

INSPECTION REPORT

ST HELENA'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Willoughby, near Alford

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120587

Headteacher: Mr R S J Saunders

Reporting inspector: Mr Phil Mann
23219

Dates of inspection: 25th – 27th February 2002

Inspection number: 196872

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:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Willoughby Alford Lincolnshire
Postcode:	LN13 9NH
Telephone number:	01507 462367
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs B Pearson
Date of previous inspection:	29 th April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Phil Mann 23219	Registered inspector	Children under five Mathematics Science Physical education Information and communication technology Geography History	How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? Standards - attainment and progress
Sarah McDermott 9173	Lay inspector		Standards - Attitudes, behaviour, personal development Attendance Spiritual, moral, social and cultural and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Helena's C of E Primary School has 64 pupils on roll, aged 4 to 11, and the average class size is 21. It is located in the small village of Willoughby, Lincolnshire. The pupils come from the village and other local villages and farms. The current circumstances of most families are broadly average. There were six children under five in the infant class during the inspection. The attainment of children at the start of school is average. There are 36 per cent of pupils on the special educational needs register and this is well above average. Of these, there are 23 pupils at the early, school-based stages of assessment and provision. Currently, there is no pupil with a Statement of Special Educational Need.¹

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school that has experienced some difficulty in the recruitment and retention of staff for the junior classes resulting in a degree of disruption and under achievement for these pupils. The school has resolved this problem. With good monitoring it has improved the quality of teaching and learning and raised pupils' standards. Teamwork is now a strong feature and teachers plan an interesting range of activities to motivate and stimulate the pupils in their care. The headteacher provides sound leadership for the work of the school and he is supported by an effective governing body. Taking into consideration the circumstances of the school, the very high cost per pupil and the standards achieved overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The provision for reception children is good.
- The pupils' attitudes, enthusiasm for school and their relationships with each other and staff are very positive.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is a significant strength.
- The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The governing body plays a very active role in shaping the direction of the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology at 11 years.
- The more effective use of information about the progress of pupils in Years 5 and 6 to raise their levels of achievement.
- The levels of pupils' attendance at the school.
- The overall links between parents and the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvement on nearly all of the key issues identified by the previous inspection. Curriculum planning is now firmly established across the school with the result that standards seen during the inspection have improved since the last national tests. There are now effective assessment procedures in place for teachers to use to plan for the next stages in pupils' learning in English, mathematics and science, although these need to be more consistently applied at the end of the juniors. Management responsibilities are more clearly defined and planning for school improvement is more effective.

¹ Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involve external specialists as well as staff within the school.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	D	E	E*
Mathematics	D	E	D	E
Science	E	E	E	E*

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

Overall, pupils are making satisfactory progress as they move through the school. The school has experienced several years of difficulty in the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers for pupils in Years 3 and 4. Consequently, standards have been low in the juniors in the past and well below average. The school has now resolved issues related to recruitment successfully and the level of achievement for pupils is now much better. The inspection finds that standards are now average by the time pupils leave the school at 11 in English, mathematics and science. This represents good improvement on the 2001 national tests where standards at 11 in English, mathematics and science were well below average when compared to schools nationally and against those with similar prior attainment. Further analysis of these results indicates that there are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls at 7 and 11 years. The number of pupils in each year group is very small and can vary in size dramatically year on year. Any comparison and analysis of past results needs to be treated with some caution due to the validity of working with such small numbers.

Standards are broadly in line with national expectations for 7 and 11 year olds in most other subjects. Standards are, however, below those expected for 11 year olds in information and communication technology. This is because there has been insufficient teaching of skills across the full programme of study for the oldest pupils at the end of the juniors.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils display very positive attitudes to school. They arrive cheerfully in the morning and participate enthusiastically in lessons and extra-curricular activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in lessons and pupils move around the school in a very orderly fashion.
Personal development and relationships	Good personal development with a particular strength in the relationships between pupils and staff and pupils themselves.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. There has been much illness and a significant number of parents take their children on holiday during the term times.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of teaching across the school is satisfactory overall. Teaching is at least satisfactory in nearly all lessons and this is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. In half of the lessons observed, teaching is good or better and in one in five lessons it is very good. A good proportion of this high quality teaching is for children in the infant and lower junior classes, where it is very good in two out of every three lessons with no unsatisfactory teaching seen. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in the school is very small and this is a similar finding to that of the previous inspection. The school teaches the basic skills of literacy and numeracy well. This is having a positive impact on raising standards across the school.

Overall, teachers have satisfactory expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are consistently good in the infant and lower junior classes. The level of challenge is high in most lessons. In the very best lessons it is very high and pupils are clearly motivated to learn new skills, as seen in a music lesson for pupils in the lower junior class when they developed the use of pitched instruments to create contrasting music to express feelings.

Good improvements have been made to the school's procedures for assessing pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. There is, however, inconsistent implementation of these procedures across the school and this is especially for those in the class for the oldest pupils. Consequently, work is not always planned effectively to meet the needs of all pupils in this class.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Reception children enjoy a range of interesting activities. Overall, teachers plan well, set challenging tasks and include all pupils in the life of the school. There is a good range of extra activities for the pupils to participate in.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good procedures have been put in place with the result that these pupils are making at least satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	This is a significant strength of the school with good promotion of cultural awareness combined with very good provision for spiritual, moral and social development. There are good opportunities for pupils to display a sense of responsibility and citizenship around the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. The school knows its pupils well and cares effectively for individuals. There is, however, a lack of formal procedures to ensure a consistency of approach. Teachers collect useful information about what pupils can do, but not all teachers use this successfully to pinpoint areas for improvement.

Links with parents are not sufficiently well established to fully promote the pupils' learning. Parents do not receive information about what is being taught in the classrooms. The setting and marking of homework is inconsistent and not all teachers share the pupils' learning targets with parents in the end of year reports. A small band of committed parents works well to raise funds and organise social events via the school association.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has provided satisfactory leadership for the work of the school since the previous inspection and during the recent period of staffing instability. He has developed very positive relationships with the pupils and has ensured that they get a wide range of activities both inside and outside school hours. His strong focus on raising standards, maintenance of teaching quality for junior pupils and the teaching of a class for most of the week has sometimes limited his capacity for managing the work of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas of improvement. They are very involved in the work of the school and they have made good progress since the previous inspection in how they fulfil their responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher, together with local education authority advisory staff, has monitored the work of the school well. Pupils' performance has been effectively evaluated and this has resulted in a clear plan of action for raising pupil achievement at the end of Year 6.
The strategic use of resources	The plan for school improvement is satisfactory and it provides a clear plan for curriculum development over the next three years. The school uses its financial resources appropriately to support pupils' learning and cater for fluctuations in pupil numbers.

There has been a high turnover of teaching staff in the last two years. However, this has now been resolved and staff are suitably qualified to meet the demands of the curriculum. The quality and range of resources are satisfactory. Overall, the accommodation is good and the outside areas provide a stimulating environment and effectively support the pupils' learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Twenty parents attended the meeting and 45 per cent returned the questionnaire.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The behaviour of the pupils. Improvement since the previous inspection. That staffing is now stable within the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear and consistent procedures for homework. Information about how their child is getting on. The way the school works with parents. The leadership and management of the school. The number and variety of extra-curricular activities.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents and it also finds that some of the parents' concerns are justified. Parents need clearer guidelines on homework expectations and more accurate information on how their children are progressing in each subject. Links with parents are not fully effective and need to be nurtured for the good of the pupils' learning. Leadership is judged to be satisfactory overall. The number and range of extra-curricular activities and visits are good for a small rural primary school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall, pupils are making satisfactory progress as they move through the school. The school has experienced several years of difficulty in the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers for pupils in Years 3 and 4. Consequently, standards in the junior classes have been low in the past and well below average. The school has now resolved the issues related to recruitment successfully. The level of achievement for these pupils is now much better. The Inspection finding is that standards are now average by the time pupils leave the school at 11 in English, mathematics and science. This represents good improvement on the 2001 national tests where standards at 11 in these subjects were well below average when compared to schools nationally and against those with similar prior attainment. Further analysis of these results indicates that there are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls at 7 and 11 years. The number of pupils in each year group is very small and can vary in size dramatically year on year. Therefore, any comparison and analysis of past results needs to be treated with some caution due to the validity of basing judgements on such small numbers.
2. There has been a trend of decline in standards for 11 year olds since the previous inspection and this has been especially so in English. The trend for mathematics and science has been more positive since the 2000 national tests. The school has been very aware of this and has analysed these results in some detail. For example, the headteacher, staff and governors have fully reviewed the 2001 results. The school has already implemented a programme of improvement.
3. The table below shows attainment in English, mathematics and science judged by the inspection team and as achieved by last year's Year 2 and Year 6 in the tests, compared to all schools nationally and measured by what is known as points scores. These scores take into account the performance of all pupils in the year group.

