. Parents assist in school, helping with reading and extra curricular activities. There is an 'open-door' policy and parents feel valued and welcomed whenever they have concerns about their children. The staff is fully aware that small worries can easily get out of proportion and effect pupils' progress if not dealt with swiftly. The effect of the very good relationships is that pupils feel secure in the knowledge that their parents are pleased with what the school is doing. The sense of security allows pupils to make the most of what they are offered and make good progress. This aspect of the school's work has been effectively managed.
53. The Friends of Hemswell School raise funds for the school and run good social events as well. The Friends recommend how the money might be spent and this has led to their good understanding about the work of the school. Parents believe, rightly, that the school has changed for the better and developed very well since the last inspection. The full consultation on school policies, such as the behaviour policy, is a very good example of this partnership working in practice. Parents value the children's growing awareness of each other and the good interaction between older and younger pupils. The policies of the school towards parents are clear and effective.
54. The quality of information for parents from the school is satisfactory. Workshops for parents are appreciated and valued by them and parents gain further insight into their children's learning. Parents have been properly consulted about how the school spends its money. There is a notice board at each entrance so that parents are fully informed of school events. There is a friendly and community feel to all correspondence from the school. However, the annual pupil progress reports do not contain targets for pupils to achieve. The school is about to include these. Parents help their children effectively at home with homework. They are pleased that their children have regular structured homework that helps them make good progress. Parents fill in holiday forms if they wish to have permission for their children to take time

off in school time. Parents are always informed if their children are hurt at school and they are happy that the school knows and cares for their children well.

55. The involvement of parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. They are invited to review meetings, kept fully informed of what is being done in school to help their child and, on occasions, have particular roles to play in the individual education plans.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

56. When the school was last inspected, Hemswell Cliff provided unsatisfactory value for money. Since then it has improved in all areas of its work and in particular the quality of teaching and the consequent improvement in pupils' progress. All of the points for action from the last inspection have been tackled effectively and areas remaining are very well identified in the school development planning. The school now gives good value for money.
57. The governing body makes an enthusiastic contribution to the smooth and effective running of the school. It fulfils its statutory responsibilities. The chair of governors has a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and of the many influences on the school. She provides very good support and direction for the school and knows it well. Many other governors provide good support and, for example, regularly work with groups of pupils in classes, run clubs or provide other valuable services for the school. The governors are well aware that they need to record their checks on the school's work in writing so that all governors are kept informed and any necessary action taken. The headteacher receives good support from the committees in all areas of the school's work, such as in making financial decisions. The content of the school's prospectus and annual report to parents meets statutory requirements. The governing body has effectively overseen the necessary changes since the last inspection. Their good management has led to a better school where pupils make good progress.
58. The school is very well led by the committed headteacher. She and the staff together have provided the drive, vision and good ideas to improve the school. The headteacher has provided very good leadership and a clear sense of direction through the many key issues from the last inspection. The headteacher promotes a highly supportive working atmosphere that has allowed the great improvements in school performance to occur, based on very good relationships, close team-work amongst staff and clear expectations of what needs to be done. The headteacher is tenacious and very well informed. Good communications between staff, parents and governors are now a feature of the school. The school is keen to improve further and the staff shares the vision for the school. There is a strong commitment in the school to realistically high targets for standards in English, mathematics and science and to continuing the good progress of pupils. The school's aims are well reflected in its work. The main effect of the very good management is the better progress in pupils' work and the huge improvements in so many aspects of the school.
59. Delegation of responsibilities is fair and teachers have good opportunities to develop the school's quality of work. Teachers responsible for subjects have had some opportunities to watch colleagues at work in classrooms. Teachers know what is happening in all classrooms and know what needs to be done next to improve how subjects are taught. There have been many priorities and targets to achieve. The headteacher has made herself responsible for most checking activities, for example, of lesson planning, teaching and pupils' learning. Teaching and learning have been

regularly and very effectively monitored and teachers receive helpful information about the strengths and weaknesses of their teaching. Consequently, the teaching and learning are good and the school is in a position to know where it can make further improvements in all subjects. The school recognises that it needs to plan more consistently for higher attainers, provide more opportunities for pupils to write and to challenge all pupils with individual targets.

60. Strengths and weaknesses in the school's results and in teachers' assessments are carefully evaluated and effective plans are put in place to further improve pupils' standards of work and their progress. The school has sought to motivate and include all pupils with ever more appropriate lesson planning and lesson resources. The headteacher is responsible for equal opportunities, which ensures this important aspect of schooling has prominence. All pupils are tested and then set appropriate work as far as is reasonably possible when they join the school during the year. The school works hard to minimise the effects of the movement of pupils on pupils themselves.
61. Since the last inspection the special needs co-ordinator has given a very clear direction to the development of the school's work. There is a good policy that meets the requirements of the Code of Practice and clearly outlines for all staff the processes involved. Day-to-day management of pupils with special needs and the comprehensive administrative procedures are very good. Pupils' individual educational plans are monitored regularly by the teacher in charge. The governor for special educational needs keeps up well with developments. Though very few pupils have English as an additional language, the school manages the provision with a keen interest for pupils' individual needs and those of parents. Parents are invited into school and teachers spend, for example, helpful periods of time explaining what the school does.
62. The school has a clear view about what it needs to do to improve further. There are many good examples of clear thinking in the school's documents. The school's long-term financial planning and striving for value for money are good and the school employs a consultant to assist with work on the budget. The school development plan is good. It takes the form of a series of targets, which include who is responsible for what, costs for the year and how the school will know when it has achieved particular goals. The plan contributes positively to the raising of standards and pupils' progress. The school is a provider of initial teacher training.
63. Educational priorities are well supported through the school's financial planning and there is a good focus on raising standards further and minimising the effects of the movement of pupils in and out of the school. The school has a very small under-spend. All funds are suitably allocated to ensure that the school maintains its good provision. The school is fully aware of its likely future costs and any implications that might require action. The strategic use of resources, including money for teachers' courses and extra resources such as the computer suite, is effective. Although the curriculum for information and communication technology is incomplete, the school is justified in waiting for the computer suite to be finished before it begins the planned initiatives to raise standards of pupils' work. Teachers this term will undergo the training necessary to use the suite effectively.
64. The school follows the principles of 'best value' appropriately. Members of staff, for example, check the value for money that contracts for services provide. Pupils benefit from the care and attention given to financial efficiency, for example, the investment in equipment to use in lessons. The secretary efficiently administers the school office. Proper use is made of new technology to save time.

