

INSPECTION REPORT

MARSHCHAPEL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Grimsby

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120461

Headteacher: Mrs Vanessa Aldridge

Reporting inspector: Mrs J. Ann Sharpe
18101

Dates of inspection: 18 – 19 October 2001

Inspection number: 196671

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Sea-Dyke Way
Marshchapel
Grimsby
NE Lincolnshire

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr E P Mossop

Date of previous inspection: 24 June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18101	J. Ann Sharpe	Registered inspector	English Music Physical education Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
12511	Linda Buller	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
11510	Keith Oglesby	Team inspector	Science Geography History Religious education Equality of opportunity	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
17794	Dave Hardman	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This very small school has 27 children (14 boys and 13 girls) on roll. The number of children attending has fallen significantly since the last inspection in 1997, and the school is not full. Children are taught in two mixed-age classes; Class 1 for foundation stage and infant children and Class 2 for juniors. The headteacher takes Class 1, with part-time teaching relief for one afternoon each week, and a recently appointed teacher takes Class 2. Children are mainly from white family backgrounds, and the proportion eligible for free school meals is similar to the national average. Almost a third of the children are on the special educational needs register, and one child has a statement of special educational needs; this is above national average, and greater than at the time of the last inspection. Children from Marshchapel attend the school, but it also takes children from nearby villages, especially North Cotes. Most children attend a playgroup before they start school, and their attainment on entry is average. The headteacher has only been in the permanent post since September 2000. Children in Class 2 had a disrupted education last year owing to several unavoidable changes of teacher. There is a fairly high incidence of children starting or leaving the school at times other than the normal times of transfer owing to changing social circumstances in the locality.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is a happy, friendly and caring place where children feel secure. Children's attitudes towards their work and their behaviour are very good. This is due to the positive ways in which adults encourage children to feel good about themselves and to respect the feelings of others. The headteacher is keen for the school to improve and wants standards to continue to rise. She works very hard, along with governors, to overcome problems, and has a determined approach that is now taking the school forward successfully. Children's achievement is satisfactory overall. They do well in speaking, listening, reading and writing in both the infants and the juniors, and in mathematics in the infants. Teaching is satisfactory, overall. The teaching of the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics in the infants is good. Children could sometimes do better, especially the brighter ones in the juniors, but not all lessons present the right amount of challenge. For the very high cost of educating each child, the school gives satisfactory value for money and provides a mainly sound quality of education.

What the school does well

- Children achieve well in English and standards are above average in Years 2 and 6.
- Children's very good attitudes to work and their very good behaviour are positive features of most lessons.
- Good teaching of the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics in the infants gives children a good start to their work in the juniors.
- Since the appointment of the headteacher, the school has started to improve much more quickly, and shortcomings are now tackled well.
- The good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development widens children's view of their own place in society.

What could be improved

- Children could sometimes do better in lessons, especially brighter juniors in mathematics and science.
- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage does not take full account of the national guidance.
- Governors and teachers do not use all the information they have from assessing pupils, as well as they should, to help them to drive up standards.
- Some important new policies, especially the policy for teaching and learning, have still to be fully implemented in lessons.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

From the last inspection in June 1997 until 2000, the school did not improve as much as it should have. There is no evidence that two of the three key issues in the inspection report were addressed, and the school did not keep up with national educational initiatives, including introducing the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. Although National Curriculum test results for such small year groups are unreliable pointers to school standards, there is no evidence that obvious weaknesses were being addressed until 2000. In 2001, test results improved. Since the headteacher took over, the role and work of governors in managing the school have increased considerably, and governors now play a full part in all aspects of the school's development, including putting together and watching over a detailed school development plan. The school has fairly recently put a full range of updated and good quality policies into place, and governors have turned a serious budget deficit into a surplus to carry forward. Since 1997, standards have largely been maintained, although they have improved in mathematics for infants. Although improvement since the headteacher took over has been good overall, the poor start in 1997 makes the overall rate of improvement satisfactory. This judgement takes into account the considerable restrictions created by staffing changes in Class 2 last year, and the fact that the headteacher has had no other member of the teaching staff with whom to share all the responsibilities. The school is now well placed to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

The table normally shown here is omitted because fewer than 10 children took the National Curriculum tests, and comparisons with national figures or similar schools are not statistically safe. Nevertheless, test results have started to improve. More children than in previous years are attaining higher levels. The achievement of reception children is satisfactory, and they are on track to attain the standard expected in all six areas of their learning by the end of the year. Infants achieve well in the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and mathematics, and standards in Year 2 are above average in English and mathematics; they are in line with expectations in the other subjects where judgements were made. The achievement of juniors is satisfactory; in English they do well, especially in speaking and listening and in handwriting and presentation. Standards in Year 6 are above average in English, and average in mathematics and science. In science, children's knowledge is better than their investigating skills. In Year 6, standards are higher in English than they are in mathematics and science, and this is because the school has had a greater emphasis in the past year on improving teaching in English by making increasing use of the National Literacy Strategy as a basis for planning lessons. In Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and religious education. No judgements were made for music and physical education, although the standard of swimming is well above average. Standards are a little below expectations in information and communication technology in Year 6 owing to lack of resources to cover all the necessary work. Children with special educational needs make good progress, but brighter children could sometimes achieve more, especially in the juniors in mathematics and science. The school has started to try to set realistic but challenging targets for both the school and individual children, but teachers and governors do not yet have everything in place to make sure that the targets are achieved.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Children are enthusiastic about their lessons and work hard to please their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Children know what is right and wrong. This means that teachers do not have to spend time dealing with behavioural matters.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Children enjoy doing jobs around the school. They get along well with each other and the adults who work with them, and become mature and sensible learners as they grow older.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The rate of attendance has declined since the last inspection, mainly owing to an increase in the families taking holidays in term time.

Children's very good attitudes and values contribute significantly to the happy and friendly atmosphere in the school, and provide a very good starting point for their educational progress. The school could take greater advantage of this by expecting them to rise to challenges more often.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory

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.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, overall, but the teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is good in the infants, leading to good achievement in Year 2 in English and mathematics. Teaching and learning in the infants in all other subjects where judgements were made are satisfactory. Teaching and learning for reception children are also satisfactory: while some lesson planning reflects the national guidance, teachers have still to work out how best to put the guidance fully into practice in a class containing older children. Teaching and learning in the juniors are satisfactory in English (including literacy), mathematics (including numeracy) and in all subjects where judgements could be made. Some individual lessons in the juniors are good. The junior teacher is new to the school, and has yet to get to know about the prior attainment of children in order to make sure that all their work is closely matched to their needs. She has settled the children down very well, following their disrupted education last year, and she sets them high expectations of their behaviour and presentation of work. All teachers are skilled at questioning children, and this leads to very high standards in speaking and listening across the subjects by Year 6. Teachers manage children's behaviour very well by their friendly but firm approach, and by showing children the respect they deserve. Consequently, children show interest, concentrate and enjoy their work and play. The good initiatives in the school in the last year have not yet had time to show in consistently improved teaching, but things are going in the right direction.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory, overall, with a very good number and range of extra-curricular activities and very good provision for children to learn to swim. There is more work to be done to make lessons for children in the Foundation Stage fully reflect the national guidance.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers quickly spot when children are having difficulties of any kind that affect their learning. The school ensures that the children have good support to enable them to play a full part in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The good provision makes a considerable contribution to children's very good attitudes towards school and other children. Very good provision for moral development results in very good behaviour. The school prepares children well for their future lives in our mixed society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school does a lot to promote good behaviour and keeps a watchful eye out for any concerns. Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' health, safety and welfare are sound. Information about children's attainment is not yet used consistently enough to plan what they need to learn next.

Parents' views of the school are good. Staff and governors value the school's positive partnership with parents and they keep parents well informed about school matters. The curriculum for information and communication technology does not fully meet requirements owing to a lack of specific resources for older juniors. The headteacher is introducing a system for assessing children and tracking their progress in order to set targets for their future learning and for the school to aim for. This system, however, has not yet been fully put into action, and children could sometimes learn even more.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher	In the short time since the headteacher took over, she has tackled many shortcomings in the school. She has steered governors significantly closer to most other schools in terms of up-dating policies and procedures. She has quickly gained the confidence of everyone, and has placed the school in a more favourable position in terms of its academic standards. The headteacher gives good direction to the work of the school, and is fully committed to its continued success.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Since the last inspection, governors have increased considerably their role in managing the school and their knowledge of its progress. They welcome recent changes to the school's management, and each one plays an individual and collective part in taking the school forward. Governors know where they can still improve, for example by finding ways to judge whether standards in the school are yet high enough.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The good range of important and updated policies are fairly new, and the school has yet to find ways of finding out how well they are seen in practice. Policies for monitoring and evaluating and for teaching and learning contain good guidance that is not always acted upon.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Governors are aware of the implications of the falling number on roll and think ahead to try to avoid financial difficulties. The next step for them is to make sure that priorities for spending relate more closely to raising standards and improving teaching and learning.