	National Tests Year 2 2001	Inspection Judgements Year 2 2002	National tests Year 6 2001 [points scores]	Inspection judgements Year 6 2002
English	Reading Well below average	Reading Average	Well below average	Average
	Writing Well below average	Writing Average		
Mathematics	Average	Average	Below average	Average
Science	By teacher assessment Well below average	Average	Well below average	Average

4. The following table shows standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

	By the age of 7	By the age of 11
ICT*	In line with that expected	Below that expected
Art and design	In line with that expected	In line with that expected
Design and technology	In line with that expected	In line with that expected
Geography	In line with that expected	In line with that expected
History	In line with that expected	In line with that expected
Music	In line with that expected	In line with that expected
Physical Education	In line with that expected	In line with that expected

*Information and communication technology

5. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations for 7 and 11 year olds in most other subjects. Standards are, however, below that expected for 11 year olds in information and communication technology. This is because there has been insufficient teaching of skills across the full programme of study for the oldest pupils at the end of the juniors. For example, there has been insufficient study of control technology for all pupils in Year 6 and no experience of using sensors or related equipment to gather data from the environment. The school has recognised this. It anticipates that more effective use of resources and better planning will resolve this situation for the younger pupils in the juniors who are now developed their skills well lower down the school.
6. Reception children make good progress overall as a result of the quality of curriculum provided and the high proportion of good and very good teaching for these children. Activities are very well organised and matched effectively to the needs of these children within the constraints of a class for Years 1 and 2 pupils. This is particularly so in their communication, language and literacy skills, number work and their personal and social development. Staff provide good opportunities for speaking and listening and ensure that all children make good progress in communication skills; for instance, when discussing the initial sounds of words when rolling a die to choose a letter. A good range of mathematical experiences ensure the consolidation of number. A good example came when the teaching assistant used large number lines chalked on to the playground surface to provide an effective stimulus for counting the digits to 10. The school maintains this progress in all the other areas of learning for children of this age. Most will have attained the expected early learning goals² by the end of the reception year.
7. Pupils in the infant and lower junior classes are achieving well overall due to consistently good teaching, good planning of what teachers to teach in lessons and effective implementation of the procedures for assessing the progress of individual pupils. Although teaching is satisfactory overall for the oldest junior pupils their achievements are not as high as they could be. This is because the school does not use assessment information consistently to monitor the individual progress of these pupils and planning for their next stages in learning is less effective. The school has managed well the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Standards have improved as a result because of a stronger emphasis on the teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy.
8. Pupils of all abilities are making satisfactory progress in science as they move through the school. The implementation of the school's own good scheme of work is now providing teachers with the means to plan work more effectively. This is resulting in a good emphasis on investigative work. Pupils are making good progress in their understanding

² Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the **E**Foundation **S**tage. They mainly refer to achievements children make in connection with: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning; for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

of life and living processes in all classes. Teachers in the junior classes especially are effectively developing the pupils' recording techniques. In turn this is ensuring good links with the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Practical sessions provide good opportunities for the pupils to co-operate with others, use their initiative to solve problems and collect a range of data, which they use effectively for the interpretation of their results.

9. The pupils on the school's register of special educational needs include those with learning difficulties as well as more able pupils. Across the school these pupils make sound progress and are fully involved in the work of their class. By the end of Years 2 and 6 they are generally one level behind or ahead of other pupils of their age. Some are successful in reaching expected national levels in the national tests.
10. **The level of overall achievement in all the other subjects is satisfactory. The setting and marking of homework, however, is inconsistent. The school does not use it effectively to support the learning of the oldest pupils.**

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. They arrive cheerfully in the morning and look forward to meeting their friends again. Pupils are interested in their lessons and participate enthusiastically in clubs and visits. The reception children really enjoyed building castles out of cardboard boxes because it was an exciting activity and appropriate to their age. Year 6 pupils interviewed said they are very happy at school. They particularly enjoy the clubs after school and the fun of science, art and design and technology lessons.
12. The behaviour of the pupils is good. There has been one exclusion for a day at the beginning of the school year as a clear and effective message to a disruptive boy. Pupils concentrate well in lessons, although sometimes there is inattention when the Year 6 pupils are not sufficiently challenged and stretched in their work. The pupils are polite and courteous, often holding doors open for adults, although on occasion one or two can become over-confident and familiar. Parents at the meeting were complimentary about the pupils' behaviour, but some parents returning questionnaires still felt there was disruptive behaviour as a result of the past staffing problems. This was not evident in the inspection week. Pupils move around the school in a very orderly fashion. It is particularly impressive the way that pupils stop in their tracks when the whistle is blown at the end of break times. All pupils get on very well together and relationships are very strong in the school. In the morning one older girl was seen holding the hand of a younger child and gently coaxing her into school. It is rare to have any incidences of bullying.
13. The personal development of the pupils is good. Pupils of all ages take on small jobs around the school with maturity. The Year 6 talked proudly of the coffee morning they organised to raise money for MacMillan Cancer Relief. Other junior pupils hand out hymn books, hold the doors, take round the 'bus list' and control the tape player for assemblies. The members of the school council, representative of each year, respond well to their important positions. They discuss school improvements, such as the plan of the orchard and how to use the outside play equipment in a sensible and thoughtful way. Pupils have a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others. In lessons it is unusual for the learning to be disrupted by selfish ill-discipline. Further afield, pupils support children less well off than they are and raise funds for a wide range of charities. Pupils have a very well developed sense of respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. They listen with interest about religions and cultures different from their own. The older pupils particularly appreciated the visit they made to Leicester to learn more about the Hindu way of life. In assemblies the pupils are very respectful and reflect genuinely and quietly in the quiet

periods. The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils are as strong as they were at the last inspection.