65. The accommodation is very good. The school has a very large hall, plenty of field space and more than sufficient classrooms. Resources are good and the library is easily accessible. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. There are sufficient well-qualified and well-inducted teachers to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. All these features have a positive effect on pupils' work. The school conducts its business with a good level of effectiveness. Taking into account the cost of educating each pupil and the school's context, it provides good value for money.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

66. In keeping with the school development plan, the Governors, headteacher and staff should raise standards in English, mathematics and information and communication technology throughout the school by:
- Giving pupils more written guidance about how to improve their work, including greater use of individual targets to challenge all pupils;  
(paragraphs 14, 27, 93, 111, 127)
  - Challenging higher attainers more frequently with more difficult work;  
(paragraphs 14, 23, 102, 127)
  - Increasing opportunities for pupils to write independently in lessons other than English;  
(paragraphs 9, 23, 93, 111, 127 )
  - Implementing the school's plans for information and communication technology.  
(paragraphs 10, 102, 129 - 133)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	29
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	10	62	28	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	114
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	37
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	29
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	45

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.



### ***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1***

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	7	10	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	13	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (89)	76 (84)	76 (89)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	13	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (89)	76 (95)	76 (84)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

\* To ensure that no individual can be identified, boys' and girls' results have not been reported.

### ***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2***

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	6	4	10

Ten pupils were present in Year 6 last year. To ensure that no individual can be identified, results have not been reported.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	90
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.2
Average class size	29

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	80

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	207476
Total expenditure	208176
Expenditure per pupil	2002
Balance brought forward from previous year	3370
Balance carried forward to next year	2670

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	112
Number of questionnaires returned	51

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	27	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	71	29	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	61	37	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	57	35	6	2	0
The teaching is good.	75	25	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	35	2	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	22	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	22	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	49	41	10	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	55	41	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	31	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	41	8	0	10

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents raised no significant issues. The inspection team agrees with parents' very positive views.

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

67. There has been considerable improvement in the provision for children in the reception class. At the time of the last inspection, provision was judged poor and a significant weakness of the school. Now the youngest children receive a good education. Carefully planned activities and experiences which meet the needs of all the children in the class, together with the skilled and sensitive approaches of the adults, ensure that children make good progress and are well prepared for their entry to Year 1. The current reception teacher has brought about good improvements, supported by the management of the school.
68. Attainment on entry to the school overall is well below what might be expected nationally. Many children have weaknesses in language and numeracy skills. This is confirmed by initial assessments made as children enter the class. Social and personal skills are often limited. Many pupils are identified as having special education needs and a very high percentage of pupils have speech problems. Some children have a limited knowledge and understanding of the world. Not all children have had access to pre-school educational experiences.
69. The quality of teaching in all the 'Areas of Learning' in the reception class is good and has a positive impact on the good progress children make. The teacher has a good understanding of the needs of young children and she is well supported by the classroom assistant. The classroom is a secure, happy environment in which children develop confidence and gain skills. Children with special educational needs are soon identified and are very well supported. They make good progress. By the time children are ready to enter Year 1, many achieve standards in line with what is typical in creative, physical and social development. In the areas of language and numeracy, mathematical understanding and knowledge and understanding of the world, the children's attainment is below what is expected.
70. One particular strength of the early year's class is the quality of the partnership with parents. This is much improved from the last inspection. Now there are good relationships between staff and parents and these help children to feel secure in the school environment. The way in which the early morning is organised allows communication between the teacher and parents whilst children settle to activities. It also encourages parents to take part in what their children are doing. The system of home visits and the plentiful flow of information provided before children enter school ensures that they make a confident transition from home to school.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

71. Children make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Many children enter the class with immature skills; some find it very difficult to adapt to the classroom environment and to get on with others. The adults give them very good support and relationships are helpful. The teacher has high expectations of children and is consistent in her approach. For example, she insists that children listen to her and to each other. They are taught to take turns in speaking.
72. Children learn to listen and to respond to the teacher. Their concentration grows and they gain confidence. They are expected to take on responsibilities, for example in helping to tidy up after activities. They learn to co-operate and share equipment. Some

activities have a social skills focus, for example taking turns with wheeled toys. Children are keen to take part in activities and they enjoy their learning. This was evident during a session with a toymaker visitor, when children watched with interest and wanted to touch the things he was showing them.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

73. Many children do not find communication easy. They enter school with a limited vocabulary and need a lot of prompting and encouragement to express themselves. Many opportunities are provided for children to gain confidence and learn to talk to each other and communicate their ideas. For example, in 'circle time' whole-class discussions, children felt sufficiently content to talk about what made them happy. The teacher makes the most of any opportunity to encourage children to talk. For example, when some children had brought toys to school they were helped to talk about them and say which group they would put them into. However, many children still remain reticent and find conversation very difficult.
74. Children make a good start with reading. They all enjoy books and know how they are organised. They tell stories from pictures and many are starting to recognise familiar words. The support of parents has a good impact on the progress that children make in reading. There is some good teaching of basic skills, for example when the teacher helps children link sounds and letter shapes during a shared reading session, or when the classroom assistant works on listening skills and following instructions with children with special educational needs.
75. Writing skills are less well developed, despite good teaching. Some children, especially those who have had more time in the reception class, gain confidence with a pencil. They learn to copy accurately and a few begin to try writing words for themselves. However, many children find it hard to use a pencil effectively and struggle to even write their name.

