

INSPECTION REPORT

MALCOLM SARGENT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stamford

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120672

Headteacher: Mr John Oates

Reporting inspector: Ms Alison Grainger
20782

Dates of inspection: 26th February – 2nd March 2001

Inspection number: 208745

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: Foundation

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Empingham Road
Stamford
Lincolnshire

Postcode: PE9 2SR

Telephone number: 01780 762708/756056

Fax number: 01780 765648

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Ken Swanson

Date of previous inspection: 30/11/1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20782	Alison Grainger	Registered inspector	Music	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management
9002	Derek Ashton	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
31175	Arthur Allison	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
1189	Sharon Brown	Team inspector	English Design and technology	
23610	Jean Denton	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	
21171	Sally Handford	Team inspector	Art Religious education Equal opportunities English as an additional language	
10611	Martin James	Team inspector	Science Physical education Special educational needs	
24216	Maureen Roberts	Team inspector	Geography History	

The inspection contractor was:

PkR Educational Consultants Ltd
6 Sherman Road
Bromley
Kent
BR1 3JH

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33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated on the north western edge of Stamford. With 586 boys and girls aged four to eleven on roll, the school is much bigger than many other primary schools nationally. The percentage of pupils (12 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs is below average. Most pupils identified as having special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties. Three pupils have statements of special educational need. Very few pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. Even fewer have English as an additional language. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Taking the intake as a whole, pupils' attainment on entry to the school is above average.

The inspection of this school included a detailed inspection of its provision for pupils with special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. There are some significant areas of strength, but the underachievement of pupils at the age of eleven in English, particularly in writing, is a significant weakness. The school is aware of the problem in English and has started work to tackle it. Pupils leave the school achieving above average standards in mathematics and science although, in English, standards are average. Teaching is good for pupils aged four to seven and pupils of this age make good progress, especially in key areas such as reading, writing and mathematics. For pupils aged seven to eleven, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, as is the value for money provided.

What the school does well

- Standards are consistently above the national average in mathematics and science when pupils leave the school at the age of eleven.
- Standards are above those expected nationally in art and design, geography, history, physical education and religious education at the age of eleven. In design and technology, standards are well above those normally found at this age.
- There is a significant amount of good teaching. Teaching is well matched to pupils' needs between the ages of four and seven and results in good progress especially in key areas such as English and mathematics.
- Pupils respond well to the school's high expectations of their attitudes and behaviour. They work and play well together and like being at school.
- There is good care for pupils' personal well being.
- The partnership with parents is good. Parents contribute well to the life of the school.

What could be improved

- Pupils do not achieve as highly in English as in mathematics and science at the age of eleven.
- There is not enough checking of teaching and the curriculum and how they affect pupils' learning.
- Information from assessment is not used sufficiently to guide the planning of the curriculum. Other than in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, there are no formal procedures for assessing pupils' learning between the ages of five and eleven.
- Insufficient attention is given to developing pupils' understanding of our multicultural society.

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 progress with improvement since its last inspection in 1998. Progress in addressing the serious weaknesses found at that time in the leadership and management of the school has been good. There are now clear procedures for making management decisions and for sharing these with staff. The delegation of responsibilities is clearer and more equitable. Further work is needed in relation to the allocation of responsibilities to members of the senior management team. Improvements have been made to the school development plan, which is now a good document with clear priorities. Good procedures are in place for checking progress on the priorities identified.

Arrangements for the appraisal of staff are now satisfactory. Governors are now aware of their role and responsibilities in checking the work of the school, and they do this well.

The school has also dealt with the areas identified as 'minor issues' at the last inspection. There is now a policy for the teaching of information and communication technology, including good guidance for teachers. A scheme of work is in place to ensure that National Curriculum requirements are met in this area. Systems are now in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in information and communication technology, although information from assessment is not used well enough to guide the planning of learning opportunities.

The school has maintained standards above the national average in mathematics and science at the age of eleven. In English, however, standards are not as high as they were at the last inspection. Religious education and design and technology standards have improved at the age of eleven, but standards are lower now in music. Good standards in pupils' attitudes and behaviour have been maintained. Many of the strengths of teaching have been maintained, although English teaching for pupils aged seven to eleven is now satisfactory rather than good. Teaching in mathematics and science is not quite as good as at the last inspection for seven to eleven year olds.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	B	D	E
mathematics	B	B	B	C
science	B	A	B	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The above table shows that standards in 2000 were above the national average in mathematics and science, and below the national average in English. When compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, standards were average in mathematics and science and well below average in English. In mathematics and science, standards in 2000 were similar to those achieved in 1998 when the school was last inspected. In English, standards in 2000 were lower than in 1998. The trend in the school's results over the last three years has been broadly in line with that found nationally in mathematics and science, although it has been below the national trend in English. The school has identified some reasons for the lower English results in 2000, largely linked to the higher than usual movement of pupils in and out of the school in this year group since the age of seven. These factors alone do not account for the lower standards. Some pupils made unsatisfactory progress, particularly in writing, between the ages of seven and eleven. The school has set realistic targets for the improvement of English and mathematics standards at the age of eleven. In 2000, the school met its targets for the percentage of pupils reaching at least the level expected of most eleven years olds. The 2001 targets indicate that improvement is expected especially in English.

At the age of seven in the 2000 tests, pupils' results were in the highest five per cent of schools nationally in reading and mathematics, and they were well above the national average in writing. These results were much the same as at the last inspection in writing, and in reading and mathematics they were better. The evidence from the inspection of pupils' school work shows that, this year, standards at the age of eleven are still above average in mathematics and science and they are now average in English. The lower English standards are, in particular, due to weaknesses in writing as a result of progress slowing between the ages of seven and nine (in Years 3 and 4). At the age of seven, standards this year are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Standards in art and design, geography, history, physical education and religious education are above those expected nationally when pupils leave the school at the age of eleven. In design and technology, they are well above. Standards are as expected nationally for pupils of this age in information and communication technology and music. At the end of the reception year, children's attainment is above average in all areas of learning except physical development. Pupils' overall progress, especially in English and mathematics, is good between the ages of four and seven, and it is satisfactory between the ages of seven and eleven.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic and respond well to challenging work. They work well individually and in groups and are attentive to teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons, when eating lunch, on the playground and when moving about the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils get on well with each other and with adults. They respond positively to opportunities to show initiative or take responsibility.
Attendance	Very good. The school maintains consistently high levels of attendance. Punctuality is good.

Pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and relationships, very good attendance, and positive response to opportunities for their personal development all contribute to the effectiveness of their learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

One hundred and eleven lessons were seen during the inspection. Of these, 10 per cent were very good, 54 per cent good, 34 per cent satisfactory and two per cent unsatisfactory. Instances of very good teaching were seen in the reception classes, in art and design in Years 4 and 6, in design and technology in Years 5 and 6, and in English and mathematics in Year 5. Examples of good teaching are found in all year groups. Unsatisfactory lessons were seen in music in Key Stage 1 (ages five to seven) and in geography in the lower part of Key Stage 2 (ages seven to nine). The quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics, including the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, is good for pupils aged five to seven. It is satisfactory in the reception year and for pupils aged seven to eleven. While the teaching of English is satisfactory overall for pupils aged seven to eleven, there are weaknesses in Years 3 and 4 where the high achievement of pupils at the age of seven is not built on well enough. The school meets pupils' individual needs well between the ages of four and seven, and satisfactorily between the ages of seven and eleven. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are met well, especially when taken out of class for teaching in small groups. Sufficient account is taken of the needs of the very few pupils with English as an additional language.

Teaching and learning are good in science between the ages of five and seven. They are also good in art and design, design and technology and physical education throughout the school. For pupils aged seven to eleven, teaching and learning are good in geography, history and religious education. In all other subjects, teaching and learning are satisfactory between the ages of seven and eleven.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. All the required subjects are covered and there is good enrichment through visits and visitors to the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils' needs are identified and they are given the support they need to make good progress towards the targets set for them. The provision in small groups taken out of class is particularly good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional	Satisfactory. The school is aware of the needs of the very few pupils with English as an additional language, and ensures that they are met.

language	
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. There is good attention to pupils' moral and social development. There is an emphasis on consideration for others and on working and playing together. Assemblies provide satisfactorily for spiritual development. While cultural development is satisfactory overall, too little attention is given to developing pupils' awareness of the rich cultural diversity of modern Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. There is good care for pupils' personal well being. Procedures for assessing pupils' learning are not established across the curriculum and information from assessment is not used well enough to guide the planning of learning opportunities.