14. The attendance of pupils is unsatisfactory and has deteriorated greatly since the last inspection. However, this year's attendance rate is improving from last year when it was only 91.6 per cent and well below the national average because of chicken pox and flu epidemics. The incidents of unauthorised absence have diminished, but there are still many pupils away with illness and a significant number of parents take their children out of school in term time for family holidays. Over the last two years the attendance figures in this small school have been severely affected by a substantial amount of absence stemming from a very few pupils. Punctuality is good and lessons start promptly at the beginning of the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching across the school is satisfactory overall. Teaching is at least satisfactory in nearly all lessons and this is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. In half of the lessons observed, teaching is good or better and in one in five lessons it is very good. A good proportion of this high quality teaching is for children in the infant and lower junior classes, where it is very good in two out of every three lessons with no unsatisfactory teaching seen. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in the school is very small and this is a similar finding to that of the previous inspection. Parents' views varied about the quality of teaching overall, but they were most pleased with the quality of teaching and learning for the younger pupils.
16. Teachers' subject knowledge is good overall. It is particularly good for children in the infant class. Teachers' technical competence in the teaching of basic skills is good across the school and consequently the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being taught effectively. For example, a good literacy lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2 developed their skills in writing sentences to explain sequences of pictures as a simple story. Teachers also display individual expertise in science, information and communication technology, art and music. Where subject expertise is not strong, as seen in an art lesson for the oldest pupils, the quality of the pupils' work is unsatisfactory because of the teacher's low expectations of what they can achieve.
17. Planning is satisfactory across the school with some very good examples of planning in the infant class. All teachers are beginning to identify clearly the learning aims and objectives of their lessons. They are beginning to share these effectively with the pupils at the beginning of lessons. When used effectively, as seen in a numeracy lesson for pupils in the Years 3 and 4 class, this strategy enables pupils to be fully aware of their own learning. Most teachers assess the levels of the pupils well and this ensures that work is generally matched carefully to the ability of pupils. This is particularly so in some English and mathematics lessons, but less evident for the oldest junior pupils where this information is not used effectively to plan for the different abilities within the class.
18. Overall, teachers have satisfactory expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are consistently good in the infant and lower junior classes. The level of challenge is high in most lessons. In the very best lessons it is very high and pupils are clearly motivated to learn new skills. For example, in a music lesson for pupils in the lower junior class they developed the use of pitched instruments to create contrasting music to express feelings. The high quality input from the teacher resulted in the pupils' music making skills being fully challenged and consequently the levels of achievement for pupils of all abilities in this class was high.

19. Teaching methods are satisfactory across the school but best for the youngest pupils. A good feature is the use of practical activity to ensure lessons are made interesting, enabling effective learning to take place. For instance, in a science lesson for the oldest pupils, the teacher used resources well to illustrate the effect of light travelling into the eye. This was complemented by paired practical activities to demonstrate the effect of light on the pupil and iris in each other's eyes when the intensity of light is changed. There is a good balance between direct teaching and practical activity across the school and this is particularly evident in literacy and numeracy lessons. Teachers group pupils according to ability in most lessons and this enables all pupils to make at least satisfactory progress. Teachers are starting to use information and communication technology effectively to support learning. Due to the inconsistent use of the computers to support learning in the past the attainment of the oldest pupils is not yet at the expected standard in all aspects of this subject such as in control technology.
20. Teachers manage pupils well in lessons and their expectations of behaviour are high. All staff have established a positive rapport with the pupils and this results in a good atmosphere for learning across the school. Even though there is no specific code of conduct, all pupils respond well to the teachers and classroom discipline is positive and quietly managed.
21. Teachers use time effectively in lessons. They use teaching resources such as practical apparatus and whiteboards well to demonstrate teaching points and to assist pupils in their understanding of new concepts. This was effectively demonstrated in a lower junior numeracy lesson to explore the pupils' understanding of counting in fives and tens. The whiteboard was used very well to involve pupils in the investigation of number patterns and the explanation of what was next required to complete their work. These pupils were clearly able to explore these relationships and, as a consequence, the quality of learning in this lesson was very good and the level of achievement was high.
22. The school has made good improvements to its procedures for assessing pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. There is, however, inconsistent implementation of these procedures across the school. Information about individual pupils' progress is being used effectively to support planning for pupils in the infant and lower junior classes, but this is not always the case for those in the upper junior class. The school is developing procedures for other subjects of the National Curriculum. Overall, the quality of marking is satisfactory and, as a result, pupils are clearly informed about their own learning. The setting of individual literacy and numeracy targets for pupils is a developing feature and this is enabling them to become fully more fully involved in their own learning. As yet these targets are not being shared with parents and opportunities for the involvement in their child's learning are being missed.
23. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in reception, Year 1 and Year 2, because the teacher and the class assistant work very closely together and provide well planned activities and support. In the juniors, teachers, class assistants and volunteers also work effectively together and provide small group work which is targeted on pupils' needs as described in their individual education plans. The local education authority's learning support teacher provides additional support in both infants and juniors, but her work was not seen during the inspection.
24. The quality and quantity of homework are inconsistent across the school. Teachers in the infants and at the beginning of the juniors provide appropriate opportunities for homework and often use it well to support learning in class. This pattern is not repeated for the older junior pupils where homework is not consistently set or used effectively to support the pupils' learning in class.

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

25. The school curriculum provides a satisfactory range of activities within lessons and in extra-curricular work for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. It now fully meets statutory requirements and has some good features. There has been substantial improvement in curricular planning and monitoring since the last inspection.
26. The curriculum for pupils aged under five and in the infant classes is good. It gives pupils a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities, which lead pupils to learn well and make good progress. Pupils enjoy the work and respond well at all ages and levels of ability.
27. A strong feature in the junior classes is the planning for cross-curricular topic work, which encourages pupils to draw on knowledge and skills from several subjects. The school underpins this by good planning of literacy and numeracy work. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy has been good and contributes to pupils' sound progress in acquiring basic skills.
28. The school has achieved considerable improvement in curricular planning since the last inspection and has effectively dealt with the issues raised then. There are school policies relating to the school's aims for each subject. Overall curricular planning is sound, with satisfactory medium term planning and in generally well thought out lesson plans. The school effectively adapts the model schemes of work provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to its needs in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and in the foundation subjects in Years 1 and 2. Although there is a structured framework to the planned curriculum for pupils in Years 3 to 6 there is insufficient detail to provide good opportunities for the assessment of pupils' progress.
29. The range of extra-curricular opportunities, provided by a rolling programme of lunch-time and after-school clubs, is good for a small rural primary school. Pupils enjoy these clubs and attendance at them is good. Pupils also benefit from visits outside the school and from the annual residential experience for pupils in the Years 5 and 6 class.
30. The school's provision for personal development is satisfactory. There is a good policy and scheme of work for personal and social education, but some teachers do not use it consistently. The school has good links with the local secondary school where pupils in Years 5 and 6 spend two days getting to know it. The toddlers club run by St Helena's gives children about to start at the school valuable experience and helps them to become familiar with the environment before they join the school.
31. Leadership in the development of curriculum planning has been sound. Monitoring of the curriculum and of teaching has helped to improve pupils' standards and link teachers currently make a useful contribution to the oversight and planning of subjects.
32. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is a significant strength in the school, as it was at the time of the last inspection. The school provides a very strong Christian foundation on which to base spiritual growth. Assemblies with the headteacher are very special and thoughtful times, which allow all ages of pupil to think beyond the obvious and material. The time for reflection is given unhurriedly and calmly and the pupils respond very well. The school gives the pupils many opportunities to wonder at the joys of nature and beauty. Pupils have participated in planting and planning the newly acquired orchard and the display around the school allows the pupils to appreciate the beauty of art and creativity. The building of cardboard box castles outside on a windy day, which might have been a disaster, was skilfully turned into the enjoyment of the wind, as

the children squealed with delight as their boxes were lifted off the ground! Pupils are encouraged to treasure the special moments in their life, such as birthdays and family celebrations. A display in the entrance draws special attention to the importance of baptism.

33. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Pupils are strongly encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and to look after their school community. They all learn to include their fellows in their lessons and games. Pupils are given a good range of jobs around the school. In the Years 3 and 4 class the world of work is introduced at an early age as pupils take on the roles of 'computer technician', 'couriers' and 'graphite engineers'! Displays around the walls remind pupils of simple and easy rules to follow, with the school mascot, Speedy the tortoise, saying 'Be tidy' and 'Say thank you'. The adults are all very good role models, who consistently emphasise what the school considers to be right or wrong. There is no whole school set of rules, but the class teachers effectively devise a moral code to suit the age and maturity of their pupils. Teachers deal quietly and patiently with any instances of inappropriate behaviour, encouraging the wrong doer to think carefully about the incident. During the inspection the headteacher calmly and firmly guided a boy who had been thoughtlessly rude to a visitor to pluck up courage to say sorry.
34. The promotion of cultural development is good. As a small rural school, with a predominantly English white background, a concerted effort is made to introduce the pupils to the ways of life of other peoples and cultures. Pupils made a successful visit to Leicester to visit a Sikh temple and to experience the sights, sounds and smells of a vibrant Hindu market. In the registration period in the class for Years 3 and 4 pupils, the teacher led the pupils in each saying good morning in Gujarati. The school equally encourages the pupils to celebrate their own heritage and surroundings. An enjoyable topic centred on the abandoned railway station in the village and the impact on the life of the villagers at the time. Various artists and musicians are celebrated around the school and visiting theatre groups have contributed to the pupils' appreciation of culture in the aesthetic sense.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school gives a satisfactory level of care to its pupils. One of the school's strengths is that all the staff know the pupils well and care effectively and genuinely for individuals. Every pupil is fully included or encouraged to participate in all school activities. At the last inspection many necessary, formal policies and procedures were missing. The school has remedied this to a certain extent, but there is still a lack of agreed routines to ensure a consistency of approach from all staff, whether established or temporary.
36. Procedures for the welfare and health and safety of the pupils are good. First aid routines are well established. Any minor bumps and grazes are carefully recorded and parents informed if there is any concern. The school nurse is a regular visitor and the school doctor is consulted if there is more serious worry. The headteacher and the governor responsible for health and safety carry out termly 'walkabouts' to check the building and grounds for potential hazards. The caretaker is vigilant in making sure the school is safe for the pupils on a daily basis.
37. Procedures for child protection are unsatisfactory. In practice, the pupils are not in danger, as all staff have good levels of common sense and know what to do if they have a concern. However, the school is breaching guidelines in not having a child protection policy. Also there has not been recent training of all the staff to ensure that they are up to date on the latest guidance and practices.

38. The school's strategies for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. Prompt registration at the beginning of each session meets all legal requirements. However, the school should ensure that these important legal documents are always returned to a secure, central place, such as the office, so that they are handy and safe in the case of fire. The school has good experience in supporting the families of pupils with particular attendance problems and works well with the education welfare officer. Although the school does award an annual certificate for any pupils with 100 per cent attendance, it should now be more proactive in improving attendance. Parents need to be reminded more frequently about the disruption caused when their child is out of school, not only to their child's learning, but also to other pupils' progress and to the teacher's smooth teaching.
39. The procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour and discipline are good. The headteacher's philosophy is to develop the self-discipline of pupils, rather than having them hidebound by rules and regulations. This is well known to the pupils and effective now that the school has stabilised the staffing situation. The current class teachers have set up their own successful systems of rewards and sanctions. In one class the pupils collect 'smiley faces' for their groups named after artists such as Van Gogh and Picasso. However, the lack of school rules causes difficulties when teachers are new, do not know the pupils well and do not have a consistent and recognised framework of rules on which to base discipline. Systems for dealing with any incidences of bullying are very good.
40. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Young children arriving in the reception class are settled in very well. They all receive a 'I'm going to school' pack with a photo of their teacher and are welcomed sensitively into the routines of school life. The personal and social development of these youngest pupils is very good, regularised as it is under the system of early learning goals. However, across the rest of the school the personal, social and health education is piece meal and insufficiently organised to be able to track the progress of each pupil formally. In practice the teachers know their pupils well and are able to give a perceptive report to parents on personal development. The sex education policy is in need of review to ensure that the older pupils have had appropriate education on relationships and coping with growing up before they move on to secondary school. The school provides appropriate drugs education. It prepares Years 5 and 6 pupils very well for transfer to secondary school. It is particularly helpful to have one of the Year 7 teachers of the secondary modern school most pupils will attend as an able governor.
41. Improvements since the previous inspection enable the school to have sound procedures for finding out what pupils know and can do. Assessments made about pupils' writing are particularly good. Teachers analyse half-termly writing tasks and set appropriate targets for pupils to work towards. The same is true for mathematics and science. Teachers collect evidence about pupils' achievements at the end of a unit of work and record their attainment on detailed record sheets. The assessment co-ordinator has worked hard to develop these systems and plans are already under way to develop similar techniques in other subjects. There are weaknesses, however, in the assessment procedures throughout the school and these are mainly apparent in Years 5 and 6. The collection of evidence is not as consistent in this part of the school. It does not provide as much detailed information about pupils' achievements.
42. Pupils from Year 1 onwards have their own individual targets for improving their writing. Pupils and teachers agree targets together. There is a good emphasis on older pupils becoming more responsible for deciding when to review the targets by recognising their own achievements.

43. The school uses compulsory and voluntary National Curriculum tests for recording pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science. It has carried out a very useful and detailed analysis of the tests, which clearly identifies where its strengths and weaknesses lie in teaching parts of the curriculum. Teachers take on board these issues and reflect this in their planning documents. The school has recently introduced a document that can track the attainment of each pupil from the time they start school. This document is particularly useful in a small school such as this as it traces the rate of progress of individual and groups of pupils and shows the effect the school has on each pupil's level of attainment.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The partnership that the school has established with parents is unsatisfactory. Although many parents are positive about what the school provides for their child, there is still a degree of parental misgiving as a result of the recent staffing instability. Relationships between school and home were considered to be good at the last inspection. The pre inspection meeting, attended by a good number of parents, was positive in tone. Parents particularly liked the good behaviour of the pupils, the improvement in the school since the last inspection and the now well established teaching staff. The inspection team concurs with all these supportive views. However, the questionnaires turned up a high number of worries about a range of issues. The most concern was about:
- homework
 - information about how their child was progressing
 - the way the school works with parents
 - the leadership and management
 - the number and range of extra-curricular activities.
45. The inspectors judge the leadership and management of the school to be satisfactory. They do not agree with parents about the lack of after school clubs and find that the number and range of extra-curricular activities and visits are good for a small rural primary school.
46. The effectiveness of the school's links and the quality of information to parents are unsatisfactory. The parents' concerns about homework are justified because routines and expectations and how work is be marked are not clear. End of year reports give sufficient information on what has been covered in each subject and on what the pupil knows, understands and can do, but they are not all sufficiently clear and consistent in letting parents know how their child has progressed in each subject over the year. Class teachers are beginning to set targets for each pupil in English and mathematics, but they do not all share these with parents in the end of year reports, so that parents find it difficult to work with the school to help their children improve. The school has held successful evenings to explain the National Literacy, Numeracy and Teaching Handwriting, Reading, and Spelling Scheme Strategies, but unfortunately it is not routine procedure to provide an overview of what their child will learn in each subject over the next term. The school has taken some action to overcome the fact that many parents do not feel confident in approaching the school with questions and concerns by introducing a chance to meet the teachers after school on Monday or Friday.
47. The contribution of parents to children's learning and their impact on the work of the school are satisfactory. At home, the lack of homework guidance detrimentally affects their contribution. Parents get insufficient information on what is being taught in the classroom and the inconsistencies in sharing targets as mentioned above. A few parents help in school with the younger pupils and accompany trips. Some committed parents work well to raise funds and organise social events via the school association. The school used a recent questionnaire to parents to drum up support for the association and find out the