### **Mathematical development**

76. Numeracy skills are weak as children enter the school, but they develop well during their time in the reception class. Counting rhymes and games are used effectively and involve all children. Most children learn to count to ten and recognise the numerals, although a few get confused and their counting of a group of objects is not accurate. During a counting game some children were not able to hold three fingers up and many could not say how many they had when two lots of objects were put together.
77. The teacher effectively emphasises the development of mathematical language so those children gain an understanding. For example, she spent one session showing how three objects could be put in order by size and encouraging children to use the words 'big,' 'small,' 'bigger,' 'smaller'. Most children made the comparisons and put the objects in order, but many had problems with using the right words to describe what they were doing. Later a few children showed that they could put five and more objects in order of size, but some children still struggled to use the words 'smaller' and 'bigger'.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

78. Many children have a limited knowledge and understanding of the world around them, but they are interested and keen to learn. They are provided with a good range of activities and experiences and have opportunities to try things out, explore and find out. They build with different construction toys; explore what happens to different kinds of

sand, and spend time fitting together jigsaw pieces. They use a computer and gain confidence in using a 'mouse' to control events on screen.

79. The teacher extends the experiences of children by using visits and visitors. For example, a toymaker was invited into the classroom and he fascinated the children when he showed them how he made dolls. There was a sense of wonder as children watched and handled the things he had brought. Although their lack of experience was obvious in their responses to questions, children were challenged and inspired by the experience and showed in their talk what they had learned.

### **Physical development**

80. Although there is an outdoor play area for the reception class, there is no direct access to it from the classroom, so the opportunities for children to use it for independent exploration are limited. However, the staff makes good use of an indoor open area outside the classroom to provide children with opportunities to use large apparatus as part of a rotation of activities. They also have carefully structured and well-managed physical education sessions in the hall. Children make good progress in developing their physical skills. They move confidently, for example in hopping, running and jumping. Children develop an awareness of the space around them, for example when they are asked to find a space in which to move. They begin to be more aware of how their actions affect others, for example, when riding bicycles in a restricted area. Their handling of tools, such as pencils and scissors is less well developed.

### **Creative development**

81. Children are provided with a good range of opportunities to explore materials creatively and to use their imagination. They respond to stories and take part in role-play. They draw plants and use pastel colours in drawing fruit. They explore texture and shape when making 'feely pictures'. However, music is in the main strength in the reception class. The expertise and enthusiasm of the teacher, together with the equally enthusiastic involvement of the classroom assistant, ensures that children have a very positive experience. Children recognise and join in with a range of songs and match movements to the music. They are beginning to understand elements of music. For example, in one lesson children realised that sounds can be changed by making them longer.

## **ENGLISH**

82. In the 2000 National Tests in English the schools results were below national averages for both seven and eleven years and well below those for similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' standards of attainment at the age of seven in reading, writing and speaking and listening are below national averages but are improving, particularly in writing. At the age of eleven, pupils' attainment is better with standards

being close to the national averages in speaking and listening and reading, although they are below national averages in writing. However, from a low starting point when pupils complete the Foundation Stage, they achieve well as they move through the school in developing skills and knowledge in all three aspects of English. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from effective support in classes and in withdrawal groups. They make good progress in developing their skills and understanding in reading and writing.

83. Against a background of considerable change in pupil groups, the school has worked hard to improve pupils' standards. In the current Year 6 class, only half the pupils have been at the school from seven to eleven years old and there are six pupils (37.5 per cent) on the register of special educational needs. Targets set for the year are challenging, but it is likely that they will be reached. Since the last inspection, the school has effectively set in place a range of strategies to improve standards:
- The National Strategy for literacy has been implemented effectively.
  - Curriculum planning has been developed so individual lessons have clear objectives set against weekly and half-termly planning.
  - The quality of teaching has improved throughout the school and is now good overall.
  - Resources have been improved for work in classes and in the library areas so that they are now satisfactory.
  - Provision for pupils with special educational needs (in pupils' individual education plans and support arrangements) has improved.
  - There are effective procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress.
84. By the age of seven, most pupils have made satisfactory progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. They listen carefully to questions and instructions, but a significant number have a limited concentration span so their attention drifts after a relatively short time. Pupils generally respond to questions appropriately, but on occasions, their replies are not relevant to the question and few pupils express their own ideas unprompted. Teachers have to remind pupils regularly to listen to them and the other pupils.
85. As they move through the school, they make good progress so by the age of eleven, most pupils listen attentively and take turns to contribute to discussions. For example, they discussed and evaluated each other's stories willingly in the Year 5 and 6 class. They reply appropriately to teachers' questions and have a good enough subject vocabulary to express their thoughts and ideas in most subjects. Most pupils speak confidently to a larger audience. Pupils with English as an alternative language are fluent speakers of English and make similar progress to the rest of the class.
86. Pupils' attainment in reading by the age of seven is below average. However, pupils achieve well and from a limited starting point, most pupils can use the sounds of letters or pictures to work out unfamiliar words. Pupils of all capabilities enjoy reading books and magazines at home and in school. By the age of seven, lower attaining pupils have gained a basic knowledge of letter sounds but they are not sure of the full range, which limits their reading. Average pupils explain, in basic terms, the story of a book, but do not have a broad vocabulary so their reading is hesitant and disjointed as they often have to work out what the words are. Although they know how to use the contents page in a non-fiction book to find information, they are not familiar with the terms, 'fiction' or 'non-fiction,' 'index' or 'contents.' In contrast, higher attaining pupils are reading fluently at the levels expected for their age, and are developing an awareness of how to use punctuation and expression to give added sense and interest

to the story. They confidently find specific information using the contents or index and talk coherently about the books and characters.