The leadership and management of the school have improved a lot since 2000, and, as a result, standards show clear signs of rising. Resources and the accommodation have a few shortcomings, but they are satisfactory overall. Support and administrative staff work hard and make a good contribution to children's education and progress. The school applies the principles of 'best value' soundly.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The friendly atmosphere where adults know children well and classes are small. • Children like school, behave well, work hard and make good progress due to good teaching. • The school is a part of the community. • The school has improved a lot since the headteacher took over. • The school works closely with parents and keeps them well informed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last year, parents had some anxieties about the changes of teacher in Class 2, and they are hoping that problems are now resolved. • A few parents think that brighter children are not challenged enough. • Parents would like to see the regular pattern of homework restored in Class 2.

Parents were right to be concerned about the changes of teacher in Class 2, but this was beyond the control of the school, and governors have now solved the problem. Parents are also right in their belief that brighter children could achieve more. Teaching is not always as good as parents think it is, although there are clear signs that any shortcomings are now being rectified. The homework policy is used for both classes. Inspectors largely agree with parents' positive views of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There are clear signs that standards in the school have started to improve. The results of the National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments for pupils in Years 2 and 6 in English, mathematics and science are an unreliable guide to judging how well pupils achieve. This is because year groups are very small and they vary in size and composition of boys and girls. Nevertheless, results suggest that pupils in Year 6 achieve higher standards in English than they do in mathematics and science, and this is confirmed by inspection findings. Governors set targets for the test results in English and mathematics based on what teachers know about pupils' attainment in lessons. Last year, for the first time, they also took account of the results of voluntary National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 5. In 2001, the target was exceeded in English, but not met in mathematics, although there has since been some question as to how reliable the school's predictions were at the time, owing to changes of teacher in Class 2.

2. The 2001 test results for pupils in Year 6 suggest that there was an improvement overall on the results from the previous year in English, mathematics and science. This was because more pupils attained higher levels than previously, especially in English. The targets for 2002 have still to be reviewed following a change to the composition of the year group to be tested. The school is introducing a system for tracking the progress of pupils. This is to make the setting of realistic but challenging targets possible in the future. The system is still at an early stage, however, and has not yet been used to set clear targets for pupils in the current Year 6.

3. The results of the National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics also suggest that standards improved in 2001 in all three areas. As with the Year 6 results, a greater proportion of pupils attained higher levels in reading and mathematics, although results in writing were not quite as good. The school's results generally show that from a fairly static position when the headteacher took over, standards are now beginning to rise. This is due to the school's increased attention to looking closely at pupils' attainment and starting to find out what can be done to push them forward. There is still, however, more work to be done on this.

4. Since the last inspection, the standard of work has largely been maintained, and standards have improved in mathematics for pupils in Year 2. Although standards appear to have fallen in information and communication technology, pupils nationally now have to apply their skills to more advanced technology than was the case in 1997. The inspection finds that the overall standard of work seen in Year 2 is above average. This is mainly due to pupils' above average attainment in English and mathematics. Standards in all other subjects, (in music and physical education judgements were not made) are in line with national expectations. Pupils in Year 2 have good speaking and listening skills and have mastered the basics of learning to read and write in all subjects. They are confident to work with increasingly large numbers and mathematical ideas, such as measuring and geometric shapes, and use the language of mathematics when talking about their work.

5. The standard of work seen in Year 6 is average, overall. Although pupils' attainment is above average in English, it is average in mathematics and science. In English, pupils in Year 6 show well above average speaking and listening skills, and their handwriting and presentation are also well above average in all subjects, including

mathematics. Pupils read fluently and write in a wide range of styles, showing good levels of correct grammar, punctuation and vocabulary. Standards are not as high as this in mathematics because pupils are sometimes capable of attaining more than is expected of them, especially the brighter pupils. In science, pupils' knowledge is greater than their skills in planning and carrying out their own investigations, and this limits their overall attainment. Standards are in line with national expectations in other subjects, except music and physical education where no judgements were made, and information and communication technology, where standards are below average. Standards in information and communication technology are a little below average because pupils do not have all the experiences they should owing to a shortage of resources, and because they do not apply their skills sufficiently well in other subjects. Pupils attain very high standards in swimming by the time they leave the school owing to the school's arrangements to provide regular swimming lessons for all the pupils.

6. When children start in the reception class, their attainment is average overall. They follow the national programme of work for children of their age and their achievement is satisfactory in each of the six areas of learning. This means that they start work in Year 1 with average skills. Although children make satisfactory progress, they could sometimes do even better, but they do not always have enough close attention from their class teacher, and their work does not always give them the opportunities they need to show what they can do. Nevertheless, they settle into school life and routines well and respond happily to their activities and lessons.

7. From this average start in Year 1, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, although they achieve well in Years 1 and 2 when learning the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' achievement in the juniors in English, from their starting point in Year 2 is also good, and it is very good in speaking, listening, handwriting and presentation. The recent initiatives and improvements in the school have not had time to show a clear effect on pupils' achievement in the juniors, especially in mathematics and science. Brighter pupils could sometimes do better in all subjects if given more demanding work. Pupils with special educational needs usually make good progress because of the extra help they receive to be able to play a full part in lessons. Teachers are now quick to spot when pupils are struggling and they seek ways to help them to overcome their difficulties. There is no evidence of any significant differences in the achievement of girls and that of boys, although with such small year groups, sometimes of only one gender, this is difficult to detect by analysing assessment data.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' attitudes to work are very good. They enjoy coming to school, have a good relationship with their teachers and value their friends. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' enthusiasm for school is apparent as they talk about their favourite lessons and activities. In lessons when their teachers' expectations are high and they are clear about what they have to do, pupils are eager to take part and work hard. Pupils with special educational needs are confident and have positive attitudes to their work because of the extra support they receive and the success they enjoy from activities planned to match their needs.

9. Pupils' behaviour is very good. They settle quickly, listen attentively and do as they are told without making a fuss. As a result, teachers do not have to waste time establishing order and are able to make maximum use of all the learning time. At playtimes and lunchtimes, pupils behave well and play together happily. The school handles rare incidents of bullying firmly. There were no exclusions in the last academic year. Pupils'

personal development is good. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and form the basis of pupils' very positive attitudes to learning. Throughout the school, pupils take responsibility for getting out the materials they need in lessons. As they get older, pupils take more responsibility for a range of jobs, for example running the tuck shop and operating the music and overhead projector during assemblies. Pupils are confident to express their feelings when, for example, discussing the music they have heard, or their thoughts regarding 'What is a Friend?' They respond well to opportunities in assemblies to consider the feelings and views of others.

10. Since the last inspection, levels of attendance were falling steadily. However, improvement in the last academic year means that they are now satisfactory and in line with the national average. The school attributes the fall in attendance to one or two pupils with long-term medical conditions and to a rise in the number of pupils taking holidays in term time. Taking pupils out of school for holidays continues to hinder further improvement.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. Teaching overall is not as good as reported in the last inspection, but the criteria for judging teaching and learning have been revised, including those for teaching in the Foundation Stage.

12. The main strength in teaching and learning lies in the good teaching in the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The teacher gives a lot of time and attention to teaching literacy and numeracy and to adapting the national strategies to her mixed age class. As a result, pupils in Year 2 attain above average standards in English and mathematics. Teaching for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory in science, geography, history, information and communication technology and religious education, and some teaching in individual lessons is good or very good. There was too little evidence for a judgement to be possible about teaching and learning in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education.

13. Teaching and learning for juniors is satisfactory, overall, including those for English (including literacy) and mathematics (including numeracy). The class teacher was new to the school in September, and is still getting to grips with teaching such a wide range of ages of pupils in one class, and is still finding out about her pupils' prior attainment and about the school's policies and practices. She has made a positive start with settling the pupils down after a disrupted education last year, and has already established a good working atmosphere in the class. She sets high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and pupils respond very well to the expectation to complete neat, careful work in their books. The teacher has restored the pattern of homework that parents at the meeting were concerned had slipped last year.

14. A shortcoming arises in the juniors because pupils' work is still not yet always matched closely to their assessed learning needs, and this sometimes leads to a lack of sufficient challenge, especially for the brighter pupils. While the teacher makes very good use of some assistance from support staff, at other times an assistant has too little guidance to make efficient use of the time available. Teaching and learning for juniors are also satisfactory in science, geography, history, information and communication technology and religious education. The one lesson seen in history was good owing to the teacher's thorough preparation of work that stimulated and interested the pupils. There was too little evidence on which to base judgements about teaching and learning in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. The high standards in swimming suggest that teaching is very good.

15. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory overall as well as in the individual areas of learning. There are only three children in the reception year, and the teacher often provides separate written lesson planning that takes good account of the national guidance. This planning is not always as effective as it could be, however, because much of the teaching is delegated to a temporary support assistant, while the class teacher concentrates her attention on the older pupils in the class. The support assistant has a lot of skills and supports the children very well by assessing them regularly and watching carefully to see when to intervene. Class teachers who work with the children, however, know that their expertise in devising a suitable programme for the youngest children is not as great as it needs to be. There are times when teachers ask children to work in the same way as much older children, and when children's tasks are not what they need to do next in order to meet the early learning goals before they start the National Curriculum. Nevertheless, caring and sensitive adults help children to settle quickly into school life and routines so that they come to school happily, behave well and do the work they are asked to.