The school's partnership with parents is good. The quality of information for parents is good and parents work with the school to support their children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher provides a satisfactory educational direction for the work of the school. The senior management team is an effective decision making body that communicates well with staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors have a good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are effective in holding it to account for the quality of its provision and the standards it achieves.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. There is not enough checking of the quality of teaching and the curriculum by the headteacher, senior staff and subject co-ordinators.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school uses its resources efficiently. Spending is closely targeted on educational priorities. The application of the principles of best value is satisfactory.

The school has sufficient teachers, support staff and resources to meet the demands of the curriculum. The accommodation is good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school is approachable. • Expectations of their children's work and behaviour are high. • Teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount and consistency of homework. • The range of activities outside lessons. • The information on children's progress. • How the school works with them. • How the school is led and managed.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views, although teaching for pupils aged seven to eleven is satisfactory rather than good. Inspection evidence does not support parents' negative views, although the range of activities outside lessons is mainly for pupils aged seven to eleven only.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

1. Pupils' results in the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 2000 were above the national average in mathematics and science, and below the national average in English. In comparison with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' performance was average in mathematics and science and well below average in English. The percentage of pupils reaching at least the level expected of most eleven year olds was broadly average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The percentage reaching a higher level was well above the national average in mathematics and science, but it was below average in English. The school has identified some reasons for pupils' lower performance in English than in mathematics and science. These largely concern the higher than usual movement of pupils in and out of the school as this year group progressed through Key Stage 2. These factors alone do not explain why pupils did not do as well in English as in mathematics and science. Comparison of pupils' end of Key Stage 1 results with their performance at the end of Key Stage 2, shows that some made unsatisfactory progress across the key stage, particularly in writing. Overall, pupils' progress in mathematics and science was satisfactory as they moved up through Key Stage 2.
2. When the school was last inspected in 1998, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were also above average in mathematics and science. In English, they had been well above the national average. Over the last three years, from 1998 to 2000, the trend in the school's results has been broadly in line with that found nationally in mathematics and science, but in English the trend has been below the national. There has been a trend of girls doing better than boys in English. In mathematics and science, there is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. In two out of the last three years, boys have outperformed girls in mathematics and science. The school sets suitably challenging targets for improvement in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. It met its targets in 2000 for the percentage of pupils reaching at least the level expected of most eleven year olds. The 2001 targets indicate that improvement is expected especially in English.
3. In the end of Key Stage 1 tests in 2000, pupils achieved high standards. In reading and mathematics, the school's results were in the highest five per cent nationally. In writing, they were well above the national average. Standards were also high when compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, and in mathematics, they were still in the top five per cent. The percentage of pupils reaching at least the level expected of most seven year olds was in the top five per cent nationally in all three areas. The percentage reaching a higher level was also in the highest five per cent in reading and mathematics, and in writing it was above the national average. Standards in writing were also well above the national average in 1998, and the rate of improvement has been broadly in line with that found nationally. In reading and mathematics, the school's results have improved at a faster rate than nationally. In 1998, standards in both these areas had been above the national average, but not as high as they were in 2000. The improvement in reading and mathematics standards is largely due to the effective implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in Key Stage 1, in particular the attention given to basic skills. There is no significant variation in the performance of boys and girls. In science in 2000, teachers assessed pupils' performance as well above the national average.

4. This year, the evidence from the inspection of pupils' school work shows that the standards at which the present Year 6 pupils are working are average in English and above average in mathematics and science. In English, writing is the weaker area and reduces otherwise above average standards. These pupils now at the end of Key Stage 2, have made satisfactory progress as they have moved up through the key stage in mathematics and science. In relation to their attainment on entry to Key Stage 2, their progress in English has been unsatisfactory over time. Pupils now in Key Stage 2 are making satisfactory progress overall in all three subjects. Progress is strongest in Years 5 and 6. In English, however, this involves developing skills that should have been established earlier in the key stage. The standards at which the present Year 2 are working are well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. These pupils now at the end of Key Stage 1 have made good progress as they have moved up through the key stage.
5. Children's attainment on entry to the reception year, at the age of four, is above average in mathematical understanding, and in communication, language and literacy, except in writing. Pupils speak and listen well and have good early reading skills. In all other areas of development, children's attainment is average. While in the reception year, children make satisfactory progress overall in communication, language and literacy with good progress in the specific areas of writing words and learning letter sounds for reading. Overall progress is satisfactory in mathematical development, with good progress made in the aspects of number recognition and calculation. In their personal, social, emotional and creative development, children make good progress. Children also make good gains in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. In physical development, progress is satisfactory overall, with good gains in manipulative skills for the use of tools such as pencils. On entry to Key Stage 1, children achieve above average standards in all areas except physical development. Children's attainment on entry, and at the end of the reception year, are much the same as at the last inspection.
6. By the age of five, at the end of the Foundation Stage, children speak clearly and listen well, taking turns to speak and to listen to others. Most children read simple texts and use letter sounds and picture clues to read new words. Higher attaining children read more complex texts and discuss characters and events in stories. They understand the contents pages in fiction and non-fiction books and know how to use books to find information. All children write their names. Many write a sentence or more unaided with recognisable words or groups of letters that resemble words. Most children count to 20 or 30, and some count to 50. They count forwards and backwards and identify a number 'one more than' or 'one less than' a given number to 20. Most children add or subtract two numbers, using numerals or pictures of objects to represent them. They recognise simple two-dimensional shapes, have a simple understanding of capacity, but are less secure in judging heavier or lighter weights.
7. By the age of seven, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils listen very attentively to their teachers and to each other. They are articulate and give clear explanations and answers to questions. Pupils read fluently, with good expression and with very good understanding. Most pupils have a good range of strategies to help them read unfamiliar words. Pupils write for a good range of purposes and with a very good awareness of the reader. Many use language imaginatively. Spelling and punctuation are accurate. While some pupils write neatly in a fluent cursive style, many do not join letters. A significant minority do not form letters evenly. Pupils count, read, write, order, add and subtract numbers to 100. They count in fives from a given starting point to over 100. About half the pupils can count just as quickly backwards as

forwards. They know the two, five and 10 times tables and quickly double numbers to 40. Pupils interpret simple graphs, are familiar with the properties of simple shapes, and tell and record the time on the hour and half-hour. They have very effective problem solving skills.

8. By the age of eleven, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils speak confidently, using a rich vocabulary, and listen carefully to others during conversations. They do not, however, have the higher order skills of debate such as in presenting a reasoned argument and in listening critically to others. Many pupils have good skills in reading comprehension and enjoy fiction, many having favourite authors. Pupils use dictionaries well, but their skills in using non-fiction books to find information are less secure and in need of development. Pupils write for a suitable range of purposes. Higher attaining pupils write at good length, selecting language to describe or create atmosphere, but many others do not. Many pupils plan and draft their writing well, editing it for spelling and punctuation. They are less effective in editing it for style and content, and this aspect of their work also needs improvement. Many pupils write in a neat cursive style. Pupils are confident in using very large numbers. They understand the link between equivalent fractions, percentages and decimals and have good skills in mental arithmetic using decimals. Paper calculations using division with large numbers are carried out accurately. Pupils calculate areas and perimeters, have a good understanding of two and three-dimensional shapes, measure angles accurately and understand metric and imperial measurements. Many understand terms such as 'mode', 'median' and 'range', and construct scatter graphs.
9. In other subjects, standards of literacy are good overall at Key Stage 1, with very good use of literacy skills by the end of the key stage. Overall literacy standards are satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Literacy skills are applied and developed in subjects such as geography and history. Where numeracy skills are used in other subjects, such as science and design and technology, standards are good.
10. In science, by the age of seven, pupils very competently undertake investigations, such as on electricity, and understand what makes a test fair. They have a very secure knowledge and understanding of all the areas of study required by the National Curriculum for pupils of this age. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have some experience of selecting their own equipment for experiments. They make sensible predictions, record their observations and measurements well, and draw conclusions based on evidence. They have a good understanding of life processes and living things, the properties of a variety of materials and physical phenomena.
11. In information and communication technology, standards are in line with those expected nationally at the end of both key stages. The school has maintained the standards found in this area at the last inspection, even though the demands of the curriculum are now greater. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use computers confidently for word processing, adding illustrations with clipart, and entering data to produce pictograms. They have the expected understanding of the use of computers to control devices. These skills are developed by the end of Key Stage 2, so that pupils combine graphics with text, produce news sheets, work on spreadsheets and enter data to produce pie charts. They use CD Roms for research. While pupils use information and communication technology in a range of subjects, such as mathematics, history and science, they do not apply their skills across the full curriculum.
12. In art and design and physical education, the standard of pupils' work is above that expected nationally at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Standards are also better than

normally found in geography, history and religious education at the end of Key Stage 2, and in design and technology they are well above the expectations for pupils of this age. Standards have improved in design and technology and religious education at Key Stage 2. In geography and history, standards are lower now at Key Stage 1 than those described in the last inspection report, and in music they are lower throughout the school. In all other subjects, standards are much the same as those found at the last inspection. Design and technology standards have improved at Key Stage 2 due to the good subject knowledge of teachers and a greater emphasis on pupils recording their work. In music, standards have fallen due to a lack of confidence on the part of many teachers, as music teaching has become the remit of class teachers rather than being taught by a specialist teacher. Other changes in standards are directly linked to teaching quality.

13. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to the targets set for them. This is because the special educational needs support teacher and the learning support assistants provide good levels of help to pupils taken out of class for teaching in small groups. Pupils' targets are regularly evaluated and reviewed, and new ones are set when necessary to aid progress. In class, pupils usually receive suitable support from the assistants, and they are given work that is relevant to their individual needs. The work set for pupils is similar to that provided for their classmates, but with suitable allowance being made for them. In class English lessons in Key Stage 2, however, there is not always sufficient recognition of the needs of pupils with special educational needs.
14. Pupils with potential for higher attainment make good progress while in Key Stage 1, and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. Higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in English at Key Stage 2, especially in Years 3 and 4. There are also occasions when these pupils are not performing as well as they might in geography, history and music. Very few pupils have English as an additional language. At the time of the inspection, there were very few pupils at an early stage of learning English. Those with English as an additional language were in the reception year and Key Stage 2 only. Their rate of progress is similar to that of other pupils in the same classes. It is good in the reception year, and satisfactory in Key Stage 2.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Children in the reception classes have good attitudes to learning, are well behaved and work and play well together. They settle well into school routines and quickly develop independence. This is seen, for example, when they select an activity for themselves in the practical area and cross their names off a list to show that they have done it and will choose a different one next. Independence and a sense of responsibility are also evident when children put things away at the end of a session, mop up water in the area of the water tray and clear up any sand that has fallen from the sand tray. Children learn the difference between right and wrong and share equipment amicably. They work well together in activities such as make-believe play in the role play 'garden centre'.
16. Pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 have good attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic and respond well to challenging activities. This was seen, for example, in practical mathematics sessions, including one in a lower attaining Year 5 set which included a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. In this lesson, pupils worked hard to solve problems related to perimeter and area. In other lessons, pupils with special educational needs persevere when work is difficult, whether

working individually or in groups. They show confidence and respond well with the support of a teacher or learning assistant. Pupils willingly join in whole class discussions, and listen attentively to instructions and explanations.

17. Behaviour is good in lessons, at lunchtimes and in the playground. Pupils move around the school in an orderly way, showing consideration for others. Inappropriate behaviour is rare. There have been no exclusions, either fixed term or permanent for at least six years. Pupils respond well to the school's high expectations of their independence and self discipline. Pupils learn to accept responsibility for their own behaviour. Pupils with special educational needs usually behave well.
18. Pupils have good relationships with each other and with adults. They work well together and co-operate in lessons. In a Year 3 English lesson, for example, pupils shared ideas as they answered questions about a text giving rules for the use of a rollercoaster. The sharing of ideas is also seen as pupils in the same year group make electrical circuits or those in Year 5 work to solve real life mathematical problems. Pupils respond well to the opportunities provided for their personal development, although these are not as great as they might be. Several Year 6 pupils very sensibly help to care for reception children at lunchtimes. Pupils are polite and friendly, and courteous in their dealings with adults.
19. Attendance is very good, with the school maintaining consistently high standards in this respect. Attendance levels are well above the national average and there is no unauthorised absence. Punctuality and time keeping throughout the day is good. Pupils enjoy school. Their good attitudes, behaviour, relationships and positive response to the opportunities provided for their personal development, all contribute to the effectiveness of their learning. All of the positive features found at the last inspection have been maintained.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good in the reception year and at Key Stage 1, and it is satisfactory at Key Stage 2. During the inspection, 111 lessons were seen. Of these, 10 per cent were very good, 54 per cent good, 34 per cent satisfactory and two per cent unsatisfactory. Instances of very good teaching were seen in the reception classes, in art and design in Years 4 and 6, in design and technology in Years 5 and 6, and in English and mathematics in Year 5. There are examples of good teaching in all year groups. Unsatisfactory lessons were seen in music in Year 1 and in geography in Year 4.
21. The teaching and learning of English, including the basic skills of literacy, are good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in the reception year and at Key Stage 2. In the reception class, there is good teaching of writing, and in Key Stage 2 there is some good teaching of English in Years 5 and 6. The better teaching of English in Years 5 and 6 results in good progress being made. This is not enough to raise pupils' attainment to a higher level, especially in writing, because pupils are covering basics that were not dealt with thoroughly enough in Years 3 and 4. The teaching and learning of mathematics, including the basic skills of numeracy, are good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in the reception year and at Key Stage 2. As with English, there are specific areas that are taught more effectively than others in the reception classes. In mathematics, these concern the teaching of number recognition and calculation. While the wider inspection evidence of the work in pupils' books and the standards they achieve, show that learning in mathematics is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 2, a significant amount of good teaching was seen in individual lessons

during the inspection. As in English, teaching and learning in mathematics are most effective in Years 5 and 6 in Key Stage 2.

22. The teaching and learning in science are good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2, with some good practice in Years 5 and 6. In art and design, design and technology and physical education, the overall quality of teaching and learning is good at Key Stages 1 and 2. It is also good in geography, history and religious education in Key Stage 2, although in Key Stage 1 these subjects are taught satisfactorily. In information and communication technology and music throughout the school, teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the reception year, teaching and learning are good in personal, social, emotional and creative development and in knowledge and understanding of the world. In physical development, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning in information and communication technology and in music are not as good as they were reported as being at the last inspection. In music, the reason is that class teachers, rather than a specialist teacher, are responsible for lessons, and many lack confidence. In information and communication technology, there has not been a fall in standards since the last inspection but the level of expertise expected of teachers has increased. In contrast, teachers are now more confident in teaching physical education. The result is that teaching and learning in physical education are better than at the last inspection. The teaching of religious education at Key Stage 2 has also improved since the last inspection.
23. What distinguishes the very good lessons is the clarity with which teachers focus on what it is that they want pupils to learn. Furthermore, the learning objectives are communicated to pupils so that they have a keen awareness of their learning. In the very good lessons seen in the reception year, children were given opportunities to review and share their learning at the end of the lessons. This summary discussion also contributes well to the development of children's speaking and listening skills. In very good lessons, time is used effectively so that learning is moved on without delay. Skilful questioning is also a feature. In a Year 5 English lesson, for example, questioning helped pupils to discover for themselves the importance of specialist vocabulary in non-fiction texts. In a mathematics lesson for lower attaining pupils in Year 5, challenging questions matched to pupils' differing needs consolidated and extended their understanding of multiplication tables and how area and perimeter are calculated. In this lesson, very good use was made of support assistants to develop the understanding of pupils with special educational needs.
24. In good teaching in the reception year, teachers have high expectations of children's behaviour, attitudes and independence. They promote confidence and self-esteem through the way in which activities are organised. When children are in the practical area, they select for themselves what activities they will do and cross their names off a list on completion of them. The ongoing assessment of children's learning is good. As a result, activities are well matched to children's learning needs. Skilful questioning is used as an effective means of assessment, for example, as children explore musical instruments. Teachers identify areas for assessment in play activities. Good resources are provided for letter formation, supporting good progress and the achievement of above average standards. Number recognition and calculation are promoted through well-paced mental mathematics sessions. Activities, such as singing the rules learned in working with numbers, reinforce learning and help the children to remember what they have learned. Classroom assistants are well deployed to make an effective contribution to learning.
25. Skilful questioning is also a feature of effective teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2. In

mental mathematics sessions, for example, pupils are required to explain the reasoning behind their responses. In a Year 1 English lesson, pupils were challenged through questioning to think more deeply about story structure and characterisation. In many subjects, there is a suitable emphasis on the use of the correct language, and this also serves to develop understanding. This use of subject specific language is particularly evident in mathematics, science and information and communication technology. There is good attention to the teaching of skills alongside the development of knowledge and understanding in art and design and design and technology. Practical 'hands on' experiences develop understanding effectively in science, geography and history. Some imaginative methods are used to deepen pupils' understanding of events in history as the teacher pretends to be a person from the past and answers pupils' questions in role. Year 6 pupils and their teacher recreated a Victorian classroom, leaving pupils in no doubt that they prefer modern conditions. In religious education, there is a good emphasis in Key Stage 2 on pupils' own ideas and views. Teachers provide clear instructions and explanations. Demonstration is used well in physical education lessons, although there are some missed opportunities for pupils to learn by evaluating what they have seen.