87. By the age of eleven pupils' standards in reading are close to the national average, reflecting good progress. They develop a good range of ways to gain meaning from print and most break down words into small groups of letters and use other clues effectively. Pupils enjoy reading and can recount the significant ideas, events and characters in stories. Lower attaining pupils read at a steady pace, but with limited expression. However, they recognise many words and have a good range of ways to use the illustrations and their knowledge of letter sounds to read unfamiliar words. Higher attaining pupils read good quality fiction of a more mature nature with fluency, expression and understanding. They cope well with the more complex stories. Out of school, they read a range of literature including magazines and children's novels. Pupils' knowledge of well-known authors is satisfactory.
88. Pupils are confident enough in their research skills to use the school and local library to find books on specific topics. When given the opportunity in lessons such as history and geography, they use their research skills effectively to locate precise information from textbooks and other printed sheets. In design and technology, pupils accurately record lists of things they need. In science lessons pupils record short sentences and phrases in, for example, tables of results but pupils' writing skills are not developed and used as much as they might be, especially by higher attainers. Junior age pupils successfully use some computer word processing skills, such as to change the size and type of letters, underline sentences and correct spellings.
89. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment in writing is close to that expected for pupils of their age and they make satisfactory progress in developing their skills. As they move through the infant classes they develop their writing skills and begin to understand how to use capital letters and full stops in a series of sentences. The content of the writing is usually satisfactory, but pupils' knowledge and understanding of grammar are less secure. They begin to develop an understanding of how to use full stops and capital letters to denote sentences and higher attaining pupils extend their ideas in a logical sequence of events. However, their ability to write in a variety of styles is less well developed; most work is descriptive. Pupils spell simple common words correctly but the quality of presentation is variable. Their writing is printed, but a few pupils are beginning to develop a joined style.
90. By the age of eleven pupils' attainment in writing is below average. Currently, most of the oldest pupils write in a joined style, but for a significant number of pupils their letter formation is uneven and inconsistent in style and shape. The use of capital letters and full stops to denote sentences and for proper nouns is inconsistent and few use a wide range of punctuation including commas, exclamation and speech marks consistently within their work. Most common words are spelt correctly. It is school policy not to discourage pupils by correcting every spelling error. All pupils write for a variety of purposes and vary the style to match the audience or subject. Higher attaining pupils' writing is comparatively lively and thoughtful and they develop their ideas well. They use adventurous vocabulary to add life and vitality to their work and in some cases, their story plots end with an unexpected twist.
91. The teaching is good which results in good learning and pupils achieving well as they move through the school. Throughout the school teachers have a good understanding of how to teach basic literacy skills. Lessons are well planned with clear targets for each part of the lesson. Management of pupils and the organisation of lessons are consistently very good so each classroom has a positive atmosphere and pupils



develop a good attitude to learning. Teachers use the classroom support staff effectively to work with individuals or groups both within the classroom and outside. Wherever pupils with special educational needs have support, they make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. They respond well to individual attention.

92. In the infants, the teaching is satisfactory overall. A significant number of pupils have a limited concentration span and under developed personal skills, which affect the pace of learning. Several of these pupils also have special educational needs and require a lot of attention and guidance. Consequently, teachers have to place an emphasis on developing listening skills and better behaviour. They achieve this by very good management of pupils and consistently reinforcing their expectations of behaviour. The whole class sections of the literacy lessons are good with a strong emphasis on using the written word as the focus for developing speaking and listening, reading and grammatical skills. In the group work part of the lesson, instructions are clear and explicit, but some pupils are not able to work on activities that fully extend them without direct supervision. This limits the teachers' ability to exploit fully the opportunities in these parts of the lessons to reinforce what has been covered in the whole class work. When the teacher or the classroom assistant works with groups, which is frequently, pupils benefit from skilled and clear teaching so they make good gains in their reading and writing skills.
93. In the junior classes, the teaching is good. The emphasis placed by infant teachers on pupils' personal skills and behaviour enables teachers of older pupils to organise lessons that make full use of all parts of the literacy lessons. Pupils enjoy very good relationships with adults and each other. They behave well, are able to discuss ideas, concentrate well and work with a minimum of supervision. They make good gains in acquiring the subject's skills, knowledge and understanding. The handwriting lessons make a good contribution to the development of pupils' writing, but insufficient use is made of other subjects to build on these skills. This has a negative effect upon the standards pupils achieve by the age of eleven. In addition, although work is marked frequently and positive comments praise pupils' efforts, insufficient use is made of individual targets and reference to lesson objectives to help pupils know exactly how they could improve their work further.
94. Since the last inspection, the teacher in charge of the subject has given a very clear direction to the subject and much has been done. By leading the introduction of the strategy for literacy, monitoring teaching by watching lessons and looking at planning, she has had a major impact upon the improving standards of teaching and pupils' achievement. The library areas have been enhanced so teachers and pupils now have adequate resources for teaching and learning. The school has developed comprehensive procedures for assessing pupils' progress but makes limited use of this information to set individual short term targets for pupils or to challenge higher attainers further and more often.

## **MATHEMATICS**

95. Standards are below average at seven and eleven years, but this is an improvement over the last few years when standards have been well below average. In the Year 2000 tests, standards were well below the national average at seven and very low at eleven, and when compared with similar schools. However, the factors of a very high rate of pupil mobility and a high level of pupils with special educational needs within a small year group affect the results. Currently Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are working at a

level just below national expectations. Targets set for the year are challenging, but it is likely that they will be reached.