16. All teachers manage pupils very well by treating them in a friendly and mature manner. Consequently, pupils respect teachers, listen very well, try hard to please adults, and their attitudes to work and their behaviour in lessons are often very good. Another strong feature seen in much of the teaching is that all three teachers are good at asking the kind of questions that make pupils think hard before they answer. In a geography lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, the teacher asked questions about pictures of Botswana that encouraged pupils to interpret the pictorial evidence and draw their own conclusions about it. As part of their discussions and questioning of pupils, teachers are careful to keep on introducing pupils to new words, as seen in a mathematics lesson for juniors when the teacher explained the terms 'mode' and 'median', and pupils began to use the terms with understanding. This good questioning and emphasis upon teaching new vocabulary has an important effect on pupils' listening and speaking skills, so that in Year 2 standards are high, and in Year 6 they are very high.

17. Lesson plans show that teachers are clear at the start of lessons as to what they want pupils to learn by the end of the lesson. They often talk to pupils about this, so that they too know what they are expected to do to improve their work. This works well, but it has not yet been extended to informing pupils about their longer term learning targets, and pupils are not as involved in their own learning as fully as they might be, especially in the junior class. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, and in English, especially, the comments in the books of junior pupils is both positive and helpful in making pupils think about how they can improve.

18. Teachers have recently become much more aware of pupils' special educational needs, and they watch out for potential difficulties. They make sure that pupils work alongside other pupils in the class as often as possible, and that pupils have attention from supportive adults to enable them to succeed. Support staff have very good relationships with the pupils, and are aware of their personal needs as well as the academic needs. They help to create a safe and secure environment that helps pupils to make good progress.

19. The new teaching and learning policy provides good guidance for teachers, although there are some matters that still need attention if the guidance is to be put fully into practice, such as making sure that teachers always make efficient and effective use of the computers in their classrooms. The headteacher is aware that there are still some

shortcomings in the teaching, but is pleased that parents are happier now than during last year, when changes of teacher in the juniors caused a lot of anxieties that she had to allay.

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

20. The curriculum for infants and juniors is generally satisfactory. It meets most of the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus for religious education, but owing to a lack of some resources, not all the curriculum for juniors is taught in information and communication technology. The curriculum fulfils the school's aims by providing a broad and balanced programme of work for all its pupils, by emphasising personal, social and health education, and by including sex education and drugs education. Lessons provide a good variety of interesting and relevant activities. A weakness arises because there are not enough opportunities in the junior class for pupils to learn and practise investigative skills in science, and this limits their achievement. Similarly, both infant and junior pupils have few opportunities to practise using information and communication technology as part of their work in most other subjects.

21. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage has some shortcomings. The teacher is keen to develop the curriculum to reflect the fairly recent national guidance, and has put a sound lesson planning system into place. This is not always as effective as it needs to be, including when the class teacher has relief teaching cover, because teachers do not yet have the level of expertise they need to be able to put the planning system into practice successfully. Additionally, children have the same work as much older pupils in the class for a lot of the time. The school development plan shows that the headteacher knows that further work is still needed.

22. The school's current approach to implementing the National Literacy Strategy is good and results in above average standards in English. In the infant class, the teacher adapts the recommended lesson format carefully to make it relevant to the small, mixed age class. Pupils in both classes have a good range of opportunities to use and extend their writing skills in other subjects. The school's response to the National Numeracy Strategy is satisfactory, but it is not yet as firmly in place as the strategy for literacy. Pupils do better in the infants than they do in the juniors, where the new teacher is still getting to grips with using the strategy to teach a mixed age class. The school was late with adopting both strategies, and the current headteacher has had to work quickly to try to put the school back 'on track'.

23. A key issue from the last inspection was to complete schemes of work to include teaching specific skills in a progressive way. Progress with this was unsatisfactory until the last year or so, when this headteacher began to resolve the issue. Some schemes of work are adapted usefully from recent national guidelines; for example, the geography scheme has been given a local emphasis. The teaching of skills is now emphasised in the documents, although the headteacher is well aware that more needs to be done to make sure that new work always builds on the skills that pupils already have. Examples of that need are seen in some lessons and in pupils' previous work, when teachers asked pupils to complete written exercises and worksheets that provided little, if any, new challenges to their thinking. The brighter pupils are sometimes held back by this shortcoming.

24. Curricular and lesson planning has improved since the last inspection. Teachers' weekly and daily lesson planning is now consistent in both classes; this puts right a weaknesses identified previously. Teachers record clearly what they want pupils to learn, although they do not always make clear enough distinctions between work for pupils of

differing prior attainment in each class. Planning has enough detail to help teachers manage their lessons; for example, some science planning has useful reminders of the key questions to be asked. Last year, some parents were concerned about the irregular homework given: there is a policy that is now being followed.

25. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good support that enables them to have the same curriculum as others in their classes. Individual education plans set targets for pupils' next steps in learning, and teachers usually, although not always, match work in lessons to the targets. Unfortunately, these targets are not always shared with the pupils themselves, so they do not know what it is they have to do to improve.

26. Links with the community and partner institutions enhance the curriculum by providing a number of regular and occasional visitors to the school. These include the local clergy, police, and members of the village community. Pupils also enjoy a few visits linked to the curriculum, such as visits to the surrounding area as part of their work in geography and history. Juniors benefit from a residential visit that provides many opportunities for extending their personal development. Older pupils are regular visitors at the village 'pop-in' lunch club, and this has a positive effect on their personal development. There is a very good range of lunchtime and after-school clubs; parents appreciate that this is particularly notable for such a small school. Pupils choose, at various times, from French, journalism, pottery, several sports, music, computers and drama. Swimming is a strength of the curriculum because all pupils are able to use a private pool regularly and learn to swim well beyond the expected standard by the time they leave the school. Pupils take part in several charity events and play a part in village life.

27. Provision for spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is good overall and provision for moral development is very good. The school's policies, and the way that adults apply them, encourage respect, consideration and tolerance. The very good relationships that exist between adults and pupils make a significant contribution. Staff have high expectations of their pupils' behaviour towards others and are quick to praise thoughtful actions. They take advantage of opportunities, for example in history or literature, to make pupils aware of the difference between right and wrong. Teachers explore themes, such as 'working together' and 'friendship' during lessons and assemblies. In a lesson for junior pupils, for example, the teacher asked pupils a good range of questions about friendship and they all responded confidently, giving some very thoughtful examples.

28. Lessons in religious education and assemblies provide good opportunities for spiritual development. Pupils learn to think deeply about religious ideas in a natural and positive way. Teachers encourage them to think seriously about words such as 'respect' or 'love', and pupils write down their ideas without embarrassment. Assemblies are special occasions, and older pupils organise the room beforehand so that there are no interruptions of noise or furniture moving. Everyone joins in prayers, and pupils enter and leave quietly. Teachers recognise and praise special moments in all lessons, as in history, when a boy in Year 4 wrote movingly about the sadness he felt for children who were unclaimed and unwanted evacuees.

29. Most pupils start school with good social skills; they are welcoming, polite and considerate. Staff value this and encourage pupils to use and improve their skills around and outside the school. Teachers could sometimes expect more of older pupils in lessons, however, in terms of collaborating and planning their own work and projects, so that they see a burning need to find solutions together. Pupils are prominent in many village events; for example, they mingle with members of the community at a weekly lunch club. They attend a very good range of clubs and sporting events that contribute well to their social development. Pupils in the newspaper club go 'out and about', collecting articles and distributing their interesting paper. Staff encourage older pupils to take responsibility and support younger ones when needed, and they do this willingly.

30. As for cultural development, displays around the school show that pupils are learning, in some depth, about other times, faiths and customs. Music played and discussed in assemblies includes pieces from around the world, both classical and modern. The library has an adequate collection of fiction and non-fiction books about other cultures. Teachers sometimes use stories and novels well in literacy lessons, as in the juniors when pupils discuss story settings and find more descriptive words. Educational visits provide opportunities for pupils to learn about their own heritage and culture, and religious education lessons introduce them to a range of world religions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The systems for ensuring the health, welfare and safety of pupils are satisfactory. The school meets the legal requirement to have a health and safety policy. This has not, however, been extended to include written risk assessment. Health education is planned throughout the curriculum; for example, pupils are able to talk with confidence about the effects of exercise on their own bodies.

32. The school has maintained appropriate arrangements for child protection. The headteacher has responsibility for this, and the school follows the local area guidelines. A weakness arises because the headteacher has yet to attend formal training, but this was to have happened during the week of the inspection. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are satisfactory. As a result, the decline in levels of attendance since the time of the last inspection has been halted.