26. The teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs is good in sessions when they are taken out of class in small groups. It is also frequently good when they are taught as part of a mixed ability class, although there are some instances of lessons in which their needs are not well enough met. In the main, teachers and support assistants have a clear understanding of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and arrange a suitable range of activities and work for them. Positive relationships are established, and help and support are constantly provided. The special educational needs co-ordinator works closely with other adults in identifying and targeting pupils' individual needs. Pupils at Stage 2 and beyond on the special educational needs register are provided with good individual education plans. These plans list clear, manageable, relevant and achievable targets. Targets are reviewed termly, with new targets being set when necessary. The special needs support teacher and the learning support assistants liaise closely with class teachers to ensure suitable provision for pupils. The needs of the very few pupils with English as an additional language are carefully considered and they are given suitable learning opportunities.
27. Although there is no subject in which teaching is judged to be less than satisfactory, there are some areas in need of improvement. At Key Stage 2 in English, pupils in the mixed ability classes are sometimes all given the same work to do. In particular, this adversely affects the learning of those who have potential for higher attainment. There are also occasions when work is not matched well enough to the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Weaker, although satisfactory, teaching in English in Years 3 and 4 involves too great an emphasis on exercises in text books, with not enough development of pupils' independent writing. English work in these year groups is not planned to build well enough on pupils' high achievement at the end of Key Stage 1. Lessons are sometimes conducted at too slow a pace, with overlong introductions.
28. Although pupils in Key Stage 2 are taught in classes for mathematics based on their prior attainment, there is still a wide spread of attainment in each class. Often, as in English, there is too great a reliance on providing all pupils in a class with the same task. In a Year 4 'middle' mathematics class, for example, almost half the class found the task set too difficult. In science in Key Stage 2, work in one lesson is not always related well enough to what pupils have already learned. The result is that work is sometimes repeated, without it being at a significantly higher level. In

geography, in Key Stage 1, teachers' expectations of the standards pupils are capable of attaining in mapping skills are not always high enough. Similarly, there were missed opportunities for geographical learning in work related to a visit to the seaside. In music, there is not enough challenge for higher attaining pupils, which is a direct consequence of teachers' lack of confidence in this subject.

29. While work is marked regularly, in many classes it does not do enough to support learning. Marking of work in English is sometimes superficial. On occasions it is careless, resulting in incorrect or poorly presented work being praised. In mathematics, there are very few comments to help pupils improve their mathematical skills. Science is another subject in which few words of advice are added. These weaknesses in marking were also evident at the last inspection and they have not been rectified. Although parents have expressed concern about how consistently homework is set, it is used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning.
30. In the unsatisfactory lesson seen in music in Year 1, the teacher lacked the skills necessary to develop pupils' singing. As a result, the activities were repetitive rather than developmental. In the geography lesson in Year 4, the teacher had not communicated the purpose of the activity clearly enough to the class. The pace of the lesson was slow and pupils lost interest.

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

31. The strengths found at the last inspection in the learning opportunities for pupils have been maintained. The quality and range of learning opportunities in the reception year is satisfactory overall. The new Foundation Stage curriculum is in place and is continuing to be developed. The learning opportunities across the areas of learning for children of this age are broad and balanced, with specific strengths to be found in each. In communication, language and literacy, for example, there is a good emphasis on learning opportunities that enhance children's skills in writing words and that develop their knowledge of letter sounds for reading. In mathematics, the activities provided give particular support to the development of number recognition and calculation. There are, however, deficiencies in the outdoor curriculum. Children do not have sufficient opportunities for imaginative play outdoors or to use large equipment such as tricycles or push and pull toys. In particular, there are insufficient opportunities for children's physical development.
32. The curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactorily broad, balanced and relevant with some strengths. Statutory requirements are met for the teaching of the National Curriculum subjects and religious education. Opportunities are provided for pupils to learn effectively in all subjects. The time allocation to subjects is balanced. English, mathematics and science receive full attention, and there is sufficient time over the course of the school year for other subjects to be covered satisfactorily. Schemes of work are in place for each subject of the National Curriculum, taking account of new national guidance. Long and medium-term planning is undertaken within year groups to ensure consistency in the curriculum offered to pupils in different classes. There is a weakness in curriculum planning in religious education in Key Stage 1 where there is insufficient coverage of faiths other than Christianity to provide pupils with an understanding of the multi-faith society in which we live. The scheme of work for information and communication technology, developed since the last inspection in response to weaknesses identified at that time, is ensuring that pupils are developing the required knowledge, understanding and skills in this area. There is effective use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in mathematics, and some use of it in subjects such as science, geography

and history. Nevertheless, the use of modern technology to enhance learning opportunities across the curriculum is still an area in need of development, especially at Key Stage 2.

33. The school has effectively implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and this has led to a more balanced curriculum. Planning for the literacy hour sessions is satisfactory overall, although there is insufficient emphasis on providing opportunities for pupils to engage in extended writing in Years 3 and 4. Planning for numeracy is good overall. In Key Stage 2, however, where pupils are taught in sets based on prior attainment for numeracy, the range of ability within the sets is not always recognised. As a result, work is not always matched to the prior attainment of pupils, particularly those who are higher attaining.
34. A new programme for personal, social and health education has been in place since September 2000. This allows pupils to explore topics that are of particular concern to them. Sex and drugs education is taught through the science and personal, social and health education provision in line with the newly agreed school policy. The school nurse contributes to the formal sex education programme for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Healthy eating, and understanding of the importance of exercise, is promoted through science and physical education.
35. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Clear procedures are in place, and they closely follow the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of pupils. Staff test pupils to identify their particular needs. The information gained is put to good use in providing suitable work for pupils, both in class and in groups taken out of class. Individual education plans are provided by class teachers, supported by the special educational needs co-ordinator, for all pupils who are at Stage 2 and beyond, on the school's special needs register. These plans are of good quality and set targets for pupils to which learning opportunities are linked. The plans are reviewed each term, and pupils are kept fully aware of the contents of their own plans. Pupils at Stage 5 on the special needs register are provided with effective support, in line with the requirements of their statements. Their statements are reviewed annually. Teachers make sure that the work provided is in line with the needs of the National Curriculum, as well as the particular needs of the pupils. Pupils receive their full allocation of both literacy and numeracy. They usually spend the introductory sessions of lessons with the rest of their class, and then are taken out for specific work with the learning support assistants. There are some occasions in English in Key Stage 2, however, where insufficient account is taken of the needs of pupils with special educational needs in the work set for the whole class.
36. The needs of the very few pupils with English as an additional language are properly considered and they are suitably provided for. No pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 require support with early English language acquisition. The needs of higher attaining pupils are met satisfactorily, although there are occasions in English in Key Stage 2 when they are not well enough challenged. There is also sometimes a lack of challenge in music and geography for higher attaining pupils. The school ensures that all pupils have equality of access to the learning opportunities provided, although there is no formal equal opportunities policy.
37. There is good enhancement of the curriculum through visits and the contributions of visitors to the school. All pupils in Year 6 attend a residential course in Norfolk to extend and enhance the curriculum. In particular, this provides learning opportunities in environmental education and in outdoor and adventurous activities. There are

visits to Stamford, including its churches, to a farm, to places of historical interest such as Eyam in Derbyshire where the plague originated, Belton House, Flag Fen, Lincoln and Skegness. Visitors to the school include local residents who tell pupils about their experiences during the Second World War, a person pretending to be a Tudor minstrel supporting both the music curriculum and the history curriculum, and a guitar ensemble. There have also been visiting theatre groups and artists in residence. A minister of the church has been a regular visitor. There is not, however, sufficient use of visits and visitors to develop pupils' awareness of the rich diversity of modern multi-cultural Britain. Pupils do not, for example, visit places of worship other than Christian churches.