most favourable time for events. More consultations on other school matters would go some way to nurturing links with parents and improving communications for the good of the pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership and sound management for the work of the school. He has ensured that leadership of the school has been focused on clear educational direction throughout a lengthy period of staffing instability and recruitment difficulties. The recruitment and the retention of high quality staff has occupied much of the governing body's and headteacher's time over the last two years. Consequently, school improvement has not progressed as rapidly as it might have, but overall progress has been satisfactory in all the key issues identified in the previous report. School improvement continues to remain a priority for the management of the school. The headteacher, teachers and governors share a keen commitment to school improvement and the further raising of pupils' standards. Their capacity for further improvement is now good.
49. Building a competent team has been a leadership objective and teamwork is now a strong feature of the school. The quality of leadership is a reflection of the published aims and values of the school and there is an atmosphere of care and thoughtfulness around the building. The headteacher's delegation of management responsibilities to staff is appropriate for a small school. Staff now have greater responsibility delegated to them than at the time of the previous inspection.
50. The governing body is fully effective in the way it discharges its duties. Governors use their specialist skills and expertise well to support the school's work. For instance, one governor has supported personally the raising of standards in information and communication technology and another has supported personally in music. The governors play a very significant role in shaping the strategic direction of the school and they share a clear vision for the school's future development. The governing body clearly understands the strengths and weaknesses of the school and plays an active part in setting targets for school development and improvement. The governors regularly monitor school improvement and they have monitored the work of the school effectively through a planned review programme. The governing body ensures that it fulfils its legal responsibilities effectively, but it recognises that the school's sex education policy is in need of review. There is a positive relationship between the headteacher and the governors and they have set appropriate targets for the headteacher as part of his performance management. The school has successfully addressed all of the key issues from the previous inspection related to the governing body's responsibilities.
51. Governors and staff monitor and evaluate the school's performance regularly. The headteacher monitors and evaluates well the development of good teaching practice. The school's procedures for appraisal and performance management are satisfactory and teachers have clear performance targets matched carefully to their needs. The school's priorities for development are appropriate for the needs of the staff and pupils. The actions taken to meet the school's targets are satisfactory. The induction procedures for new staff are detailed and effective. There has been satisfactory improvement in staff development since the previous inspection.
52. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Teachers work with parents and the local authority teacher to establish the individual education plans, review pupils' progress and update targets. Class teachers monitor pupils' progress regularly. The school uses funding for pupils with designated special needs satisfactorily.

53. The strategic use of resources, grants and other funding is satisfactory and financial planning helps to support educational priorities effectively. The efficiency and effectiveness of the financial administration systems are good and the school responded extremely well to the most recent auditor's report and has addressed all the issues. The headteacher and governing body regularly review the school finances. Staff are aware of and familiar with new information and communication technology and make effective use of new technology to support school administration. They are increasingly using it more effectively to support the pupils' learning, but older pupils have yet to experience all aspects of the information and communication technology curriculum. The school uses specific grants appropriately for their designated purpose. Periodically, it monitors the effectiveness of its spending and the school ensures the outcome of expenditure is matched with the school's current objectives. The school's contingency is above that normally expected, but the governing body has identified suitable for reasons for this as part of its future staffing expenditure.
54. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily in this school to further the opportunities open to the pupils. The school is aware of the need to compare its costs with those of other schools. The school usually engages in competitive tendering and staff identify and justify their use of resources satisfactorily. Major expenditure decisions are usually subjected to consultation.
55. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the primary curriculum is satisfactory. There are enough staff and they are suitably qualified. The teaching assistant in Studio 1 is a great asset in supporting the youngest children. There has been a high turnover of teachers in the last two years, but the school has now resolved this. It inducts new staff into its workings effectively. Since the last inspection it has drafted and agreed a new staff handbook. Despite recent disruption, appraisal and performance management are now up to date and effective.
56. The accommodation is good. Inside, the accommodation is bright and attractive, with a good range of modern, well appointed rooms. Rooms are well managed to make the most of the limited space, with the library areas adjacent to the classrooms used efficiently for group work. The reception children have sufficient space for exploration and investigative play. Outside, the facilities are very good. The school has recently acquired some orchard land, which is providing a stimulating and interesting place for recreation, nature study and physical development. The grounds are well maintained and pleasantly planted. The quality and range of resources are satisfactory overall and there are a good number of computers around the school. The library areas are well organised and provide a good focus for reading and individual study.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. To further develop the effectiveness of the school and continue to raise standards the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- raise standards of attainment in information and communication technology at 11 by ensuring that:
 - teachers effectively use information and communication technology equipment to develop pupils' skills, especially in control technology;
 - teachers plan for the use of information and communication technology in all other subjects;(paragraphs 5, 53 and 91-95)
 - use information about the progress of pupils in Years 5 and 6 more effectively to raise their levels of achievement and set targets for their individual development;
(paragraphs 22, 41, 82 and 95)
 - improve levels of pupils' attendance;
(paragraphs 14 and 38)
 - improve links between parents and the school by:
 - involving them more in their child's learning;
 - providing better information about what is being taught and about their child's progress.(paragraphs 22 and 44-47)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	17
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	3	7	6	1	0	0
Percentage	0	18	41	35	6	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	63
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	23

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	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.5
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.9
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
	2001	10	5	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Total	11	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	73 (100)	80 (100)	87 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Total	11	12	11
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	73 (100)	80 (100)	73 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

As the school has fewer than 11 boys or girls in the year group, the table omits totals for boys and girls.

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
	2001	5	6	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	6	6	8
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	55 (79)	55 (43)	73 (79)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	6	6	8
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	55 (100)	55 (64)	73 (79)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

As the school has fewer than 11 boys or girls in the year group, the table omits totals for boys and girls.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	63
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.7:1
Average class size	21.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	39

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	214,340
Total expenditure	198,190
Expenditure per pupil	2,915
Balance brought forward from previous year	630
Balance carried forward to next year	16,780

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4.8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.8

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 49.3%

Number of questionnaires sent out	67
Number of questionnaires returned	33

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	39	42	6	12	0
My child is making good progress in school.	33	36	15	15	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	52	9	6	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	39	15	12	0
The teaching is good.	45	30	9	15	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	24	18	21	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	6	3	18	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	18	15	0	9
The school works closely with parents.	27	33	21	18	0
The school is well led and managed.	24	36	9	30	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	30	12	0	12
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	24	30	0	3

Some totals do not equal 100% because not all parents felt able to answer all the questions.

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

58. Children of reception age join the infant class at the start of the year of their fifth birthdays. The planned curriculum for the reception children closely follows the areas of learning for children under five and is clearly based on the national early learning goals.
59. The children, including those with special educational needs, make a good start in all aspects of school life. Assessment on admission to school shows that most children have knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of learning that is in line with that normally expected for children of a similar age. Most children are attaining above average standards in speaking and listening and in other aspects of literacy development. The inspection findings for mathematical development, the children's knowledge and understanding of the world and especially in information and communication technology are also above that expected. Standards in creative and personal development are in line with those expected of children of a similar age. Their attainment in physical development is what one would expect of five-year-olds. Inspection evidence clearly indicates that most children are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the reception year in all areas of learning because of the good standard of teaching and learning in the reception class.
60. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The experienced teacher and teaching assistant manage the needs of these children well within the organisation of the class for infant pupils. The quality of adult and teacher interaction with the children is very good. They organise activities effectively according to the children's abilities and specific needs. The planning is very good and firmly based on the children's interests. It is very imaginative and ensures focused activities promote specific learning. Activities initiated by the children promote structured play of good quality; as seen in an afternoon session to develop the children's personal and social development and communication skills. In this session the teaching assistant provided good levels of support to individual children in a range of investigative and role play activities such as buying a snack in the class 'burger bar'! The teaching assistant uses questions well to challenge children in their thinking and assess their understanding of new concepts. She makes a valuable contribution to the teaching of these children by working carefully with them as a group or moving around the activities and providing support as required. This good teamwork and very effective planning are ensuring basic skills are taught very well and children of all abilities make good progress within the class.
61. A particular strength is the care and thought that has been taken to provide a stimulating classroom environment. Resources are good and used effectively to motivate the children. Induction arrangements are effective and there are good links with new parents and children through the weekly toddler group held in the school hall and managed by the teaching assistant. During the induction period the children have several opportunities to visit the reception class before they start school and appropriate meetings are held with parents.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. The staff have a good clear understanding of this area of development. Their good subject knowledge and positive approach mean they meet the emotional needs of the children well. Relationships between the staff and the children are very good. Children, especially those with special educational needs, feel secure and fully included in the class. This has a positive effect on progress.