33. The monitoring and promoting of good behaviour are strengths of the school. Procedures include praise and rewards, such as team points. Each week, pupils are set personal targets to achieve, and one pupil from each class is chosen to receive a certificate. Pupils are very proud of these and are keen to explain to adults why they have been chosen. Teachers apply the rewards and praise consistently, and, as a result, behaviour is very good throughout the school. Adults record rare incidents of poor behaviour appropriately, and the headteacher keeps a watchful eye on the situation. Procedures exist to deal with any incidences of bullying quickly and firmly. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is satisfactory; it is based on teachers' knowledge of pupils and is still mainly informal, which is possible in such a small school. All staff care about the pupils and treat them with kindness and consideration.

34. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are now satisfactory because the headteacher has recently started to tackle the related key issue from the last inspection. Before that, progress with addressing the key issue was unsatisfactory, and in 1999, the school did not submit details of the teacher's assessments for pupils in Year 6 as required. The headteacher corrected this weakness in 2000, and has further plans to supplement the National Curriculum test results with additional tests in each year group.

There are now consistent policies for recording pupils' attainment and progress, and the headteacher and governors have started to set themselves targets for the results of National Curriculum tests in English and mathematics in Year 6. New plans to set shorter term targets for individual pupils based on the information from assessments are not yet being put into practice owing to recent staffing changes. The school's use of assessment information to guide curricular planning and lesson planning is, therefore, still a weakness. As a result, not all pupils' work is correctly matched to their prior attainment and brighter pupils, especially, are sometimes held back by this.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. Most parents continue to have positive views of the school. They believe that their children make progress because teaching is good and that their children are expected to work hard and behave well. Some parents expressed concern regarding the disruption caused to their children's education because of recent staffing problems. Others felt that the needs of brighter children are not always met. Inspection findings support parents' views that children are expected to work hard, their behaviour is very good and in some lessons teaching is good. Parents are right to be concerned about the disruption caused by staffing problems. The headteacher and governors have worked hard to overcome these problems and a new teacher is now in post. Inspection findings support the view that the needs of the brighter pupils are not always fully met. New procedures are being put in place to rectify this, but teachers are not using them well enough.

36. The school continues to be committed to working in partnership with parents and recognises the benefits from this partnership in the raising of standards. Parents are welcome in school and a few respond to the school's encouragement to support work in classrooms. For example, a parent shares the responsibility for the library and regularly listens to children reading. There is an active Parents' Association, which raises funds to support the work of the school as well as providing opportunities to enhance pupils' personal development. Teachers encourage parents to support their children's work at home, and many do so. This has been particularly effective in supporting infants with learning to read.

37. The school provides good quality information for parents. The headteacher recognises that good communication with parents is essential, and she has worked hard to develop a good working relationship with them. Parents at the inspection meeting confirmed this view. The school prospectus is good quality and provides detailed information about school routines and the curriculum. Letters to parents at the beginning of each term provide information about the topics to be covered in each class. This, together with regular newsletters, results in parents being enabled to effectively support their children's learning at home. It contributes to the standards attained, particularly in reading. Reports to parents on their children's progress provide good quality information. They tell parents what it is their children can do in each area of the curriculum and report informatively on the progress they have made. Some reports give targets for future development, but this is not consistent for all pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

38. Following the last inspection, improvement in relation to two of the three key issues noted in the report was too slow. By the time the headteacher took over, much of the work in the action plan had not been completed. The school had a lot of 'catching up' to do to bring it in line with most other schools in responding to national educational initiatives and in involving governors in the work of the school and raising standards.

39. Since summer 2000, the headteacher has worked very hard to remedy these matters, along with many more important and serious issues that she faced on appointment. Although relatively inexperienced as a headteacher, she has tackled many things very well, especially making sure that the school has the full range of up-to-date written policies it needs in order to move forward in the right direction. She has introduced the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, as well as making several important improvements to the physical appearance of the building and grounds. The headteacher has achieved all this at the same time as having no other member of the teaching staff with which to share management responsibilities. Additionally, a series of staff absences and changes for junior pupils created parental anxieties that the headteacher had to respond to. The role of the headteacher in improving the school in the last eighteen months or so has been significant, but because of previous slow progress, the overall pace of improvement is no more than satisfactory.

40. An important improvement in more recent times is that the headteacher has started to look more closely at pupils' attainment and achievement and has recognised that some pupils could do even better in their work and in their National Curriculum tests. As a result of this, the 2001 test results are better than in 2000, especially for pupils attaining a level higher than expected for their age. Another important improvement is that the headteacher and governors now have a more detailed school development plan to show what they want to achieve over time. They now work together much more closely, and governors welcome the chance to become actively involved in helping their school to improve. They accept responsibilities positively and their knowledge of the school and its progress is improving. Governors set the headteacher appropriate targets for improving her own management performance and the education of the pupils.

41. The model for the school development plan has several good features and shows that the school is not afraid to state its areas for improvement, but it is not yet specific enough about what needs to be done to improve teaching and raise standards. An example is that the school has set targets for the 2002 national test results, but there is no clear plan to show how these are to be achieved and where changes to practice and the curriculum are needed. One of the recently agreed policies is for teaching and learning, and this contains a lot of appropriate guidance for teachers. The headteacher has not yet been able to observe lessons taken by the two other teachers in the school. This means that she does not know how well the policy is being put into practice in classrooms other than by talking to teachers and looking at planning and pupils' work. Likewise, for all the other good policies now in place, the headteacher is the one member of staff responsible for checking how well the school is doing with putting them into practice. There are important examples of where further work is still needed with this, such as the policies for assessment, monitoring and evaluating and the Foundation Stage.

42. A significant improvement since the appointment of the headteacher is that, by working together closely, the headteacher and governors have turned a budget deficit into a healthy surplus to carry forward. This has been achieved while maintaining the level of resources and sometimes improving them. Governors now use budget figures and information about the school when thinking about the school's financial future. They know that they need to watch the situation carefully and are well aware of the implications of the falling roll. They have not yet written out their financial plans, to show how they intend to manage the finances in the event of unexpected shortfalls or new money suddenly becoming available. Governors apply the principles of best value soundly; for example they recently conducted a survey of parental satisfaction, but they need to extend the work they do in relation to finding out if standards in their school are high enough.

43. The accommodation has a few shortcomings. For example, children in the Foundation Stage have no proper access to a secure outdoor play area and there is too little indoor space for physical education lessons. However the schools accommodation is satisfactory overall. Governors are resourceful, however, and the use of the village hall compensates well for the lack of space for physical education lessons. Resources are satisfactory, although a shortage of computer software for information and communication technology limits pupils' attainment in one area of their work.

44. Recently introduced national procedures for managing the performance of staff are in place, and governors have set targets for the headteacher's personal development. The headteacher plans to set targets for the new junior teacher as soon as possible. Support and administrative staff make a good contribution to the work of the school, and overall, staffing is satisfactory.

45. The school has come a long way in a short time, but many of the recent improvements are fairly new and there are still obstacles to overcome. The management of the school overall is now sound, and this represents a considerable improvement in recent times. Parents who attended the inspection meeting are, rightly, pleased with the improvements to the management of the school since the appointment of this headteacher.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

46. In order for standards to continue to improve the school now should:-

- (1) Ensure that all pupils, especially the brighter ones, achieve as much as they can in lessons by putting into practice the new systems for assessing their attainment, tracking their progress and setting them individual challenging National Curriculum targets.
(Paragraphs 2,7,14,22,23,34,61,64,69,70,72,76)
- (2) Ensure that work for children in the Foundation Stage takes full account of the national guidance, and that children have a fair and balanced share of their teacher's time and attention to help them to attain the early learning goals before they start the National Curriculum.
(Paragraphs 6,15,21,48 – 54)
- (3) Take better account of information from assessing pupils, including the National Curriculum tests and teacher assessment results, to plan the way forward in the school development plan and direct the work of staff and governors.
(Paragraphs 3,56,65)
- (4) Check that the new policies are always seen in day-to-day practice, especially the policies for teaching and learning, monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and the Foundation Stage.
(Paragraphs 19,41,42,55,66,89,104)

In addition to taking action on the above key issues, the school should ensure that the specific shortages of resources for information and communication technology in the juniors are rectified.
(Paragraphs 91,95)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	19
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	9	7	0	0	0
Percentage	0	16	47	37	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than five percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	27
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		9

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
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 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	0	4	4

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

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

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	6	2	8

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total			
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School			
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total			
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School			
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

***The school's results are not included in the above tables because fewer than 10 pupils took the tests and percentages are not statistically safe.**

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	26
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	12.9
Average class size	13.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	45.5

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	0	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.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	137,266
Total expenditure	127,926
Expenditure per pupil	4,127
Balance brought forward from previous year	-5,900
Balance carried forward to next year	3440

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

74 per cent

Number of questionnaires sent out	27
Number of questionnaires returned	20

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	35	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	30	5	0	10
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	40	0	0	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	40	15	10	10
The teaching is good.	50	30	5	0	15
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	30	10	0	10
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	30	5	0	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	20	0	0	15
The school works closely with parents.	55	25	10	0	10
The school is well led and managed.	60	20	10	0	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	25	0	0	25
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	45	0	5	15

Of the 27 questionnaires sent out, 7 were to parents of children who had only just started school.