96. Most pupils achieve well through the school. They make good progress in the carefully structured lessons and pupils build on their prior learning effectively. Results from the last two years indicate that girls achieved less well than boys, but the small numbers involved distort the picture. Currently girls and boys achieve equally well through the school, except in Year 1 where the behaviour of a few boys affects their own progress. Pupils for whom English is a second language achieve well alongside their peers. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively in lessons. Clear explanations, which are a feature of all lessons, particularly affect the understanding of these pupils, and well-targeted adult support helps them to make good progress in completing the tasks set for them. Higher attaining pupils usually achieve well and results show that some pupils each year achieve at above average levels. However, in some lessons, the work they are given to do is not accurately matched to their needs, and sometimes the pace of lessons is too slow for them.
97. On entry to the school numeracy skills are well below what might be expected. Although children make good progress in the reception class, particularly in gaining an understanding of mathematical ideas, as they enter Year 1 there is a significant number of children who have not yet achieved the levels expected. The attainment of seven year olds is just below what is expected. Many pupils count sets of objects reliably, are confident with counting in tens to one hundred and recognise and write number names. They tell the time using half hours and quarter hours. They use their number skills to solve problems involving money. However, some pupils still struggle with sequencing numbers and with the idea of subtraction.
98. The attainment of eleven year olds is also just below what is expected. Many pupils accurately work with numbers up to and over 1,000. They add, subtract and multiply decimals. They estimate sensibly and check their sums by using calculators. They measure the angles of triangles and find the perimeters of shapes. However, the lower attainers are less confident and need the support of more practical methods when carrying out calculations. Often their lack of confidence with basic number additions limits the amount of work they complete.
99. The quality of teaching is usually good and has a positive impact on the learning that takes place. Teachers plan carefully and effectively. They plan lessons to meet their targets and ensure that work meets the needs of most pupils. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well and has helped to bring about more consistency to teachers' planning. Support staff make a valuable contribution in lessons, particularly in supporting the work of the lower attainers. For example, in the Year 1 and 2 class the classroom assistant worked effectively with a small group of pupils and made some useful assessments of what they had learned.
100. Oral work in lessons is often very good. Occasionally mental arithmetic parts of lessons are too slow for the higher attainers, but overall teachers are good at involving all pupils, including the pupils with special educational needs, in these activities. A strong feature of all lessons is the way in which teachers give clear explanations. These help pupils to gain understanding and they particularly help the pupils who have moved from school to school and have gaps in their learning. For example, the Year 5 and 6 teacher clearly demonstrated the multiplication of decimals and this ensured that all pupils could see the process and what was happening. It was obvious that pupils had gained a confidence with the process and were able to apply it effectively when they later worked on some problems for themselves.

101. Teachers place an emphasis on pupils learning the language they need in mathematics. This begins in the reception class, for example when the teacher encourages children to use the words 'bigger' and 'smaller' to help them talk about and compare different objects. It carries on through the school, for example in the Year 3 and 4 class when the teacher helps pupils to read mathematical problems. They also ensure that skills in mathematics are used effectively across the curriculum, for example, in graph work in a Year 6 geography lesson. Pupils used their numeracy skills effectively to plot rainfall graphs and to compare different places referring to the information. In history, pupils' understanding of number allows them to comprehend aspects of time, such as events occurring before others. In design and technology pupils learn to estimate amounts and measure accurately so that their model rooms are to scale. Pupils measured in Newtons and fractions of Newtons successfully in a science lesson about forces. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn to handle information by making, for example, graphs of different types of footwear.
102. Lessons are less successful when the tasks do not accurately meet the needs of all the pupils in the class. For example, in one class the tasks given were too difficult for many pupils. However, in other lessons, the level of challenge is not sufficient for the higher attainers and the pace of lessons is too slow for them. There is also a weakness in the limited use of information and communication technology to support work in lessons, but the school has plans to improve this soon.
103. Attitudes of pupils are generally good. They enjoy mathematics and work hard. The level of support they are given and the positive approach of their teachers encourage even the least confident to have a go at the tasks and the sensitivity of teachers to individuals' ensures that pupils are not left to struggle on their own. Pupils are attentive and responsive in oral sessions and they settle to tasks responsibly. They co-operate with each other and will often help others when they cannot get on. Only in Year 1 are there a few pupils who find it difficult to concentrate and this has an impact on the progress they make.
104. Mathematics is well managed. The teacher in charge has had a positive impact on the improvements that have been made in standards. She monitors effectively the progress of pupils through the school. She has monitored lessons to ensure consistency in the quality of teaching and continuity in learning. Assessment procedures are good and information is used to help teachers plan the curriculum. For example, the Year 3 and 4 teacher has focused lessons on 'using and applying mathematics' as this had been identified as a weakness in the past. She helped pupils to understand how to solve problems by using different methods. The checks on teaching have not picked up the need for pupils to have individual short-term targets for them to achieve in order to raise standards of work further.
105. The curriculum for mathematics is much improved from what was in place at the last inspection. The implementation of the national numeracy strategy and the positive action of the teacher in charge of mathematics has ensured that there is now more emphasis on pupils understanding what they are doing, better attitudes to work and much better quality of teaching. Tasks now more closely match the range of ages and attainment levels in the classes, although there are still some weaknesses here, for example in the level of challenge for higher attainers.