63. As a result of this good provision, the children's attitudes to learning are very good. Children raise their hands to answer the teacher's questions. Children generally work well together in pairs and in their small group. They share equipment well and they are developing a sense of responsibility, for instance, when putting the play equipment away at the end of an outdoor play session.

Communication, language and literacy

64. All of the children make good progress in all aspects of communication, language and literacy because sessions are effectively planned and taught well. These include a wide range of activities for children to use and apply their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. Good opportunities for speaking and listening ensure that all children make good progress in communication skills, for instance, when discussing the initial sounds of words when rolling a letter die. There are also good opportunities for extending speaking and listening skills through role-play activities. Children enjoy books. They talk enthusiastically about the stories and turn the pages carefully. Some children are beginning to pick out letters and words in books based on the beginning sound and picture clues. Most children recognise their name and some are starting to recognise simple words. Nearly all of the children hold their pencils correctly and can independently write their first name. Letters are generally correctly formed and the basic skills of handwriting are being taught well. It is very evident that children enjoy these activities and their efforts are valued in displays showing their first attempts at writing.

Mathematical development

65. The teacher and teacher assistant plan a wide variety of mathematical tasks for children to experience and, as a result, all children make good progress in this area of learning. The staff also pick up on spontaneous opportunities to develop children's numeracy skills at the start of the day or outside in the playground. A good example of this was seen when the teaching assistant used large number lines chalked onto the playground surface to provide an effective stimulus for counting the digits to 10. As a result of these interesting and vibrant activities, all children can count to 10 and reorder these numbers on a 'washing line'. Higher attaining children count to 20 or even beyond this. The children can add one more than to a given digit up to nine. Some are developing their skills of addition further and can add two and two to make four. Most children have achieved the early learning goals and are making a good start on work within the National Curriculum.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. All children are making satisfactory progress in this area of learning. Children also explore their senses through a range of interesting science activities such as the investigation of some common sounds. They can use the mouse effectively to activate simple animations on the computer screen in response to program prompts. They effectively develop their design and technology skills. Display on the classroom walls indicates that they can make a representation of Josephs' coat from simple materials and use a range of techniques to join them together. They develop a broad range of skills in geography and history and this is exemplified by local walks and work completed on the Fire of London.

Creative development

67. Staff provide a broad a range of activities that are well-planned to ensure that all the children develop their creative skills effectively. The children are making satisfactory progress in their art skills. Drawings and pictures are colourful and painted with care. All children can sing familiar songs satisfactorily and they sing enthusiastically with the teacher.

Physical development

68. Children develop their skills in cutting and sticking through a range of suitable activities. They develop manipulative skills when pouring water into containers during water play and

increase their skills in taking care of themselves by dressing and undressing for physical education. Children sit, kneel or stand when working with 'small world' toys, construction sets and the role play area. The children play outside at playtime and have good opportunities for physical activity during timetabled lessons in the playground or the hall. For instance, they get good opportunities to develop their co-ordination and physical skills through building structures outside with blocks of wood and cardboard boxes. They demonstrate an appropriate range of skills in physical education lessons in the school hall with the older infant pupils. Opportunities for physical play outdoors are satisfactory within the confines of the school playground. There is a good range of large toys and other outdoor equipment for children to develop their skills further.

ENGLISH

69. Since the last inspection standards as shown in the test results at the end of Years 2 and 6 have fluctuated year by year, although the small size of each year group makes comparisons difficult. The evidence of the inspection shows that pupils are now making progress at the expected rate as they move up the school and that standards in English across the school are often good. Targets set for tests in 2002 are realistic. There has been improvement in curricular planning and the school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy well. The recently appointed link teacher for English is establishing a sound system for assessment of pupils' work. This helps teachers to set individual targets for all pupils which are contributing to good learning. Standards in English are now in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6.
70. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening. Pupils of all ages express their ideas and opinions with confidence in whole class sessions and in small groups. Even the youngest pupils are taught to use specialist words in English, especially through the THRASS scheme (Teaching Handwriting, Reading and Spelling Scheme). A feature of the school is the concentration and courtesy that pupils show when listening to their teachers' own excellent example and to each other. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' attitude to work which shows in the emphasis on listening carefully.
71. Pupils in all three classes make steady progress in reading. The teaching of reading across the school is good and results in confident readers who show enjoyment of books, both of fact and fiction. By the end of Year 2, pupils develop sound strategies for deciphering unfamiliar words and correct errors for themselves. They use picture cues to help them understand the story and talk about the characters with understanding of how they might feel and act. The more able are reading confidently at Level 3, above national expectations.
72. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 show a good understanding of information texts and of how to use them. By the end of Year 6, pupils read aloud fluently and with expression. They understand significant events and ideas and talk about the characters with insight. Year 6 pupils are confident users of reference books and know how to use an index or contents page to locate information. They are developing skills of skimming books and scanning for specific information.
73. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in handwriting, punctuation and spelling. By the end of Year 2 they write simple sentences, showing a developing awareness of sequencing, and use a good range of familiar words. In the Years 3 and 4 class most pupils are consolidating well their knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling. In their stories they are beginning to use complex sentences and to choose adjectives and verbs for their effect. They write poems and illustrate them. In the class for Years 5 and 6 pupils, standards of writing are satisfactory for the majority but vary considerably. Some

pupils are working at one level below that expected in Year 5. The majority are in line to achieve the nationally expected level by the end of Year 6. The most able are working at Level 5, in line with expectations for such pupils. One example of very good writing showed mature control of narrative pace and style, using differing 'voices' through dialogue, letters and a first person account. The story was well structured, built tension and suspense through a sequence of events, which led to a satisfying ending, and had clearly benefited from good teaching on how to plan and write a good story.

74. The quality of teaching in English is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use the literacy session effectively so that pupils make sound and steady progress. Teachers know their pupils well and ask questions skilfully to challenge pupils at an appropriate level. They pay particular attention to basic skills in grammar, spelling and punctuation and this is reflected in pupils' accurate and increasingly confident writing. In planning group work, teachers in Years 3 to 6 should provide a wider range of tasks, particularly for the more able who are not always sufficiently stretched.
75. The teaching of English contributes positively to pupils' learning across the curriculum. A good example of how good teaching of English links work to other areas of the curriculum is shown in a wall display of Class 2's work on the Willow Pattern Story. Pupils read the story and discussed it. They read a poem by a poet who used blue and white imagery, and then wrote their own poems. These showed a vivid use of imagery through the choice of a wide range of adjectives and verbs. The poems, paintings and word summaries of the story, written on segmented circles and rigorously edited, created an impressive display to which the whole class had contributed. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, had produced work of good quality.
76. The English curriculum throughout Years 1 to 6 follows the National Literacy Strategy and is planned on a spiral curriculum to ensure full coverage in mixed-age classes. All teachers have been monitored and this has contributed to improvement. The newly-appointed link teacher has carried out a monitoring scrutiny of samples of pupils' work from all years, together with the local authority literacy adviser. The school should now set a priority on using its analysis of findings for action by all three teachers and their class assistants. There are good procedures for assessment and target setting, although these are not yet used consistently.