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

47. Since the last inspection, arrangements for judging the quality of provision and standards for the youngest children in the school have been revised. It is not possible, therefore, to make direct comparisons with the last report or to judge the overall rate of improvement. The three children, all girls, in the Foundation Stage are taught in Class 1 and work alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2. They have only attended full-time school since September, and their achievement so far is satisfactory. Owing to satisfactory teaching overall, as well as in each of the areas of learning reported below, children's rate of learning places them on track to attain the early learning goals (the standard expected nationally) by the end of the reception year.

48. The main strength of teaching and learning is that adults encourage very good relationships and manage the children very well so that they make a happy start to school life. Although the headteacher has introduced some very good documents to reflect the national guidance for children of this age, procedures for assessing children and planning what they need to learn next still need further work to make them as effective as they could be. Also, at this time of the school year, children do not have a fair share of their teacher's time and attention. During the inspection, a temporary support assistant provided some good quality teaching, by using her own initiative and her expertise in assessing children's progress. This ensured that children with special educational needs had the sensitive help needed to make progress at the same pace as other children of the same age.

Personal, social and emotional development

49. Children are already settled into the life and routines of the school, such as eating sandwiches and changing for a dance lesson. They come happily and are confident to work with several different adults and older pupils. They know their way around the school, including going to assemblies and to the village hall for physical education lessons. Children's behaviour is usually very good, although they still get over-excited and have to be calmed down occasionally. They try hard; for example, when joining in with the whole-school singing in assembly, they watch others and try to do the actions properly. Children listen attentively to adults and can concentrate for an appropriate length of time. Teachers sometimes expect them to join much older pupils for the same lessons in subjects such as geography and religious education, however, and the work does not always provide the opportunities they need to reach the early learning goals set nationally for children of this age. Adults are always caring, friendly and supportive, and this goes a long way towards helping children to enjoy school and to want to come. Lesson planning, however, is not yet rigorous enough to make sure that adults set new challenges in a systematic way and that children acquire a keen thirst for learning by exploring and experimenting with new materials and situations.

Communication, language and literacy

50. Children have many opportunities to learn to listen carefully to their teacher, other adults and to each other. They listened very well when their teacher told a story in a religious education lesson, and enjoyed following the text of a large book when working with a support assistant. They could talk about the story, suggest rhyming words and identify words beginning with certain letters. The teacher gives a lot of priority to teaching the basic skills of reading and writing, and pupils who have just completed their reception year have mastered many of them. At this time of the school year, however, much of the

teaching of the reception age children in the class is delegated to a temporary support assistant. She helps and supports children very well, including making and recording many observations about their progress. Lesson plans, however, do not always give enough attention to times when children have finished their formal work and to those occasions when talking and exploring ideas could be the main focus for their work in all the areas of learning.

Mathematical development

51. The one lesson in which mathematical development was a focus for learning was good. This was due to the knowledge and skill of the temporary support assistant, who did a lot of talking with the children and assessing their strengths and misunderstandings during her direct teaching session. Consequently, during this time, children increased their understanding of mathematical shapes and language, such as 'bigger' and 'smaller', at a good pace. They can already count to ten and recognise, name and write a few numbers, although they need help to do this correctly. Teaching is not always as effective as it could be, however, because opportunities for children to gain a greater understanding of mathematical ideas through their day-to-day play are often missed owing to a weakness in the lesson planning. The support assistant is very good at taking advantage of opportunities as they arise, but at this time of the school year, the teacher only occasionally interacts with children because her focus is on older pupils in the class. Although the lesson plans clearly reflect the early learning goals, planning is not systematic enough to ensure that children's continuing mathematical progress is part of their learning in all other areas, and too many chances are being missed.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

52. Teachers plan opportunities for children to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world both during formal lessons with older pupils in the subjects of the National Curriculum, and during activities with the support assistant, such as when using a computer. Whilst older pupils in the class work in the computer suite, the younger children enjoy learning how to operate a computer and complete simple games. They are excited about the work, and sometimes have to be helped to concentrate more. The support assistant manages their behaviour well, and children learn more about using a computer keyboard and become more confident to try. Children show interest and concentrate hard during their lessons, such as in geography and religious education. In religious education, they enjoyed listening to a story from a different religion along with older children, and were delighted with the monkey masks they wore to add interest. The teacher used a digital camera to record the event, and children were thrilled. In their geography lesson, again with older pupils, children showed interest in photographs of Botswana and tried to join in discussing similarities and differences with their own lives. The work was incorrectly matched to their learning needs, however, because they still have little knowledge of where they live and do not yet talk about it to the level expected for their age. Their task did not give them enough opportunities to build on their existing knowledge and understanding in a way that challenges thinking at their own level. An ideal opportunity to provide an appropriate outdoor activity was missed on this occasion.

Physical development

53. Children increase their physical skills during formal lessons in physical education with older pupils, through energetic play at play times and dinner times and through handling materials and equipment in their classroom. They did well in a dance lesson, where they enjoyed making their bodies work hard and showed how they could move in a wide variety of ways, with awareness of a large space and of other children moving in it. They persevered when learning to cut out using scissors, although they still need help to keep to the lines. Children handle their play equipment sensibly and carefully, but during

the inspection, they had few opportunities to respond to planned new physical challenges. This is because planning is not yet clear enough about how children are to build up their skills in a systematic and continuous way over time.

Creative development

54. Children have opportunities to learn to express themselves creatively during role-play, dance lessons, story times, singing in assemblies and when making pictures. In their dance lesson, they listened very well to the teacher and thoroughly enjoyed listening to music and moving like animals. They play a full part in the lessons and their behaviour is very good. They help to make a class picture by painting, printing and using different materials. In their literacy lesson, for example, they acted out the nursery rhyme, 'Little Miss Muffett', and when they selected play activities for themselves, they enjoyed making up their own little stories. As with other areas of learning, however, planning does not yet show how children will build up their skills in a systematic way that takes account of what they can already do.

55. The headteacher and governors have already identified the fact that curriculum planning for all areas of learning needs to improve, but the school development plan is not specific enough about what needs to be done and how the changes are to be brought about. The new policy for the Foundation Stage has yet to be put fully into day-to-day practice.

ENGLISH

56. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained the above average standards for pupils in Years 2 and 6, and there has been a good amount of improvement in other respects in the last year or so. Because of the very small year groups taking National Curriculum tests, the results are an unreliable way of judging pupils' attainment or their achievement over time and in relation to similar schools. Nevertheless, the 2001 test results suggest an improvement in the school on the previous year in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 and in English by the end of Year 6, especially in terms of lifting the standards attained by brighter pupils. Pupils achieve well overall in relation to their prior attainment, and they do better in English than they do in mathematics and science. This is because of the emphasis that the school has placed in the recent past on using the National Literacy Strategy as a main guide to teaching literacy. In 2001, the school exceeded its target for pupils in Year 6 attaining the level expected for their age or above it. Targets set for 2002 are no longer applicable, but these have not yet been formally reviewed to reflect the changed circumstances. There is no evidence of any differences in the attainment of girls and boys.

57. In Year 2, pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average. They listen very well to teachers and other adults in lessons in all subjects and answer questions thoughtfully, using a good level of correct grammar and interesting vocabulary. In Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening is well above average. Pupils listen very attentively to adults and to each other, and answer questions in clear, confident and mature language, explaining their answers in detail when asked to do so.

58. In Year 2, pupils read fairly accurately, fluently and expressively from a range of books. They know how to tackle reading new words because their teacher has emphasised this. They have a good knowledge of words associated with books, such as 'blurb' and 'contents' and know how to use a dictionary. By Year 6, pupils can read a wide variety of texts, including the Internet, and know how to find information in reference books in the school library. They know how to use a thesaurus and encyclopaedia and read aloud

with great confidence and enjoyment in their literacy lessons. They have a very good knowledge and understanding of the terminology of books, which they explain very well when asked.

59. In Year 2, pupils write by themselves, as seen when they wrote about a visit to Eden Camp. Their writing shows that they can write in most subjects and in different styles. They know how to sequence a few ideas, use simple punctuation, spell common words accurately and use good grammar and interesting words. The range of writing for pupils who recently left the school at the end of Year 6 is very good, although the current pupils in Year 6 have not yet had many opportunities to write freely. Writing from last year as part of history, for example, is very thoughtful and often sensitive, as when pupils wrote diaries and letters home from the point of view of evacuee children. Such pieces are full of interesting words, such as 'distressing', 'revolting' and 'spine chillingly', and punctuation is used correctly and for effect. The standard of grammar is above average and handwriting and presentation are well above average. Pupils with special educational needs also attempt the same pieces and make good progress with learning to express their ideas in their own words.

60. Teaching and learning are good overall in the infants. The teacher understands the importance of teaching the basic skills well, and makes sure that pupils gain a good knowledge and understanding of how individual letters and groups of letters build up into words that they can read and spell accurately. When pupils work in groups as part of their literacy lesson, however, the brighter ones do not have to think very hard to complete their work sheet. Previous work shows that this also occurs from time to time for pupils of all levels of attainment when they merely colour or copy as part of their work in reading and writing.

61. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in the juniors. The teacher is new to the school and does not yet have a thorough knowledge of pupils' prior attainment to make sure that work in lessons is closely targeted towards their widely differing ages and abilities. An example is when very bright pupils in Years 5 and 6 completed a worksheet that did not require them to think hard enough. The school is introducing a system for assessing pupils and making certain that teachers push them on towards meeting challenging targets, but this is at an early stage of practice, especially in the junior class. Nevertheless, the junior teacher plans lessons with clear overall purposes that she shares with the pupils themselves. She has a very good level of expertise in English grammar, has no discipline problems at all and establishes an industrious working atmosphere in lessons. She sets high expectations of pupils to present their work neatly and carefully, and they do so. The standard of pupils' handwriting and presentation across the subjects is, therefore, well above average.

62. All teachers are good at questioning pupils so that they have to think hard in order to answer. They often brief support assistants so that they also know how to ask challenging questions. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, responded very well to thoughtful questioning about the text they were reading together. Their answers showed that they were learning to read to extract meaning beyond the literal as well as for enjoyment. The support assistant for juniors with special educational needs, however, lacks clear guidance about what the pupils concerned are expected to learn by the end of the lesson; this results in a waste of valuable teaching and learning time. Teachers continually introduce pupils to new and harder words, and pupils use these in their answers and written work. Pupils become confident to offer answers, as when the junior teacher asked pupils in Years 3 and 4 to elaborate on their descriptions of a story setting and express their views about the story. Because of teachers' very good class management,

pupils have positive attitudes towards their work and their behaviour in lessons is very good.

63. A weaker area of teaching and learning for all pupils is that teachers do not take enough advantage of opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their skills in using information and communication technology to record ideas in literacy lessons. Computers stand idle when they could be used more efficiently. Pupils' previous work shows, nevertheless, that infants can write on the computer and juniors use the Internet to complete research work as part of their work in English.

64. Current teaching in the juniors gives a lot of attention to teaching formal grammar, but not much attention yet to extending the range and quality of pupils' own writing. Although pupils learn the technical terms at a good pace, pupils already apply good grammar to their speech and writing and there is no need to spend time practising this in exercises. This is an example of the need for the school to put the existing plans for assessing pupils and setting them targets that inform lesson planning into day-to-day practice as soon as possible.

65. The school has come a long way in the last year or so towards putting a policy and assessment procedures into place, introducing the nationally recommended teaching methods and getting the resources needed for this. The headteacher is the subject leader, but she is also leader of all other subjects at the moment. English is a school development priority, but the headteacher has not yet had an opportunity to see the other teachers teaching lessons or to find out how well the teaching and learning policy is being put into practice. The school development plan does not include the specific detail it needs to in order that everyone knows clearly the part they need to play in reaching the school's targets.

MATHEMATICS

66. In Year 2, pupils' attainment in mathematics is above average, and in Year 6 it is average. Since the last inspection, standards have improved for pupils in Year 2 and have been maintained for pupils in Year 6. The National Curriculum test results are unreliable indicators of standards as measured against the national average or similar schools because so few pupils take the tests each year. Governors set targets for improving test results for pupils in Year 6, but the 2001 target was not met. The 2002 target has still to be revised because of changes to the composition of the year group concerned. Pupils' good achievement in the infants, from their average attainment when they start the National Curriculum, is due mainly to good teaching and learning in the infant class. Satisfactory teaching and learning in the junior class results in satisfactory achievement. The school has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and strengthened pupils' abilities in working with numbers and measurement. There is no significant variation in the attainment of girls and boys.

67. In Year 2, pupils are confident to work with numbers. They understand, for example, that numbers up to 99 are divided into tens and units. Pupils accurately add and subtract one-digit and two-digit numbers up to 20 and sometimes higher, as seen when they successfully solved money problems using both addition and subtraction accurately. Pupils recognise that 3×2 gives the same answer as 2×3 . They then use this knowledge to explain how to multiply different numbers, and they know that this is the same as adding a series of the same number together. They understand how to multiply by two, three and ten, sequence numbers in different patterns and recognise the difference between odd and even numbers. Pupils appreciate the relative values of fractions, such as halves and

quarters, and use this to good effect when telling the time. By using correct mathematical language when tackling problems, pupils compare numbers that are 'greater' or 'less' than others. They measure everyday objects correctly, using standard measurements of centimetres. They recognise common two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, such as cubes, pyramids and cylinders.

68. In Year 6, most pupils have a broad mathematical knowledge, and a sound grasp of their multiplication tables. They can multiply and divide properly and use long multiplication. They understand that percentages are parts of a hundred. Pupils calculate accurately with fractions and add and subtract them correctly. When setting out their workings correctly on paper, for example, pupils record how to find $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{8}$ of a particular shape. Pupils build effectively on their work in the infant class, as seen in Years 3 and 4 when they recognised geometric shapes, such as rectangles and cubes, by the key features of sides, corners and angles. Pupils know how to present mathematical findings in bar and line charts. Pupils in Year 6, for example, create block graphs to show the number of times a particular colour appears when rolling special dice. They use good mathematical strategies to answer problems and their confidence improves when pupils use patterns of thinking that can be applied to different situations. This was seen in a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 when they worked with a classroom assistant who explained how to find the mode, median and mean for a series of numbers.

69. Pupils' previous work in the junior class shows that they often all start work in lessons from the same place, and pupils capable of higher attainment are not sufficiently stretched by this method. This occurs mainly because the teacher's assessments of pupils' prior attainment are not yet always accurate enough or used effectively to build on their previous experiences so that demands are made of them from the start of an activity. Because of pupils' very good attitudes, including those with special educational needs, they make satisfactory progress overall.

70. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils result in positive working environments and guarantee good levels of concentration and behaviour. Teachers maintain a brisk pace in lessons, particularly during the mental mathematics sessions. An example was seen in a lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, when a 'quick fire' question and answer session helped to keep pupils focused on the task of counting rapidly and spotting the 'prize number' identified by the teacher. Teachers use support staff well to help groups of pupils and individuals according to the support they need, as seen in the junior class, when the classroom assistant used a discussion to ensure that all the pupils understood the meaning of the mathematical terms median, mode and mean. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the teaching of basic skills; lessons are brisk and parts are challenging, with time managed well. The previous work of pupils in the junior class, however, shows that many of the exercises set are the same for all pupils. This successfully raises the attainment of some pupils, but provides too few new challenges for those capable of higher attainment, and there is a sense of 'marking time' in some of the work.

71. The successfully implemented National Numeracy Strategy has had a positive impact on both teaching and pupils' learning, and is beginning to raise standards in both classes. There have been improvements in assessment procedures since the time of the last inspection, although these improvements are fairly recent. The school aims to collect a good deal of information on each pupil and uses a variety of tests and specific assessments at suitable intervals. Mainly owing to recent staff changes, however, this information is not yet used to set specific targets for small groups or individuals to ensure that they build most effectively on their previous learning. Teachers' planning shows the specific objective for each lesson and they share this with their pupils well. In a lesson for

pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, the teacher told pupils that the aim for the lesson was to find the missing number in different number lines in order that they understood what they were intended to learn. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but they do not consistently provide comments that pinpoint areas for improvement. Teachers establish effective classroom routines that encourage pupils to listen constructively and to participate eagerly. They are enthusiastic about mathematics and value pupils' contributions. Consequently, pupils become keen to contribute to discussions and concentrate well on different kinds of work. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils respond accordingly.

72. The mathematical curriculum is satisfactory and makes some good links to other subjects. In science, for example, pupils use their mathematical skills to record the results of their experiments with shadows, showing how the length changes during the day. The recently developed mathematics policy, along with the plans for the teaching of the subject through the year, show the positive response that the school has recently made to issues raised in the last inspection. Nevertheless, there is not yet a system in place for the headteacher, who is also the subject leader, to observe teaching and learning and provide feedback to the other teacher. The school's strategy for the development of the subject is satisfactory and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Computers are not used as often as they could be to support pupils' work both in mathematics and in information and communication technology. Teachers identify the assessment of pupils' achievements in their planning, but they do not yet use assessment as a means of setting challenging targets for pupils of all ages and prior attainment. Nevertheless, the school is now well placed to make further improvements in the standards achieved in mathematics, owing to the headteacher's determined approach.

SCIENCE

73. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards in Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations. This means that the position at the time of the last inspection has been maintained. The National Curriculum test results for pupils in Year 6 and the outcome of statutory teacher's assessments for pupils in Year 2 do not paint a reliable picture of pupils' attainment or their achievement in relation to similar schools. This is due to the very small number of pupils tested and assessed. Even so, it is safe to say that pupils in Year 6 do not do as well in science as they do in English and that test results for Year 6 pupils did not improve in 2001 as much as they did in English. The school's explanation for this is that, in the past, teachers have not given the same amount of time and attention to science as they have to improving provision in English. There is no evidence of any significant differences in the attainment of girls and that of boys.