38. The curriculum is also enriched by a satisfactory range of extra-curricular opportunities to the benefit of pupils in Key Stage 2. Football, netball, basketball, badminton, cross-country running and table tennis are offered to pupils at different times of the year. The school competes against other schools, and also hosts athletics, football and netball tournaments. Pupils have the opportunity to play chess and two chess boards are set out permanently in the entrance hall to which pupils have access at break and lunch times. There is also an art club and older pupils are able to follow a course in cycling proficiency. Pupils have the opportunity to learn musical instruments. There are recorder groups for pupils in Key Stage 2 at lunchtimes twice a week. Instrumental teaching for clarinet, guitar and drums is available from peripatetic teachers, but these have to be paid for by parents in line with the local education authority policy. There is also a choir. Pupils sing carols in hospitals and residential homes for the elderly and in Stamford town centre. Pupils in all year groups have the opportunity to participate in Christmas productions.
39. The school has established useful links with the local community that further enrich the curricular opportunities. There are links with the business community. One local company, that now has a representative on the governing body, made a significant contribution to the development of an environmental studies area in the school grounds. Another company that was upgrading its computer hardware allowed the school to purchase laptop computers and colour laser printers at a very reasonable cost.
40. The school has established links with the secondary schools to which most pupils transfer at the age of eleven. In the Summer term, Year 6 pupils visit the secondary school and teachers from the secondary school come to the school. Towards the end of the first term in the secondary school, teachers from the primary school visit the secondary school to discuss how the pupils have settled in and advise on any problems that may have arisen. Links such as these familiarise pupils with the staff and the school, prepare pupils for the next stage of learning and provide some support for those who may need it after the transfer. There are particular links in English and mathematics with 'bridging' courses provided for Year 6 pupils. Sixth form students organise sporting days to enhance the physical education curriculum. The school also has links with a nursery school and with local playgroups. Children from the playgroups are invited to attend a Christmas concert in the school. There are also links with two organisations that cater for pupils after school and, in one case, before school also. One organisation is now based every afternoon in the school and is open to all pupils whose parents require after school supervision for which they pay. This is a recent innovation.
41. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral and social development and satisfactory provision for their spiritual and cultural development. Spiritual development is supported through assemblies, which are well planned and

thoughtfully delivered. Pupils are helped to gain knowledge and insight into their own and other peoples' values and beliefs, and in particular, they are encouraged to respect and value the opinions of others. Moments of quietness are provided for pupils to reflect on what they have heard, and to consider how they should respond themselves. On other occasions, pupils are provided with interesting and thought provoking experiences, such as when they take part in experiments on electricity in Year 4, and materials in Year 6 as part of the science curriculum. There are few planned opportunities in other subjects for pupils to develop their spiritual awareness.

42. Provision for moral development is good. The headteacher and staff, as well as providing good role models themselves, regularly remind pupils of the correct forms of behaviour and give reasons for them. Pupils in each class contribute towards the development of their own rules, and this greatly encourages them to be responsible for carrying them out. 'Circle-time' when pupils sit together for discussion is used well. Pupils are given opportunities to consider a variety of issues, such as bullying, and the need to avoid such forms of behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to develop a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong, and to treat staff, visitors and other pupils with courtesy, and property with respect.
43. The school makes good provision for pupils' social development. Pupils are encouraged to form good relationships with each other, their teachers and other adults. As they progress through the school, pupils have opportunities to work collaboratively, to take turns and to share resources. Older pupils are encouraged to care for younger ones. Suitable opportunities are provided for pupils to take on responsibilities within their classrooms. Older pupils undertake a range of tasks around the school, such as assisting in the school office, preparing the computer suite for use and helping to prepare the hall for assemblies. The social development of pupils is further enhanced by involvement in extra-curricular activities, taking part in residential visits in Year 6 and being involved in fund raising. There is no provision for pupils to have a greater voice in the school, such as through a school council.
44. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are taught about aspects of British culture in subjects such as English and history. A suitable emphasis is laid on the knowledge and understanding of other cultures during assemblies and during lessons in religious education and geography. This occurs, for example, when pupils in Key Stage 1 follow the imaginary journeys of 'Barnaby Bear'. In Year 3, pupils learn about Africa. Displays on other cultures are provided in the school. The school does not, however, make enough provision for the development of pupils' understanding of the multi-cultural society in which we live.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

45. Provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good, and it has improved since the last inspection. It enhances the quality of education provided by the school. Staff know pupils well and pay good attention to their personal well being. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure and form good relationships with teachers and each other. They are happy to share concerns with adults. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early in their school career and effective measures are taken to support them. The area of weakness in the care for pupils is in the use of assessment to guide the planning of the curriculum and to ensure that learning opportunities are always effectively matched to their needs.
46. Lunchtime supervisory staff provide good support, relate well to pupils, and follow

specific guidelines which have a positive effect on behaviour and safety. First aid and fire safety arrangements are good. Procedures for dealing with accidents are effective. Child protection arrangements are good and meet statutory requirements. The headteacher is the designated member of staff and has received the relevant training. Class teachers and learning support staff are aware of child protection procedures and the need to be vigilant.

47. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Records of attendance are accurately maintained and comply with statutory requirements. Procedures for recording unauthorised absence are strictly enforced and unexpected absences are quickly investigated. There are good and effective measures in place for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour. A system of rewards and sanctions is understood and accepted by all pupils. As a consequence, there is no evidence of bullying, sexism or racism. Since the last inspection, there has been an improvement in the procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour and attendance.
48. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall due to the arrangements in place for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. There is some good use of testing. This school year, a tracking system has been introduced that allows the results of national tests and optional tests in both key stages to be recorded. They are analysed to identify pupils who need more support, including those who are highly attaining, and to set targets for all pupils. This is a good feature of the assessment process. There is also an analysis of test data to see where areas such as writing need greater focus. The weakness is that the good amount of data available in key areas such as English, mathematics and science is not used sufficiently to guide the planning of the curriculum. The lack of use of assessment in this way restricts pupils' progress. In particular, the higher attaining pupils are adversely affected. They are not, for example, always well enough challenged in mathematics sets in Key Stage 2. The school recognises that this is an area in need of attention. The weaknesses in the use of assessment were identified at the last inspection and they have not been rectified.
49. Pupils with special educational needs are regularly assessed, and information is recorded to help identify their current attainment. This information is used effectively to provide suitable work. The learning support assistants, working with pupils with statements, keep detailed records that help ensure that the tasks provided for them are particularly relevant to their present needs. The overall effectiveness of the school's educational and personal support and guidance for all pupils is satisfactory in raising their achievements.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. The quality of the school's partnership with parents has improved since the last inspection. Parents are happy with many aspects of the school, more so than when it was last inspected. Their children like school, and parents consider that they make good progress. Parents feel they can approach the school when they have worries or problems and overall are happy with the standards achieved. They say the school encourages the children to become mature and responsible individuals, promotes good behaviour and has high expectations. Parents feel teaching is good. Inspection evidence supports these views with the exception of pupils age seven to eleven where teaching and progress are satisfactory overall rather than good. The questionnaires received show parents to be supportive of the school. A number of

parents, however, expressed concerns about homework provision, information concerning pupils' progress and the provision of extra-curricular activities. Inspection findings do not support parents' negative views, although extra-curricular provision is mainly restricted to pupils aged seven to eleven.