Strengths in the subject

- Good use of the National Literacy Strategy and associated planning
- Development of assessment systems and target setting for individual pupils
- Consistent focus on basic skills in handwriting, punctuation, spelling and grammar
- Strong focus on the development of imaginative writing at all levels

Areas for development

- Consistency across all classes in the use of assessment in order to track progress better
- Greater challenge and extension for more able pupils in the junior classes

MATHEMATICS

77. The number of pupils in each year group tends to be very small. There are also significant numbers of pupils with special educational needs in most year groups. Any comparison with other schools nationally and with schools in similar circumstances needs to be treated with some caution because of these small numbers. Although there have been fluctuations over recent years, the trend is now one of rising standards overall. Standards are improving due to the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and effective teaching across the school. As a result, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the national expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. This is a similar judgement to that of the previous inspection. Several pupils in Year 6 are already working at the higher Level 5, confirming that teachers' expectations for what these pupils can achieve are high and at the appropriate level.
78. Pupils with special educational needs throughout the school are making satisfactory progress in the development of their mathematical skills because the work set is planned appropriately to match the ability of these pupils. There are no significant differences in the performance of girls and boys.
79. By the age of 7, the pupils are developing a satisfactory understanding of place value with two and three-digit numbers. They effectively order three-digit numbers and add two-digit numbers correctly. They calculate simple multiples of five and accurately identify the common two and three-dimensional shapes. Most solve problems using money that involve simple calculations with pounds and pence. Higher attaining pupils explore number patterns involving four digit and three digit numbers. Teachers and support staff make sure that lessons are based around practical experiences and fun. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is ensuring that all pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making satisfactory progress overall with good progress being made in number work.
80. The school is now maintaining this progress throughout Years 3 to 6. By the age of 11, the attainment of most pupils is, therefore, now in line with the national expectations for pupils of this age. This is despite the fact that difficulties in the recruitment and retention of high quality staff have been a problem for the school in the past three years, with the result that the progress of the pupils now in Year 6 has been unsatisfactory overall. The majority of pupils in Year 6 are competent with addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and the work in their books demonstrates this clearly. Most pupils in this year group have a good understanding of time and their knowledge of shape and space is good; for instance, they grasp the concept of rotational symmetry and co-ordinates to a sophisticated level.
81. The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school. Only two lessons could be observed during the inspection and, therefore, judgements are based on the observation of these lessons, discussions with staff and scrutiny of pupils' work. Planning is consistent with the National Framework for numeracy and subject knowledge is secure. Teachers use questions well to challenge pupils and especially the more able; as seen in a lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4 on the investigation of number patterns. Teachers use subject specific vocabulary with confidence and often make good links with literacy skills. They use practical activities to challenge and motivate pupils and enable them to practise their skills in realistic situations. As a result, all pupils feel fully included in lessons. Teachers organise lessons well in all classes so that they waste no time and activities move on with pace. They manage lessons well and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement. They do not use homework consistently across the school to support the learning undertaken in class and this is particularly so for the older junior pupils. Teachers have used information and communication technology well to support the teaching of data handling skills and the presentation of results in scientific investigations.

82. The school has planned the curriculum well overall and implemented the National Numeracy Strategy effectively. A good feature is the emphasis on mental and practical mathematics. Teachers use the start and end of the lessons well to support and review pupils' learning in lessons, but further use of this information by teachers is inconsistent across the school. Assessment is satisfactory but teachers do not always use the information effectively to plan for different abilities in the upper junior class. The monitoring of teaching and learning is of good quality and the headteacher provides satisfactory leadership for colleagues. The subject is adequately resourced and equipment is stored effectively in the classrooms and storage areas.

Strengths in the subject are

- Good use of the National Numeracy Strategy and associated planning
- Development of assessment systems and target setting for individual pupils
- Consistent focus on basic skills in numberwork

Areas for development

- Consistency across all classes in the use of assessment in order to track progress better
- Greater challenge and extension for more able pupils in the junior classes
- Make better use of homework for the oldest pupils to support their learning and strengthen the partnership with parents

SCIENCE

83. Only one science lesson could be seen during the inspection at the end of the junior classes. Judgements are based on this lesson, talking to pupils and looking at their books and discussions with staff. Standards are average at the end of both key stages. This finding is an improvement on that of the previous inspection, but not consistent with the previous year's national test results, which were much lower. However, these results need to be treated with caution due to the very small numbers of pupils each year in this school and the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress because of the hard work of the co-ordinator to devise and implement a scheme of work across the school. A good range of practical activities has ensured that all pupils are developing a sound understanding of all aspects of science covered in the National Curriculum programme of study. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.
84. The scrutiny of the pupils' books confirms that pupils at 7 and 11 are working at the expected levels in all aspects of the subject. In the one lesson seen for Years 5 and 6 pupils on how light travels into the eye to provide humans with sight, the teacher clearly explained this concept using the pupils' own experiences and visual aids. The work in the pupils' books shows that the previous work is also at this nationally expected level. They also include a broad range of investigative work. The development of the pupils' numeracy skills is supported by appropriate data handling to record their results such as in an investigation to measure noise pollution by Years 3 and 4 pupils. Pupils in other year groups are also making satisfactory progress across the school due to effective planning and the good development of investigative work. For example, pupils in Year 2 have studied the senses and in particular the simple properties of sound. The pupils' attitudes to learning are good overall, but some of the work completed by the oldest pupils is not always recorded in their books with the expected level of care and it is often untidy.
85. The curriculum is now satisfactory and it is appropriate for pupils throughout the school. The quality of leadership and management for this subject is good and the co-ordinator has worked hard to improve curriculum planning throughout the school. There are now good procedures in place for recording the achievement and progress of pupils against the

National Curriculum attainment targets. Teachers are now able to use this information to plan more effectively for the needs of individual pupils and further raise standards. Monitoring and evaluation of the subject have been satisfactory and this has led to further improvements in teaching and learning. The range and quality of resources are satisfactory

Strengths in the subject are

- A good focus on investigative work
- Good planning for lessons and assessment of pupil progress

Areas for development are

- Improve levels of presentation by older pupils

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

86. Only one history lesson in Years 1 and 2 was observed during the inspection. Further evidence was taken from teachers' planning, pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils. Throughout the school all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall in both subjects. Progress is good in geography at the end of Year 6. These findings are an improvement on those of the previous inspection.
87. In Years 1 and 2, pupils gain knowledge about places and events of the past through simple map work and topics such as the Great Fire of London. Teachers in the junior classes are promoting the appropriate use of geographical vocabulary through topics covered and the good development of mapping skills, for example in the study of mountains, Norwich and a traffic survey within the village. A study of the old village railway station highlights how teachers are beginning to use the local environment to support the teaching of history and geography.
88. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are developing a good sense of past events when they study topics such as the Great Fire of London. This good provision is characterised by the one very good lesson seen for pupils in the infant class. The teacher's good subject knowledge and good use of visual aids brought the subject to life for the pupils. As a result, these pupils were keen to learn about the past and the changes that the Great Fire brought to the people living in London at the time.
89. The school builds appropriately on this good progress throughout Years 3 to 6. Pupils extend their understanding of the passing of time and sense of chronology through using timelines and studying periods in history such as the Ancient Greeks. Teachers have established satisfactory links with literacy work and extended writing is assisting the raising of standards in English. In Years 3 to 6, pupils get good opportunities for data handling in the tallying of results and the construction of graphs. All pupils show an enthusiasm for history and are keen to display their knowledge of the past. Both subjects make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development overall by providing opportunities for pupils to reflect on past events and its impact on their own lives in the present.
90. The curriculum is satisfactory in both subjects. It makes an appropriate contribution to pupils' development through focusing on life from different eras and the study of other places and their locality. Management and leadership are satisfactory overall, but there has been very little monitoring of curriculum planning and teaching. The school makes good use of the local area for study. It has satisfactory levels of artefacts and resources fully to support the topics being taught.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