## **SCIENCE**

106. Pupils make good progress in science throughout the school. Consequently, pupils in Years 2 and 6 this year are attaining standards close to the standards expected nationally. There are particular strengths in pupils' observation and investigative skills. There has been a considerable improvement in the teaching of science, in the attitudes of pupils in lessons in all classes and in the quality of resources since the last inspection. Better lesson planning and a more consistent quality of teaching through the school are features of science teaching now.
107. Children enter the school with a very limited knowledge and understanding of the world. Children make good progress in the reception class, partly as a result of the wide range of experiences they have. Teacher assessments in 2000 showed that seven year olds were still well below the standards expected of this age. However, the school has a high turnover of pupils and numbers in each year are small. The effects of these two factors mean that national statistics are not reliable indicators of the school or pupils' performances. Results of National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds in 2000 and in previous years showed standards to be well below average nationally and in comparison with similar schools. During the inspection, teachers' assessments indicated that about two thirds of the pupils in Year 6 will attain the expected standards this year.
108. Seven year olds perform close to the expected standard for pupils of this age. Their work shows an appropriate knowledge and understanding of all aspects of science. They know about materials and their properties. For example, they find sources of light around the school and classify types of light into 'artificial' and 'natural' sources. Pupils record their results quickly and efficiently. Higher attainers make small and detailed drawings of types of light and have produced six or seven examples in 15 minutes. Average pupils also produce several clear diagrams. Lower attainers explain that sources of light help us to see things. Pupils know that pushes and pulls are forces and know some of the basic things that animals need to live. Pupils have studied healthy and unhealthy foods, the seasons and weather patterns.
109. Eleven year olds have a growing knowledge and understanding across all aspects of science. For example, they investigate the properties of weight and mass. Higher attainers measure objects in Newtons and fractions of Newtons with ease. Their measurements are reliable and they weigh many objects. One pupil knew that the earth was spinning and that this creates a force. Average pupils measure accurately to the nearest Newton and record their results competently. Lower attainers need some help to measure the weight of objects. Much of pupils' work reflects the good emphasis the school gives to investigative work. They draw graphs effectively to help explain results. Pupils have experimented with the speed of sound, how fast liquids evaporate and they show that they understand the fairness of the tests.
110. Pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils benefit from the practical approach, in which they can be involved alongside their peers. They receive good adult support. Higher attaining pupils are usually sufficiently challenged by the work they are given. Teachers use a high level of questioning to stretch the thinking of these pupils, although sometimes they are not given sufficient opportunity to investigate ideas further. Teachers manage pupils particularly effectively. They are adept at preparing lessons very thoroughly and pupils behave better and make better progress with the tasks. Pupils who arrive at different times of the year are quickly tested and placed in appropriate groups. Teachers give good attention to revision of ideas in all lessons and at the end of topics.

111. The teaching throughout the school is good and has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Teachers plan topics carefully and have clear targets which pupils understand. Planning is organised so that what pupils are taught builds on what they have already learnt. Consequently, pupils gain new knowledge and skills and make good progress. Teachers successfully build on the work in the previous classes. For example, in Year 3 and 4 pupils learn about the differences between solids and liquids and meet the topic again two years later. Teachers' planning of how higher attaining pupils record information, up to the end of Year 4, is weaker. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to use their writing skills to express their ideas and findings. Sometimes this is due to an over-emphasis on the practical approach, and only limited time is left in lessons for the more formal recording of their learning. The checks on teaching and learning have helped the school improve science greatly. However, pupils are not set individual short-term targets for them to attain in order to raise standards of work further.
112. To support their planning, teachers effectively use a wide range of resources. The outside environment is used to good effect. Pupils have the opportunity to observe living things in a practical way, and this approach has a considerable impact on their interest and motivation. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils go on nature trails and look for creatures and pupils begin to learn about the different animals found in different habitats. They learn enquiry skills as they ask questions about why certain animals live where they do. Pupils' listening and speaking and numeracy skills are put to good use. They learn new technical terms and to count accurately.
113. A strength of the teaching in science is the knowledge and understanding teachers bring to the subject and the enthusiasm with which they approach science. This encourages pupils and affects their positive attitudes to work. The teacher who manages the subject has had a positive influence. Her enthusiasm affects other teachers. It is her influence that has ensured the school has the breadth of curriculum it has and that pupils gain a depth of knowledge and understanding. Resources are good and pupils have sufficient equipment to use for small group work.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

114. The evidence available indicates that standards in art and design are in line with what is expected nationally. Throughout the school, pupils have a range of opportunities to work with a variety of materials and processes to communicate their ideas. They reach a satisfactory standard, with a strength in observational drawing. The work of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils drawing musical instruments and that of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils drawing portraits, indicate pupils are skilled and have a high level of concentration.
115. In the one lesson observed, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils learnt about natural sculpture, building on their previous work on 'What is sculpture?' They gained skills in shading techniques, practised these and then used them in their sketches. In the lesson they were effectively exploring ideas and investigating materials. The interest and enthusiasm of their teacher gave them the confidence to use their imagination and to share and try out their ideas.

116. The subject is developing well in the school and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils are encouraged to use their sketchbooks to explore ideas and experiment with different media. They are gaining the confidence to try things out and older pupils are beginning to look at their own work and that of others critically. Although some pupils have had the experience of drawing pictures using appropriate software, information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to support the design element of the subject.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

117. Because of the planned pattern of work during the inspection, it was not possible to observe any lessons in design and technology. Evidence of curricular planning, photographs and discussions with pupils and the teacher who manages the subject indicate that pupils in Years 2 and 6 attain the expected standards of work. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Little evidence was available to illustrate the planning, making and evaluation process followed by pupils during these projects, although these important skills are taught. The school plans, for example, for pupils to answer problems as a starting point for their work and to give pupils opportunities to experience the full range of the National Curriculum, such as pulling devices apart to see how they work.
118. Year 2 pupils have designed puppets and labelled the clothing that they want to add to their characters. Pupils have designed a 'new' flower and listed the parts of a car. The rain hats designed for Teddy are particularly detailed. There is a strong bias towards art and design in the work seen and pupils have evaluated their work in one or two short sentences.
119. Year 3 and 4 pupils have designed and made models of rooms that have working lights. They have used large construction kits to build a three-metre suspension bridge successfully. Pupils have raced their self-made boats constructed from plastic drink bottles with balloons attached to push them along. Some pupils have added an electric motor to drive their boats. The school has entered competitions for science and design and technology and it is obvious that pupils have developed very good attitudes to the subject. The necessary designing and fixing skills, such as using glue, have been well taught. In Year 4, pupils have opportunities to evaluate the tastes of food. Each pupil has designed a fruit salad and given opinions about what they like and do not like about their choices. Pupils have recorded their thoughts in a table successfully.
120. Years 5 and 6 pupils have evaluated the taste and texture of several sorts of bread from different countries. Pupils have investigated the value for money of these foods in terms of the amount in the packets and how good they taste. Christmas Fair games were designed with advertisement posters and the success of the games was evaluated by counting the number of people who had a go. Games included 'guess the number of sweets in a jar,' and a variation on the game of tiddly-winks.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

121. Inspection evidence from lessons and pupils' work shows that pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at both seven and eleven years of age in history and geography. As they move through the school, all pupils, including those with special needs, gain a sound knowledge and understanding of the two subjects. They develop skills which mean they can do basic research and observe satisfactorily, although the

higher attaining pupils have fewer opportunities to fully use and extend their information technology, literacy and numeracy skills within lessons than they might.