51. The good links with parents enrich pupils' learning experiences. Induction arrangements are in place to support parents and ease children's start in the reception classes. These arrangements include information meetings for parents and informal play sessions where children can meet each other and their new teachers. A home-school agreement is in place, which helps to commit the school, parents and pupils to improve standards. Parents and other helpers are welcomed into school and encouraged to take part in its work. Parents help with activities such as reading, cooking and managing the school shop. The involvement of parents in the work of the school makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. The Parent Teachers and Friends of the School Association is well organised by a committed group of parents. They make a strong contribution to the life of the school. Proceeds from social events provide considerable support for the school. This support is much appreciated by staff and pupils.
52. The quality of information provided by the school for parents is good, and is better than at the last inspection. The prospectus is an impressive document containing comprehensive information about the school, and it fully meets statutory requirements. Regular newsletters and the governors' annual report keep parents well informed of school activities, although there are a few minor omissions in the governors' report. Parents are also advised of curriculum changes and topic work. Parents are informed of their children's progress and development through consultation evenings and an annual written report. These reports are good, providing a summary of attainment and progress. They are critical where necessary, and make suggestions for improvement. In addition, parents have access to an interim review of attainment and progress which takes place during the Spring term.
53. The headteacher has strengthened links with parents and organises an open day each year where Year 6 pupils conduct visitors around the school. He has an 'open door' policy and makes himself available to see parents at any time. This works well and is appreciated by parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The overall leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection when serious weaknesses were found. The headteacher provides a satisfactory educational direction for the school and is well supported by the senior management team. The headteacher, senior staff and governors have worked with determination to overcome the serious weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school found at the last inspection. Communication within the school has improved significantly and there are now clear procedures for providing staff with information and seeking their views. Relationships between the governing body, senior management team and staff have improved, and are now satisfactory. There is no longer evidence of low staff morale caused by difficulties in relationships.
55. The senior management team works effectively together, knows the school's strengths and weaknesses and is effective as a decision making body. The team has, for example, responded positively to the need to bring about improvements signalled by the lower Key Stage 2 English results in 2000. A system for tracking

pupils' progress over time has been introduced, with responsibility for this area being taken by the assessment co-ordinator. Senior staff have recognised that there are some areas in which teaching needs to be improved, most particularly in English in Years 3 and 4.

56. The delegation of responsibilities has improved and is now satisfactory overall. At the last inspection, the deputy head was found to be overburdened. While there have been changes in the allocation of responsibilities and the senior management team has expanded, it is still the case that the deputy has a large workload. She has responsibility for a class for half the week. She is mathematics co-ordinator and has responsibility for the reception year and Key Stage 1. She also oversees the work of learning support assistants and lunch-time supervisors, as well as having responsibility for student placements and supply teachers. Additionally, the deputy has a significant role in the day-to-day management of the school. There is a more equitable allocation of responsibilities to other members of the senior management team. The leadership of Key Stage 2 is less clear than that of other key stages. Two members of the senior management team share responsibility. One oversees Years 3 and 5, and the other takes responsibility for Years 4 and 6. This does not involve direct leadership and development of the curriculum and it is difficult to see why this particular arrangement is in place.

57. In recognition of the need to bring about improvement in the English provision at Key Stage 2, the school has appointed a well-qualified and experienced co-ordinator. Although only in post since January 2001, she has started to take action. She has developed a new approach to planning, which is being piloted in Year 2, as this is the year in which she teaches. As English is an area of concern, the school has rightly made the post of English co-ordinator one which is part of the senior management team. The co-ordination of mathematics by the deputy is undertaken effectively. In the main, co-ordinators undertake their roles satisfactorily by providing guidance to colleagues such as in relation to the implementation of the revised National Curriculum. They are required to report to the senior management team on the development of their subjects, for example in relation to the implementation of new national guidance. Where relevant, such as in information and communication technology, co-ordinators have audited resources. There are temporary arrangements for the co-ordination of music, which are not effective.
58. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator keeps extensive records, and the progress made by pupils is carefully monitored. Suitable arrangements are made to move pupils to different stages on the register should their progress warrant it. The co-ordinator works well with her colleagues in ensuring that suitable provision is made for the pupils.
59. The checking of teaching and the curriculum and how they contribute to pupils' learning was seen as 'not fully effective' at the last inspection. There has been too little progress in this area, and this aspect of leadership and management is now unsatisfactory. Procedures are beginning to be put in place. There is some observation of lessons by the senior management team, for example focusing on the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Where lessons are observed, teachers are provided with written and oral feedback and action plans for improvement are established. Where necessary, support is provided. It is a concern, however, that there has not been close checking of teaching and the curriculum through lesson observations in English at Key Stage 2 to discover the precise reasons for standards having fallen. This is even though the school knows that improvements have to be made.
60. Planning is checked, but this is more often the broad medium-term planning rather than the more detailed short-term planning. The headteacher acknowledges that this does not tell senior managers enough about the provision. There is insufficient systematic sampling of the work in pupils' books to examine the outcomes of teaching and pupils' response to the learning opportunities provided. There has been some of this taking place in English, with a particular focus on pupils' progress in writing, this school year. Some other co-ordinators scrutinise pupils' work, but this is not established across the curriculum. In the main, co-ordinators are not involved in checking the quality of provision in their subjects, other than by looking at medium-term planning. This lack of systematic checking of provision by co-ordinators restricts the extent to which they can accurately identify and lead areas in need of development. The science co-ordinator, for example, has not been able to identify the weaknesses in planning at Key Stage 2 that lead to pupils unnecessarily repeating work.
61. The effectiveness of the governing body has improved considerably since the last inspection. Governors have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are actively involved in shaping the direction of the school and in evaluating its effectiveness. Good procedures are in place for independently checking the school's progress in relation to the priorities of the school development plan. Governors now have a secure understanding of the role of 'critical friend' and

ensure that they hold the school to account for the standards it achieves. There are good links between governors and curriculum co-ordinators for all subjects. As part of the drive to improve relationships in the school, there are 'open' invitations for teachers to attend governors' meetings and for governors to attend staff meetings.

62. The school uses its resources efficiently. It plans and manages the budget very well to meet its educational objectives. The quality of the financial planning which is linked to the school development plan is good. The school development plan itself has improved since the last inspection. It is a comprehensive document which supports the checking of progress towards the achievement of educational priorities. Following the change from grant maintained to foundation status the school has, through its very effective finance committee, reviewed cost effectiveness and made savings wherever possible.
63. The school bursar, employed on a part-time basis, provides valuable expertise. Financial procedures are clear and day-to-day spending is administered and controlled effectively. Recent audits have consistently praised the sound financial controls. Spending is carefully monitored and governors receive regular reports through the finance committee. Other administrative and office duties are co-ordinated by the senior secretary and her assistant who ensure the smooth running of the school.
64. The overall number, qualification and experience of teachers and learning support assistants matches the demands of the school's curriculum, including the needs of the pupils with special educational needs. There is a good balance of experienced and younger staff. Non-teaching staff contribute positively to the work of the school. New teachers undergo effective induction training and their professional development is mentored during the first school year. The school utilises the local authority's support service to provide training in school as, for example, in numeracy and literacy. The school development plan sets out staff development priorities, and all staff attend specific professional development courses. Staff appraisal is currently under review.
65. The accommodation is good and generally well used. Buildings are of a good standard and well maintained, with the exception of the mobile classroom used for music lessons. The hall, which can be divided, is spacious and is used for assemblies, physical education and as a lunchtime eating area. Classrooms are adequate and there are good specialist areas for food and information technology. The school benefits from a very large playing field and separate hard playing areas which fully accommodate the numbers on roll. Younger children have their own securely fenced play area. A separate car parking and dropping off point for parents has eased congestion at the beginning and end of the day. A small pond, which is securely fenced, is a feature in the pleasantly landscaped grounds.
66. Resources are satisfactory overall to meet the demands of the curriculum. They are good in science, information and communication technology, geography, history and physical education. In all other subjects they are satisfactory. Library provision is limited for the size of the school. There is insufficient provision, in terms of space and equipment for the outdoor curriculum for children in the reception year. While music resources are satisfactory overall, there are too few instruments of good quality for use by pupils in Key Stage 2.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67. In order to retain the strengths of the school and rectify the weaknesses, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- a) Improve pupils' progress in English at Key Stage 2 so that the standards they achieve are as high as in mathematics and science by:
 - ensuring that the work in Years 3 and 4 is sufficiently demanding to build on the high standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 1;
 - giving greater emphasis to developing writing skills in Years 3 and 4 in particular; and
 - providing more opportunities for the development of skills in the use of non-fiction books and in debate.
(Paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 8, 13, 14, 21, 27, 33, 35, 36, 82, 84-87, 90)
- b) Develop and implement systems for the rigorous checking of the quality of teaching and the curriculum and how they affect pupils' learning.
(Paragraphs 59, 60, 93, 103, 111, 117, 130, 136, 144, 149, 154, 161)
- c) Develop formal procedures for assessment in all the subjects that do not already have them. Ensure that the information gathered through assessment is used to guide the planning of the curriculum.
(Paragraphs 45, 48, 92, 111, 117, 130, 136, 149, 154, 161)
- d) Give emphasis to developing pupils' awareness of the rich diversity of our multi-cultural society.
(Paragraphs 32, 37, 44, 156, 158, 161)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- Children in the reception year do not have enough opportunities for outdoor play, including with large wheeled or push and pull toys.
(Paragraphs 31, 79, 81)
- Marking is not used well enough to support pupils' learning.
(Paragraphs 29, 91, 92, 101, 110)
- Teachers lack confidence in the teaching of music.
(Paragraphs 12, 22, 145, 148, 149)
- The use of modern technology to enhance learning across the curriculum is not established in all subjects, especially at Key Stage 2.
(Paragraphs 32, 91, 143)
- There is no provision for pupils to have a greater voice in the school, such as through a school council.
(Paragraph 43)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	111
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	10	54	34	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	-	586
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	69