91. Standards in information and communication technology are in line for 7 year olds at the end of Year 2, but below that expected for 11 year olds at the end of Year 6. All pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, are provided with an appropriate range of activities and opportunities to develop their skills in using the computer, such as word processing and graphic work. The oldest pupils in the juniors have had very little experience of control technology, although the school plans to cover this later this year. The youngest pupils in the juniors are making good progress this year in information and communication technology because skills are being taught regularly and sometimes daily. For instance, these pupils have achieved some impressive results in the production of pictures in the style of Seurat and Andre Derain. The school has made satisfactory progress overall in the subject since the previous inspection.
92. Pupils in the infants build on the good work started in the reception year. Pupils get regular opportunities to use the computer to support their learning in literacy and numeracy. Their skills in using the keyboard are satisfactory and they use the mouse well to activate programs and enter data. Several examples of typed text and pictures in the pupils' work confirm that they receive suitable opportunities to use the word-processor and graphics packages. Staff use investigations in science to provide good opportunities for these pupils to enter and interpret information in data handling packages, for instance the representation of the size of pupils' feet as a bar chart.
93. Pupils in the juniors continue to develop their skill in word-processing. They use it to good effect in the presentation of work around the school, such as poems and stories. Good quality teaching for pupils in Years 3 and 4 is now ensuring that these pupils have regular opportunities to develop their skills. For instance, they are able to enter simple data and present it in graphic form to depict the results of their noise survey. Skills in graphic modelling are being taught well as exemplified by the very effective repeating pattern designs displayed on the classroom walls. Good use of parent help in this class ensures that all pupils are provided with good opportunities to search the internet at pre-determined and appropriate websites for project information, for example on their shark topic.
94. The quality of teaching and learning continues to be satisfactory for Years 5 and 6 pupils, but due to unsatisfactory teaching in previous years their skills in several aspects of the subject are below that expected for pupils of a similar age. The headteacher and governing body have recognised this. A governor provided extra support in the previous year to raise standards in word-processing and data handling. Further enrichment took place during the previous school journey where some pupils now in Year 6 produced their own website pages. As yet these pupils have not been taught how to use email and their understanding of control technology is very limited.
95. The headteacher leads the subject satisfactorily. All staff are receiving appropriate training and support staff are competent with the use of computers, providing extra help for pupils in their work. The school's simple network system provides an efficient means of using the software, but continual problems with the printers limit the opportunities for the pupils to print out their work immediately. The school uses older computers effectively to provide extra opportunities for pupils to monitor the weather. There is an appropriate range of software available for staff to use. There is no whole school portfolio of pupils' work to provide reference material for monitoring pupils' standards. The school has recently introduced a skills assessment sheet, but as yet it is not using this effectively to record and monitor the pupils' progress at the top end of the school.

Areas of strength within the subject

- Improved levels of provision across the school
- Good teaching of skills as a result of staff training and recruitment

Areas of development

- Raise levels of attainment overall by the age of 11 and especially in the aspect of control technology
- Monitor pupils' individual progress more effectively

ART AND DESIGN, DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY AND MUSIC

96. During the inspection there were few opportunities to see lessons in art and in design and technology. Inspectors saw three lessons in music, one in each class. They saw one lesson of art and part of a lesson of design and technology. Judgements on pupils' standards are based on these lessons, on their previous work as seen in folders and portfolios, and on work displayed around the school.

Art and design

97. In reception and the infant class, standards are in line with national expectations. Work displayed showed that pupils use a variety of media such as pencil, paint, pastels and crayons as well as using the computer to produce very effective images of houses on fire to illustrate a project on the Fire of London. The pencil line drawings in response to photographic images of architectural features such as wrought iron scroll work and glass and steel buildings showed good observation and sensitive response to the stimulus.
98. Standards are in line with national expectations for 11 year-olds and an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. In the junior classes, younger pupils' work on repeating patterns reflected their research on textiles and wallpaper patterns. The work on the Willow Pattern Story showed lively use of colour and of line in pictures of willow trees. The work of pupils in the older junior class was below national expectations. Pupils used different materials to create pictorial effects to illustrate stories, but were unused to evaluating their work in terms of National Curriculum criteria. As yet, the school makes no formal assessment of pupils' work in art. This makes it difficult for pupils to identify what they need to do to make their work better.

Design and technology

99. Standards are in line for 7 and 11 year olds and similar to that of the previous inspection. In design technology work, pupils in the reception, Year 1 and Year 2 class had considered the best way to hold together pieces of cotton material in a project on Joseph's Dreamcoat. They had considered the purpose of what they were doing, experimented with gluing, stapling and sewing and then evaluated the results. Older pupils gave clear, reasoned explanations for saying that sewing was the best method. Their teacher had successfully taught them the process of designing, making and evaluating a piece of work and pupils had responded thoughtfully.
100. In Year 3 and Year 4, work in pupils' folders showed similarly well planned projects on designing and making photograph frames and in one case a music stand also. The drawings and written explanations of the process were detailed and clear and well presented. Initial design work on a battery-connected light source showed carefully drawn and labelled diagrams which demonstrated pupils' understanding of how an electric circuit works.
101. In Year 5 and Year 6, pupils had created a display of multi-media work on space travel. Pupils had painted pictures, made three-dimensional figures from modelling clay and wrote imaginative stories on the topic. There was no evidence of pupils working through the design process nor of evaluation. Pupils' experiences of and learning from design and technology needs to be extended and planned to build on skills already acquired.

Music

102. Standards are in line for 7 and 11 year olds and similar to that of the previous inspection. In the lesson seen in the reception/Years 1 and 2 class, pupils experimented with instruments to make long and short sounds and to distinguish between high and low notes. A game introduced by the teacher ensured that all pupils were able to take part with enjoyment. In the lesson for the Years 3 and 4 class, the pupils displayed considerable interest and enjoyment in exploring the different emotional effects music can create in the listener. They worked very well in pairs to compare sequences of notes, which they played to the whole class and evaluated. Their work was thoughtful and every pupil achieved the lesson's objectives. The lesson seen for pupils in the Years 5 and 6 class showed that pupils were working well and achieving in line with expectations. Good teaching of harmonics through a range of familiar and unfamiliar songs is developing the pupils' understanding of music well.
103. Curriculum coverage in art, design and technology and music is achieved by following the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority schemes of work for each subject. As yet, there is no assessment of pupils' work in art or music, although some assessment is carried out in design and technology. The school now needs to develop agreed criteria for assessment and apply them consistently.

Strengths in all three subjects can be summarised as follows

- Careful planning and good use of resources in reception, Years 1 and 2 and the lower part of the juniors
- Pupils' good response to a range of stimuli in the creative arts and their evident enjoyment of their work

and areas for development to

- Establish assessment procedures in art and music and teach pupils to evaluate their work against subject criteria so that they know how to improve it
- Ensure greater consistency of practice across the school

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

104. Standards are in line with national expectations for pupils by the time they are 7 and 11. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress in their physical development. After-school clubs such as gymnastics provide good opportunities for the most talented pupils to be taught a range of sports to a good level. Appropriate opportunities are provided for pupils in Years 5 and 6 to swim at the local secondary school, with the result that most pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the age of 11 years.
105. Teaching is satisfactory across the school and in games such as hockey it is effectively supported by sports coaches. Pupils and teachers dress smartly for all lessons. Teachers' planning is satisfactory overall, although it varies greatly in its quality and content from unsatisfactory to very good. However, teachers clearly identify aims and objectives for each lesson and they demonstrate good subject knowledge. They use good levels of praise to motivate pupils and they provide guidance to help pupils to improve their skills. This was clearly demonstrated in a gymnastics lesson for Years 5 and 6 pupils in how to complete a forward roll. Pupils in the infant class are also developing their gymnastics skills appropriately through the satisfactory teaching of skills such as climbing, balancing and swinging. Pupils in some classes are not effectively encouraged to appraise the work of others in their lesson in order that they may improve their own skills and comment on the performance of their classmates.

106. The overall management of the subject is satisfactory, but there has been no effective monitoring of standards. There is a good range of resources available and the playgrounds and local sports field provide good opportunities for outdoor games. The school takes part in several local sporting competitions and the range of extra-curricular activities is good.