122. In both subjects, there has been improvement since the last inspection when standards of attainment and pupils' progress were judged unsatisfactory. The improvements in standards reflect better quality teaching and the impact of a number of other measures the school has introduced. The school management has given a clear direction to the development of the subjects so there are now teachers in charge of both subjects, resources have been developed and both subjects feature in the school development plan.
123. At seven, pupils have a secure sense of when some events happened and understand that places and people change over time. They learn about the lives of some famous people, such as Florence Nightingale and how they affected the present day. Through a topic on toys, they learn how places and things change overtime and begin to learn a range of vocabulary to describe the past and present such as 'old' and 'new.' In geography, pupils draw maps of their route to school using pictures to show particular places such as the playground on the maps. They learn about the seasons of the year and the different weather at different times of the year. Although opportunities to write their ideas are limited, they use appropriate vocabulary to explain their ideas.
124. As pupils move through the junior classes they build on these basic skills in both history and geography so that by the age of eleven they have acquired the skills, knowledge and understanding expected nationally. In history, pupils know about different periods, events and important people in the history of the ancient world. For example, they learn about some of the aspects of the culture and lifestyle of the Egyptians. They learn about periods in the history of the United Kingdom such as the Victorians, how life was different for people and about some of the important events that shaped the modern world such as the development of motorised transport.
125. Pupils' research skills develop satisfactorily so that they can use a range of sources such as textbooks and artefacts to find evidence about specific topics. However, they have limited opportunities to write about their findings or to use information technology as a way of presenting their ideas. In geography, pupils build on the knowledge they acquired in the infants about weather and climate to develop a broader understanding of how the physical landscape and climate varies in different parts of the world. They learn about the climatic zones of the world and about particular climatic features such as the monsoon season in the tropics. Pupils use their numeracy skills effectively to plot rainfall graphs and to compare different places referring to the information.
126. From evidence of pupils' work and the lessons seen, the quality of teaching and learning in both subjects is satisfactory. The main strength of the teaching is the very effective management of pupils. Explanations and instructions are clear and explicit so pupils understand what is expected of them and what they have to do. Teachers expect pupils to remember and use knowledge from previous lessons. In the introductions to lessons the teachers ask probing and open questions often directed to specific pupils, so that all pupils are fully involved in the discussion and need to use what they know to answer. Consequently, pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding.
127. The teaching has a good impact upon pupils' behaviour and attitudes to lessons. Pupils are enthusiastic, interested in lessons and behave well. Teachers have good knowledge and they use this to plan lessons effectively. The range of activities is more varied in history. There is an over-reliance on worksheets as the basis for written

activities in geography. Consequently, although the planned activities cover a broad range of topics, there are insufficient opportunities for all pupils, particularly the higher attainers, to develop their thinking in their own words. Although, assessment through questioning and discussion is good in lessons, the quality of marking of pupils' work gives insufficient information to pupils about how they can improve their work. The quality of pupils' written work, particularly that of the oldest pupils, is below that expected. Insufficient attention is paid to handwriting, grammar, punctuation and spelling.

128. The teachers responsible for geography and history are beginning to have a positive effect on the subject. For example, the teacher in charge of history has revised the subject policy in line with the national guidelines and the subject is a focus for further improvement. The school makes good use of the local library service to enhance the resources for history and the range of visits to local places such as Lincoln Castle make a positive contribution to pupils' cultural development

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

129. No lessons were seen or observations made of pupils using computers in other situations. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with the co-ordinator about plans for the future. Pupils' standards of work are below those expected nationally at eleven years and they have not made the progress expected. At seven years old, pupils' standards of work meet those expected. There have been some improvements since the last inspection and sufficient use is made of the existing computers for infant age pupils. The subject is better managed than it was and the teaching of skills is better than at the time of the last inspection. The school has just installed a very good computer suite with a much improved range of computers and other equipment. Teachers are about to undergo thorough training in information and communication technology and the school has good plans for developing the curriculum in the coming months. Information and communication technology is a major priority for school development and the school is justified in waiting for all the facilities to be in place before embarking on major changes in what it provides for pupils.
130. During the inspection the curriculum for the oldest pupils was incomplete. Pupils are not taught enough about controlling devices, monitoring data such as weather information or about simulations which mimic, for example, real life situations and require pupils to make sensible choices and decisions.
131. In Year 2, pupils load and save their work on computers successfully. They have learned that many things in daily use need to be controlled and pupils have programmed the actions of a floor robot. Pupils make lists on screen and use sets of words to help them with their work. They use computers to make bar graphs. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn to handle information by making, for example, graphs of different types about footwear. Pupils also successfully use word processing skills, such as changing the size and type of letters to enhance their work. Pupils save their work, print it, underline sentences and correct capital letters. They know how to switch on the machines and load programmes successfully. They have composed a weather map of Lincolnshire by placing symbols to represent different sorts of weather on a base map.
132. In Years 5 and 6, pupils further refine their data handling and word processing skills. Pupils have changed the colour and size of their writing on screen. They have used



images taken from other programs to make their work more attractive and used a drawing program to make a Christmas picture. Pupils control the on-screen pen effectively and shade mostly accurately. Higher attaining pupils have made some interesting comments about the results of their work. Overall pupils have been set similar tasks and higher attainers have not been extended as much as they might have been.

133. So far the use of computers and devices for supporting work in other subjects has been limited by the lack of opportunities pupils have had. However, work in other subjects does benefit pupils' information and communication technology skills. Work completed in mathematics and science, such as handling survey information about pupils' favourite colours, is appropriate. Pupils' work in English, such as drafting and editing sentences using some of the many features of word processing programmes also supports the development of pupils' skills.