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	48
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	34

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	35	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	35	35	35
	Girls	49	49	49
	Total	84	84	84
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (98)	100 (99)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	35	35	35
	Girls	49	49	49
	Total	84	84	84
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (95)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	38	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	31	36
	Girls	29	26	32
	Total	57	57	68
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (82)	78 (79)	93 (90)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	29	33	36
	Girls	29	26	32
	Total	58	59	68
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (83)	81 (80)	93 (89)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	3
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	580
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	22
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.6
Average class size	29.3

Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	226

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2001
	£
Total income	907685
Total expenditure	893826
Expenditure per pupil	1508
Balance brought forward from previous year	30254
Balance carried forward to next year	44113

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

56%

Number of questionnaires sent out

586

Number of questionnaires returned

327

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	41	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	50	3	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	57	4	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	53	17	2	1
The teaching is good.	50	46	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	47	18	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	37	6	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	43	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	28	50	16	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	31	46	14	3	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	51	4	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	48	17	4	8

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

68. Children enter the reception year in the September of the school year in which they will be five. They attend part-time for two weeks, after which they become full-time. Most children have had experience of pre-school provision prior to starting at school. On entry to the reception year, taking the intake as a whole, children's attainment is above average in communication, language and literacy, except in the area of writing, and in mathematical development. Children speak and listen well, which provides a good foundation for their further learning. In knowledge and understanding of the world, physical, creative, personal, social and emotional development, children enter the reception year with the expected skills for their age group.
69. Children's overall progress in the reception year is good. On entry to Key Stage 1, standards are above average in all areas of learning except physical development. There is no significant variation in the attainment and progress of girls and boys. No child in the reception year is identified as having special educational needs. Very few children have English as an additional language and are at an early stage of learning English. Standards now are very much the same as at the last inspection. The overall quality of provision, especially teaching, is also similar to that found at the last inspection. The strengths in the reception year have been maintained.

Personal, social and emotional development

70. By the end of the reception year, most children meet, and many exceed, the Early Learning Goals for this area. They have good relationships with each other and with adults. Most observe the rules for the number allowed to participate in a particular activity, such as water or sand play. They negotiate choices of character and play together well in acting out a story. In the role-play 'garden centre' they co-operate to take money, orders, or answer the telephone. When sitting together for discussion or in worship time, children show respect for the thoughts and feelings of others. They concentrate well for an extended length of time and persevere with a task until it is finished. In all activities, children show an awareness of behaviour being right or wrong, for example, sharing writing and drawing tools well. When tidying up, they demonstrate independence in putting away equipment and maturely clear up sand and mop up water in the practical area. Children are independent in changing for physical education.
71. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is good. Adults are good role models in how to behave towards others. They promote concern and consideration for others. This is seen, for example, when children are encouraged to find space for others to sit on the carpet or to help one another in tying apron strings. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour, and children respond by following instructions well. The good use of praise for success enhances children's self esteem and confidence. Children are managed well. Clear instructions for group work and moving about the school ensure that children feel secure at all times. The rules and organisation in the practical activity area give children opportunities to think, read notices and reminders, and make choices about how to organise their time. This results in children taking responsibility for their learning and crossing their names off an activity sheet to show they have completed a task and will choose a different one next. Adults show secure knowledge of children's learning. They take good opportunities to assess the co-operation and independence developed during play

situations.

Communication, language and literacy

72. Most children meet the Early Learning Goals for this area, and many exceed them by the end of the reception year. Almost all children speak clearly when sharing their knowledge about an activity or story with the teacher and class. They listen well and have quickly learned to take turns to speak and listen to others. They competently retell parts of stories they have read together. Most children give reasons for their opinions of events in stories such as 'Super Pig' or 'Bob the Builder'. All children handle books carefully and tell the stories by referring to the pictures. Most read simple texts and use letter sounds and picture clues to help them read new words. The highest attaining children, about a quarter of the group, read more complex texts fluently. These higher attaining children also have a clear knowledge of contents pages in both fiction and non-fiction books. They know how to find information in simple non-fiction books. All children write at least their first names. They behave as writers in a range of situations, such as when making lists in the 'garden centre', writing about holidays, copying words about their 'growing' topic and forming sentences about books. Children of average and higher attainment write a sentence or more unaided, with recognisable words or groups of letters which closely resemble a word. All children form letters, holding a pencil or pen correctly. Average and higher attaining children usually write letters correctly formed and of similar size, with spaces between words.
73. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in this area. The teaching of writing linked to words, and of letter sounds in reading is good. Children make good progress in these specific aspects because of clearly planned activities linking writing to familiar words and sounds acquired in reading sessions. Resources to help children identify words are readily available. Clear guidance and praise for successful attempts in writing a sentence encourage children to do their best. In a very good lesson observed, time was used well. As a result, children completed their tasks efficiently and reviewed their work with the teacher. This review at the end of the lesson gave good opportunities for speaking and listening. It also developed understanding as children considered their progress towards the goals of the lesson. Teachers use both fiction and non-fiction books well, building on the early reading skills children have on entry to the reception year. Good resources are provided for introduction to letter formation. When children are working unaided, instructions for activities are not always clear enough for the children to make writing a priority over illustration, such as when compiling a list of words. Joint planning between classes ensures all children have equal experience of activities over a week matched to their learning needs. Regular assessment notes ensure that the next activities build on current knowledge. There is good recognition of the needs of the very few children who have English as an additional language. These children are well supported.

Mathematical development

74. By the end of the reception year, most children meet the Early Learning Goals for this area and many exceed them. Most count to 20 and 30, and some to 50. In mental mathematics sessions, children easily identify a number between seven and nine and higher attaining children use higher numbers. They count forwards and backwards and know 'one less' or 'one more than' a number to 10 or 20. They accurately identify numbers, using the word 'between'. Lower attaining children correctly match number symbols in a game. Average and higher attaining children

place numbers in the right order to 10 and 15. The highest attaining children count to 50 and backwards from 30. Most children have a secure understanding of adding and subtracting two numbers, with either numerals or pictures to represent them. They identify shapes such as squares, circles and triangles. When working in water, they know when a container is full or empty, but are less sure about whether something is heavier or lighter. When making flowers, they are beginning to identify which ones have taller or shorter stems. Most children create repeating patterns with two colours or shapes, and the highest attaining children use three.

75. Teaching and learning in this area are satisfactory overall. In the specific area of number recognition and calculation, teaching and learning are good. Learning in these particular aspects is promoted well through mental mathematics sessions, which proceed at a good pace and achieve children's full involvement. Teachers provide good resources, such as 'number fans' or cards, which help children stay focused and concentrating well. The challenge given and sense of fun enthuse children to try hard. A good range of activities is well matched to children's prior attainment, which enables them to progress in their learning. In a satisfactory lesson, the number challenge for higher attaining children was not sufficiently emphasised when making a model and this slowed progress. In the same challenge in a very good lesson, children very quickly used number skills to count to 15 and made a range of models using this number. In this lesson, the teacher ensured each group fully understood their task and provided follow-up games to enhance their learning. At the end of the lesson, children were able to talk clearly about what they had learned. An innovation in one class of singing the rules they have learned in number, ensures children remember what they have learned. Classroom assistants make a good contribution to the development of language of size, shape and capacity in well planned activities to promote these areas of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. By the end of the reception year, most children meet the Early Learning Goals and many exceed them. Through investigating seed packets, children know that some seeds grow into flowering plants and some into vegetables. They know that plants need water and sun. Children select construction toys and join sections together to make items such as wheeled vehicles and rockets. The highest attaining children describe how they will change their design to ensure it will be fit for its purpose. Children competently use a cassette recorder with headphones to listen to a taped story. They confidently use the computer mouse to move objects on the screen, such as a teddy bear's clothes. Most children know that they live in Stamford and sometimes go shopping to Peterborough for clothes and toys. They find their way round the building in which their classrooms are located. Through role-play in the 'garden centre', they explore the world of work and relate it to the real garden centre that has links with the school. Children have an understanding of the time it takes for seeds to grow and relate time to parents, grandparents and older or younger brothers and sisters. Some know that when 'little', their parents came to this school. Through a small range of dolls, ethnic cooking utensils and assemblies, such as that for Chinese New Year, children are developing an insight into other cultures.
77. Teaching and learning are good overall in this area. Teachers plan carefully to develop children's knowledge and understanding. At the time of the inspection, the topic of growth permeated the planning. Together with the good provision of resources, this resulted in learning experiences which delighted and enthused the children. Teachers and assistants ask well-focused questions to develop children's thinking and assess their learning. Good assessment opportunities are incorporated

into play activities. In a very good lesson seen, children were able to evaluate their learning at the end of the session and show and discuss what they had done.