74. In Year 2, pupils can say whether a test is fair, for example when they roll vehicles down ramps of different heights. They can collect data from their tests and record this well, using charts, drawings and their own sentences. They know what animals and plants need to stay alive, and they can plan healthy meals for themselves. They can sort and label sounds or materials, for example, into magnetic and non-magnetic sets. Pupils can talk about light and shadow, using scientific vocabulary like 'reflection' and 'refraction'. They use instruments such as thermometers when they study insulation. They grow plants, describe growth and change over time by measuring and observing closely, and make detailed booklets by themselves about the life and death of a bean plant.

75. In Year 6, most pupils use and understand scientific vocabulary correctly, for example 'igneous' and 'metamorphic'. Pupils of all levels of attainment have a generally sound knowledge of physical processes, living things and materials, although there are a

few gaps and misunderstandings in their knowledge. An example is where they confuse 'forces' with 'friction' and do not remember the two opposing forces on a parachute. When investigating, pupils carry out a test planned by the teacher. They look at the evidence and make fair comparisons, for example when comparing the size of a shadow with the distance from the light source. Most pupils in Year 6, however, do not yet devise their own tests without help, and their skills in investigating do not match their knowledge. An example is that pupils could not work out how to compare and measure the different grips of a sample of shoes.

76. It was possible to see only one lesson, but, taking account of pupils' previous work, teaching and learning are satisfactory in both the infants and the juniors. Teachers prepare their lessons carefully and use a good variety of equipment. The junior teacher describes simple scientific ideas well, and this encourages pupils to listen carefully. Teachers have started to use a good quality programme of work to plan the curriculum. Curricular planning shows that the school teaches all aspects of knowledge in the National Curriculum in a logical way; consequently, pupils' recall of scientific facts is improving. Teachers keep records of what pupils know and they use this information well to avoid repeating work or missing out aspects of work. In the juniors, however, these records do not yet give enough detail about pupils' progress in the skills of scientific enquiry, and this was also a criticism in the last report. As a result, the teacher does not have enough information to be able to plan to challenge pupils at the right level. Consequently, enthusiastic pupils in Year 6, who are eager to learn more, carry out investigations that are too similar to those they did in Year 4.

77. Teachers set pupils high standards for written work, and this is a strong feature of the teaching. From Year 1, teachers show pupils how to use their own words, charts and drawings. Juniors continue to write freely about their work, showing increasing use of scientific terms, but they make insufficient use of information and communication technology to analyse results or communicate their findings. Teachers' marking is generally good, and they sometimes add effective questions to make pupils think, such as 'Were you surprised? Can you explain why?' Teachers support pupils with special educational needs well, so that the pupils can play a full part in lessons and complete their written work well. This raises pupils' self esteem and helps them to make good progress.

78. The school has plans for improving standards further through improved assessments and more careful checking of how well things are progressing. The infant teacher has introduced good procedures for assessing and recording what pupils know, understand and can do, but this still has to be extended fully into the juniors, and is not yet used as well as it could be to plan the next steps for pupils' work. The headteacher, who is also the subject leader, monitors teaching and learning by looking at pupils' work and checking planning, but she has not yet been able to observe lessons in the other class.

ART AND DESIGN DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

79. In Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment in art and design and in design and technology is in line with that expected for their ages. Pupils' learning and achievement are satisfactory and the quality of some art work on display is good. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection, and there is no evidence of any difference in the standards attained by girls and boys. Infants show good use of observational drawing when they complete portraits of themselves in the style of the artist Modigliani. They work well using different resources. In design and technology, for example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 use materials well to make bags, and their simple designs show how they plan to

attach the handles or straps to their finished products by sewing. Pupils work happily in two-dimensional or three-dimensional materials to create pictures, murals and models. They have made boxes from cardboard, with hinges to form the opening lids. They used paper fasteners as levers to show good movement for the arms and legs in their models of clowns. They paint portraits and use computers to mix text with their artwork, making good links with their work in information and communication technology. All classes contribute to the attractive displays of work in classrooms and corridors.

80. Pupils continue to develop their skills and understanding of art, design and technology in the juniors, as they explore an increasing range of media. They develop their drawing skills as they explore the effects that can be obtained when using different pencils and shading. In Years 5 and 6, for example, pupils' books contain good sketches of faces, and their work in sketch books shows that they improve their skills in drawing eyes, noses and ears for their completed portraits. The work on still-life pictures with the use of delicate water colours shows good observational skills and builds effectively on work completed following a visit to Gibraltar Point, such as the stunning effects seen in their paintings of tree stumps, landscapes and delicate butterflies. Teachers ensure that pupils' studies include looking at the work of famous artists. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, study pictures of different styles of chairs, and, in a good link to both history and design and technology, they draw pictures of chairs and make models using rolled paper. By Years 5 and 6, pupils' drawings are detailed, well executed and varied in content. They make good links between work in science and work in design and technology when they make vehicles. In a discussion, they explained how they used simple motors connected to elastic bands to 'drive' their vehicles. They obviously enjoyed the practical nature of this work.

81. Pupils enjoy their art and design and take pride in their work. They work with care and are willing to try new ideas in order to achieve the best results. Pupils in Year 6 are very keen to explain previous work when they used computers to create symmetrical patterns and when they experimented with an art program and used the facilities to rotate, repeat and change the appearance of their finished work. This good use of computers to enhance work in art and design makes a positive contribution to pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in both art and design and information and communication technology. Art and design makes a positive contribution to pupils' cultural and spiritual development, because they learn about art in different societies and experience a range of feelings when creating their own works.

82. Only one design and technology lesson was seen, and this good lesson was in the infants. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 responded enthusiastically to the challenge of designing and using simple mechanisms to produce a 'pop up' book. The teacher made sure, by leading a discussion well, that all pupils understood the task and were able to evaluate their progress in using scissors to make slits in card for the sliding mechanism to fit through. Teachers' planning shows that they have a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject that they use to ensure that the full curriculum is available to pupils, including those with special educational needs. Teachers plan lessons with good consideration for health and safety issues and provide good links with other subjects, such as English, mathematics and science. Relationships in the school between teachers, pupils, support staff and volunteer helpers are good and make a significant contribution to pupils' attainment, progress and their personal and social skills. For example, adults encourage pupils to work together to make models and to discuss their progress. Teachers base their lesson planning on fairly new but clear guidelines, and the headteacher, who is also the subject leader, checks pupils' progress informally. Teachers use resources well to encourage pupils to experiment and enjoy finding new ways of creating models and works of art.

Display that is linked to both art and design and design and technology creates a colourful and stimulating environment that celebrates pupils' achievements.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

83. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection, and pupils in Years 2 and 6 attain the standard expected nationally in both geography and history. Many pupils in Year 6 have a good knowledge of events, people and places. They enjoy using an increasing range of resources, such as plans, maps and photographs, in order to find out more. Teachers support pupils with special educational needs well, and they are proud of their books and make good progress. There is no evidence of any difference in attainment between boys and girls. In the light of all the evidence, including the few lessons seen, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in both the infant and the junior class. This, along with pupils who listen well and work hard, ensures that pupils' achievement over time is satisfactory.

84. Pupils in Year 2 know their local area well. Teachers extend their learning by showing how to present the results of surveys, for example of shopping and travel habits. This helps pupils to see where patterns occur, and they make good comparisons and suggestions about a local town, a Scottish island and a community in Africa. Pupils know about events and people of the past. They write some very detailed and lively accounts of the Great Fire of London.

85. In Year 6, pupils make good use of books, the Internet, and experts to find out about the past. They use word processing skills well to present their findings using computers. Teachers present evidence from different points of view, for example on Henry VIII's troubles. This extends pupils' understanding of the importance of interpreting evidence when studying history. It could be more effective for the higher attaining pupils, however, if a wider range of evidence were available for them to consider. Pupils use timelines, and have a reasonable knowledge of dates and events in British history. Some pupils use this well when talking about their own families in the last century. Pupils respond well to personal stories, for example of the evacuees, and this shows in their interesting and thoughtful writing. Pupils are less confident, however, when discussing the wider consequences of such events. Pupils in Year 6 can use large and smaller scale maps. They know the common symbols and can refer to a key quickly. They can speculate on the type of terrain shown and how to travel across it. They understand the impact of change and human intervention, for example in their study of rivers. Teachers develop this knowledge by setting a variety of tasks, such as writing questions and answers, about an area, or making comparisons in the tourism work. Given pupils' ability to collect evidence from many sources, however, this work is not always challenging enough for some pupils, especially the brighter ones.

86. The one junior lesson in history was good and the one junior lesson in geography was satisfactory. The infant geography lesson was also satisfactory. Teachers have a good personal grasp of history, and provide good collections of books, documents and artefacts, for example in the junior work about the Second World War. A visit to a museum enhances this work well. Teachers make good links with literature and with the pupils' family experiences. Parents support this learning well by lending photographs, ration books and postcards. A strength of the teaching is the quality and breadth of writing required of pupils. Teachers use this writing, for example about Ann Boleyn or the evacuees, to develop pupils' understanding of the personal stories behind well-known historical events. Pupils can set out arguments for and against a decision, for example Henry's divorce. This is effective in helping them to realise that there can be complex

reasons why things happened as they did. Teachers miss some opportunities, however, to bring these arguments to life through drama and role-play.