## **MUSIC**

134. It was not possible to observe any music lessons, but teachers' planning and other evidence suggests that a satisfactory curriculum is in place and that pupils attain the expected standards at seven and eleven. There is a strength in the musical performances that pupils give. This was clear in the quality of the Christmas concert at the end of last term and the success of the school's part in a local music festival. In assemblies, pupils sing tunefully and with enthusiasm. Older pupils sing with a sense of the 'shape' of the melody.
135. The subject has a higher status in the school than it did at the last inspection. This is mainly due to the expertise and enthusiasm of the teacher responsible for music. There are opportunities for pupils to follow their own interests, for example, in taking part in lunchtime drum and recorder groups, or taking piano tuition from a visiting teacher. There is a good range of resources to support the subject.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

136. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in most areas of physical education across the school. Seven and eleven year olds achieve standards that are typical of pupils nationally. Overall, standards of pupils' work are better than those found in the previous inspection but the school has not provided the 'outdoor and adventurous' curriculum expected since last September, when the National Curriculum was changed. There have been other improvements, such as in the progress pupils make, in their attitudes and responses in lessons, to the quality of teaching and to the quality and range of resources. Although physical education is not a priority for school development, the good features of the provision reported four years ago have been maintained. The arrangements for swimming are very good. At eleven years old, nearly all pupils swim 25 metres and pupils' attainment is above national expectations.
137. In Year 1 and 2, higher attainers demonstrate that they can roll with a partner, starting and finishing at similar points. Pupils hold balances successfully and perform forward rolls tidily. Average attainers roll, jump and balance successfully, but when working with a partner they sometimes finish at different times. They make good use of hops and skips to join sequences of movements. Lower attainers take part in lessons

effectively and are generally confident and willing to have a go at what everyone else is doing.

138. In Years 3 and 4, higher attaining pupils show that they can interpret instructions with considerable skill. When they make a darting movement, they deviate several metres either side of the line they are taking. Lower attainers' movements are quite similar when responding to instructions such as to 'scamper' or 'sprint.' Average attainers run and make balances in pairs successfully and support each other's bodies well when necessary. Pupils' attainments reflect the good teaching, which requires pupils to be vigorous and to try extra hard to complete tasks.
139. Higher attaining Year 5 and 6 pupils successfully swim many widths of the local swimming pool and refine their front crawl and back strokes effectively. Pupils' attainment is enhanced by the good quality of the teaching by the classteacher and instructors, the very good attitudes to work that pupils have and the very good quality of the swimming pool facilities. All pupils made good progress. Lower attainers progress from ungainly backstroke actions until many make very little 'splash' at all by the end of the lesson. Younger pupils were also present during this lesson. They made good progress in learning to swim or to strengthen their strokes by holding the floats so that they could concentrate on good strong leg actions.
140. The teaching is good across the school. The school provides a good curriculum with the exception that outdoor and adventurous activities are not included. Teachers' expertise and expectations of what pupils should do are good. Lessons are well planned. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. In all lessons, the procedures to manage pupils successfully are good and pupils make good progress in every lesson. Pupils learn to become more agile and thoughtful about their work. Pupils' good progress shows in the ways they extend their sequences of movements, stretch higher, run faster and swim further. Pupils of all ages are interested in what they do and they make good attempts to carry out the teachers' instructions. Pupils try hard and apply themselves with enthusiasm. In one gymnastics lesson, several boys with special educational needs did not apply themselves as well as they might and they made less progress.
141. Teachers place good emphasis on the use of space and of encouraging pupils' self-evaluations of their work, which involves pupils watching, listening and speaking. Teachers demonstrate the required movements well, using higher attaining pupils or themselves to inspire pupils. Good demonstrations have a positive effect on the effort pupils make, the learning and the quality of subsequent work. All teachers also make good use of praise to motivate pupils.
142. The teacher responsible for physical education has a good knowledge of the subject. The school's programme of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. It includes netball, football and sporting visits to other schools, which raise the standards of pupils' work. The school's accommodation is very good. The hall and playground are large and pupils have sufficient room in which to work. The school uses these spaces to very good effect in lessons and pupils have every opportunity to make good progress. The school has good plans to improve the range and number of recorded assessments made of pupils' attainment and progress. The co-ordinator has written a good policy that gives proper attention to health and safety matters.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

143. Pupils reach the standards in religious education expected by the locally agreed syllabus. There are currently strengths in pupils' knowledge and understanding of different religions.
144. Year 2 pupils know about Jewish customs and especially the significance of the holy day of Shabbat. They understand what might be special to people in their religion and are developing a clear idea of what rituals are and linking this with people's beliefs. For example, they explain why a special tablecloth might be used on this day and why the family gets together and shares a meal.
145. Year 4 pupils know about the festival of Divali and understand the significance of the story of Rama and Sita. They appreciate what the lighting of divas means to Hindus at this time. Year 6 pupils have developed a greater understanding of both the Hindu and Jewish faith and can explain the significance of Advent to Christians.
146. Religious education is taught well and with sensitivity. Teachers make good use of resources, for example the special tableware and food used in Class 2 to create a particular atmosphere for the Jewish meal. There are opportunities for pupils to reflect on the meaning of what they are learning. For example, Year 2 pupils thought about the importance of sharing food and they made imaginative suggestions about what the family conversation might be about. Year 4 pupils reflected on what the candlelight from the lamps meant to themselves and the significance of light. The secure environments which teachers have created in their classrooms, where expectations are clear and relationships supportive, help pupils to feel sufficiently confident to reflect on their own thoughts and feelings and to be prepared to share them with others.
147. The teacher responsible for religious education is competent and has good ideas about how the subject should be taught. She has supported teachers with ideas and resources and is confident in taking on the new agreed syllabus later this term. There has been a significant improvement in provision for religious education since the last inspection. It now has more status and is properly taught. The subject has benefited from the better attitudes of pupils and a calmer atmosphere in the school, which encourages teaching that is more sensitive and more thoughtful responses.