87. In geography, teachers in both classes have good subject knowledge and often ask open questions to make pupils think. Pupils' rate of learning slows down, however, when they spend too much time listening and do not have enough chances to show what they can do in terms of applying geographical skills. Some work is not demanding enough, especially for the brighter pupils. An example is when infant pupils spent too much time completing photocopied sheets that simply confirmed what they already knew, and when the teacher's interactions with them were mainly about the quality of their writing rather than furthering their geographical understanding.

88. Teachers plan from the recently revised scheme of work in both geography and history. This ensures that all areas of the National Curriculum are taught and that the skills to be practised are identified. It also shows that the school has responded only recently to the key issue in the last report requiring schemes of work to include the teaching of skills in a progressive way. There is still some way to go, however, because teachers do not always use their knowledge of pupils' existing skills to plan work at the right level.

89. The school is keen to raise standards further in these subjects. The headteacher has already set out the way forward in the teaching and learning policy. Although this policy has not yet been checked closely to make sure that it is put into practice fully, the school is now well placed to be able to improve in the future.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

90. Standards have largely been maintained since the last inspection, and pupils' achievement in both classes is satisfactory. This is a credit to the school. The headteacher and governors have updated the computer systems, introduced a small computer suite in a spare classroom, improved programs and adopted a good policy with written guidance for the subject. Information and communication technology is valued as an essential part of the curriculum, although the time given to it still varies; for example computers in the classrooms are still not used consistently enough to support pupils' learning in other subjects.

91. In Year 2, pupils' attainment is in line with the expected level for their ages. In Year 6, pupils' attainment is a little below national expectations, because a lack of resources means that one element of the curriculum is missing. There is no evidence of any difference in attainment between girls and boys. Juniors reach satisfactory standards in the elements that are taught. For example, in word processing, conducting research using the Internet and using the electronic mailing system confidently. Older pupils understand the use of sensors in the real world, such as their use to control traffic lights. The school does not yet, however, have the equipment needed for pupils to conduct their own experiments with sensors, to sense, for example, how much light is falling on objects or to measure temperatures over a period of time when using computers. The school is aware of these shortcomings and has a good action plan for the use of the computers in the suite. The school has already booked some sessions with staff from the local education authority to provide support for this aspect of the subject.

92. When computers are used, pupils are keen to explain what they have been doing. An example was seen in a lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, when they used their skills to log on to the computer and to change the size and shape of text they had typed into the computer. Pupils understand how to add a caption to the photograph taken using the

digital camera. Infants enjoy using computers and their skills are improving. They understand and follow screen icons when saving and printing out their work, and they know that information can be shown in text or pictures.

93. Juniors are beginning to build more effectively on their skills and knowledge with the use of the new computers and programs in school. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, use the computer suite independently to produce repeating patterns using an art program. They are very confident to log on using their own passwords, select the program they are to use from the list shown on the screen and, when the pattern is finished, print out their work. In a discussion, they explained how they support their work in history by using the Internet for research into evacuation procedures during World War II. They talked enthusiastically about using a floor robot and entering the correct sequence of numbers to create a particular pattern. They do not yet, however, have the skills to produce 'multi-media' presentations or to use the facilities of a spreadsheet. They can explain how they load and save their work and how to bring up the various menus available, such as when changing the size or colour of their work when writing stories straight onto the screen. During the inspection, however, computers in the classrooms were not always sufficiently well used to further develop pupils' skills in information and communication technology, for example to support work in mathematics.

94. Only one lesson was seen, and this was for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Discussions with teachers and pupils, however, show that teaching and learning are satisfactory when the programs available are used. Staff are well motivated, keen to develop their skills and have a desire to improve teaching further in order to raise standards. Planning is satisfactory and teachers share the learning objectives with pupils at the beginning of sessions. Pupils of all ages, including those with special education needs, enjoy learning about information and communication technology. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 talk with knowledge and enthusiasm about their work at school and at home. They are keen to learn more and to develop their skills and knowledge. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are keen and work with enthusiasm, diligence, perseverance and adaptability.

95. The subject has been a priority for development and is currently managed by the headteacher, whose planning for improvements shows a good understanding of pupils' needs. Shortages in software and training are already identified in a development plan for the subject. The curriculum overall, however, does not yet quite meet statutory requirements, owing to the lack of sensing equipment.

MUSIC AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

96. Too few lessons were seen to make overall judgements about teaching, learning, the standard of work or improvement since the last inspection. Because of the lack of suitable indoor space, teachers use the village hall for physical education lessons, and the dance lesson for infants was good. The good teaching and learning are due to the teacher's enthusiasm, her very good control of pupils in a larger and different setting and to the way that she encourages pupils to try to improve their own performances. As a result, pupils in Year 2 move safely, confidently and imaginatively to music. They enjoy energetic physical activity and stick at their work. The teacher set a small task for homework too, and this enhanced the lesson further.

97. Parents are very pleased that all pupils in the school have swimming lessons. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of eleven, all can swim, often well beyond the distance expected for pupils of that age, and most pupils also have life-saving skills. This standard of swimming is well above the national expectation and one of the strengths of

pupils' achievement. In a discussion with pupils in Year 6, they demonstrated a very good understanding of the importance of safety in physical education lessons, such as 'warming up' to avoid damaging their muscles. They talked about previous work, using words such as 'perform' and 'sequence of movements' to explain their ideas. They talked about the effects of energetic physical exercise on their own bodies, and know that this is important for keeping healthy. Pupils recall measuring their heartbeats before and after energetic activity to demonstrate what happens to their own bodies.

98. Pupils of all ages sing songs together in assemblies. The standard of singing is as expected nationally for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Pupils clearly enjoy singing familiar songs and try hard to sing tunefully and in time to a more advanced rhythm. The school provides continual opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of music, including some from other cultures. Pupils learn to recognise pieces and know something about the composers. In a discussion with pupils in Year 6, they remembered listening to many pieces, they knew about several composers and expressed opinions about the music they had heard. Previous work on display and a discussion with pupils in Year 6 about it showed that they use musical terms, such as 'pentatonic scale', with understanding, and that they have had opportunities to use percussion instruments to compose and record their own pieces. Pupils have not yet had the opportunity to use a computer program for this, but the school expects that this will happen when the resources become available.

99. The headteacher is subject leader for both subjects. She has not yet had an opportunity to see lessons in the other class. A key issue from the last report was to complete schemes of work to include the teaching of skills in a systematic way, but there is no evidence in the school that this was tackled until very recently, and there is still more work to be done.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

100. Since the last inspection, the school has revised the scheme of work to reflect the new agreed syllabus for schools in Lincolnshire. This work was completed only last year. There is already evidence from lessons and displays around the school that teachers use the suggested programme of work well to make sure that standards in Years 2 and 6 are in line with the levels expected. There is no evidence of any difference in attainment between girls and boys. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, and those with special educational needs make good progress owing to the regular support they receive to complete written work. The school has maintained the standards found in the last inspection.

101. Only one lesson was seen and this was in the infant class. Pupils in Year 2 have a very good knowledge of their current work about Hinduism. They listened attentively to a story about Rama and Sita and related this to the idea of good and evil in their everyday lives. They enjoyed wearing masks to identify with the story, and were eager to have an opportunity to use a digital camera to record the event. This enthusiastic response was because the teacher told the story very well, and she encouraged pupils to have positive attitudes towards the beliefs of others. They have recently visited a local Christian church, and can name some of the objects used in worship and celebrations.

102. Evidence from previous and current written work and from a discussion with pupils, shows that pupils in Year 6 recall stories from the old and new testaments of the Bible. They relate these stories to their own lives; after listening to the story of Adam and Eve, a pupil wrote, 'we all sometimes blame others'. Pupils remember some of their previous work about world religions, and they talk and write about symbols, special religious places,

festivals and celebrations. They sometimes confuse religious names and beliefs, but they can talk seriously about their own religious traditions as well as those of others.

103. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in both classes. In the one lesson seen, the teacher was confident to be able to talk about the Hindu religion, and encouraged a sense of interest and respect for religious ideas. The lesson had a clear purpose, and the teacher made sure that pupils knew what they were going to be learning about. She asked open questions, and pupils answered using the new words that she had introduced so carefully. As a result of this successful lesson, pupils listened very well, and learned a lot.

104. Work in religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is due to teachers' understanding of the need to cover all aspects of the locally agreed syllabus in a sensitive and positive way. The school has a good collection of pictures and artefacts, and teachers use these well to give the subject a higher profile in displays. Teachers make worthwhile links with other subjects of the curriculum, such as writing and art, although there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise their information and communication technology skills. Nevertheless, pupils' very good attitudes towards religious education are due to the way that adults promote respect for the feelings of others. The school is now well placed to improve standards further by making sure that pupils in the junior class build on their infant work, and that lessons provide new challenges for pupils in Years 5 and 6 beyond that which the teacher expects of them in Years 3 and 4. The headteacher, who is also the subject leader, has not yet had an opportunity to find out directly how good teaching and learning are in the other class.