Physical development

78. Most children meet the Early Learning Goals for this area overall. In the specific area of using tools for writing, sticking and cutting, many children exceed the Early Learning Goals. Children run, jump and play in the playground with the expected skills for their age. They move around in movement lessons with a growing sense of personal space. Children ably pedal and scoot around on the few quality toys available, but have to wait quite some time for a turn in a half class group. They throw and catch large balls with the skills expected. Children demonstrate good control over a range of tools for writing, such as pencils, felt-tipped pens and paint brushes. Most children cut very accurately and are aware of safety. They have good control over the computer mouse and skilfully use cleaning tools to tidy up after sand and water play.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall in this area. It is good in the opportunities provided for the development of manipulative skills with writing, drawing and sticking tools. Many opportunities are provided for children to make choices about the use of pencils, pens, felt-tipped pens or crayons. Good guidance and safety instructions ensure children use scissors sensibly. In a good physical education lesson, pupils made effective gains in their learning as they followed instructions for moving at different levels safely. Focused guidance ensured children noticed the effect of movement on their bodies and challenged them to improve on their imaginative ways of travelling around the room. There is satisfactory planning for children's physical development. Children do not have enough opportunities for imaginative play outdoors or for developing skills in climbing and balancing activities or using a range of wheeled or push and pull toys.

Creative development

80. By the end of the reception year, most children meet, and many exceed, the Early Learning Goals for this area. Children show a flair for realistic paintings, for example of underground animals. They make a range of flowers for the 'garden centre' using paper, beads, pasta and fabrics. Children confidently make choices about materials to use and skilfully join them together, using the correct glue for the purpose. They show the expected skill in using musical instruments and making sound patterns. Standards in singing are better than usually found at this age. Children have the expected skills of moving to music. When playing with a range of toys in planned situations, such as building a three-dimensional garden and designing garden furniture, good levels of imagination are shown. They sustain make believe situations well together as they role play in the 'garden centre'.
81. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is good overall. Creative development is promoted through all areas of learning, as well as specifically focused activities. Cutting and sticking activities are planned in mathematical activities and painting helps develop letter and number formation skills. Teachers have high expectations of children's independence, which promotes their self-esteem and desire to achieve good results. Good planning includes the use of a wide range of pencils, crayons and felt-tipped pens from which children make choices. Very good organisation of activities, development of personal responsibility and evaluation all featured in a very good lesson. The use of musical instruments ensures children have opportunities throughout the week to explore sound and

compare the differences between wooden instruments. Skilful questioning and evaluation times provide opportunities for assessment. Planning for imaginative outdoor play is limited by the difficulty of free access to a large enough dedicated area with storage or cover for outdoor toys. Teachers try hard to overcome this in Winter by providing a very stimulating indoor environment. These indoor activities are extended outdoors in Summer.

ENGLISH

82. Pupils' performance in the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 2000 was below the national average. It was well below average when compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. While the percentage of pupils reaching the level expected of most eleven year olds was close to the national average, the percentage reaching a higher level was below the national average. This was in contrast with the results in mathematics and science in which a well above average percentage of pupils reached the higher level. Standards in 2000 were lower than at the previous inspection when they had been well above the national average. Since then, the trend in the school's English results has shown a decline in standards in contrast to the national picture. The school has identified some possible contributory factors for lower standards in 2000, largely concerning a higher than usual movement of pupils in and out of this particular year group as they moved up through Key Stage 2. These factors alone do not account for the fall in standards in English. Comparison of the results achieved by this year group at the end of Key Stage 1 with their results at the end of Key Stage 2, shows that some pupils made unsatisfactory progress. In particular, not enough progress was made in writing. Girls tend to do better than boys in the tests.
83. In the end of Key Stage 1 tests in 2000, pupils' performance in reading was very high compared with the national average, being in the highest five per cent of schools nationally. In writing, pupils' performance was well above the national average. Standards in reading and writing were also high when compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Pupils' results were high in 2000 because all pupils reached at least the level expected of most seven-year-olds in both reading and writing. The percentage reaching the higher level in reading was very high, and in writing it was above the national average. These standards are higher than at the previous inspection. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls at Key Stage 1.
84. The evidence from the inspection of pupils' school work shows that the standards achieved by pupils currently in Year 6 are average and represent an improvement on 2000. In Year 2, standards are well above average. The improving standards in Key Stage 2 are due largely to stronger teaching and better planning in some Year 5 and 6 classes which result in pupils learning more effectively and at a greater pace than in Years 3 and 4. Nevertheless, these standards are not high enough in relation to the performance of this year group at the end of Key Stage 1. Writing is the area of weakness at Key Stage 2. This is a concern as writing was also identified as the weaker area at the last inspection when standards were higher. The improvement in Key Stage 1 standards since the last inspection is due in part to the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, in particular its approach to phonic work. It is also a result of good teaching in the basic skills of reading and writing.
85. By the end of Key Stage 1, speaking and listening standards are well above average. They are above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 listen very attentively to their teachers and to each other. They are articulate, offering

clear explanations and responses to questions, and speaking with clarity and awareness of the listener. This was seen, for example, when pupils recited their favourite poems. Pupils took note of suggestions by the teacher and other pupils in the class as to how they might improve reciting aloud to an audience. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils speak confidently and use a rich vocabulary. Pupils participate well in discussions but they do not have the higher order skills of debate. They do not, for example, present reasoned arguments or listen critically to challenge the views of others. Most pupils listen carefully and take turns in conversation.

86. Reading standards are well above average by the end of Key Stage 1, and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Most pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 read with fluency and good expression. They have a very good understanding of their reading, for example predicting what might happen next in a narrative. Phonic skills are secure for most pupils, who have a good range of strategies to help them read unfamiliar words. Lower attaining pupils have a reasonable grasp of phonic skills and make confident and plausible attempts to build more complex words. Many pupils use punctuation well to give meaning when reading aloud. Pupils read widely, enjoying fiction and non-fiction books. Many have a good appreciation of poetry and an increasing awareness of authors and their work. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read a good selection of fiction books and many express their reading preferences for different authors. Many pupils' reading comprehension is good. This was seen in their discussion of a challenging non-fiction text for the 'hover-bike owner's handbook'. Many pupils recognised features of formal official language and could explain different presentation techniques used in the handbook, such as bullet points, key words and the use of the imperative for instructions. Pupils use dictionaries well, but their skills in using non-fiction books for research are less effective and in need of development.
87. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in writing is well above the national average. By the end of Key Stage 2, it is average. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 write for a good range of purposes, including poetry, recipes for honey cakes, instructions, and extended story writing. Many pupils write imaginatively, with higher and average attaining pupils using a range of interesting and exciting adjectives, expressing their ideas clearly. In a poem on senses, for example, one pupil wrote 'I breathed in and smelled the smell of Christmas'. Most pupils show a good awareness of the audience for their writing. In non-fiction writing, the instructions for helping hedgehogs to make a hibernation nest are detailed and imaginative. Spelling and punctuation are accurate, with many pupils making plausible attempts at more complex words and using punctuation, such as exclamation marks, for added effect. While some pupils write neatly, in a fluent cursive style, most are not joining letters. A significant minority present work untidily, with careless and uneven letter formation. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils write stories, playscripts, poetry, accounts of events and non-fiction writing, for example producing their own 'hover-bike user's handbook'. Higher attaining pupils write at good length, enriching their writing through their use of language. Many others do not achieve this standard. Many pupils plan and draft their writing well, editing for punctuation and spelling. They are less effective in editing their writing for style and content, and this aspect of pupils' writing is in need of improvement. Most pupils use a neat cursive style of handwriting.
88. The quality of teaching and learning is good at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, it is satisfactory overall, with good teaching in some Year 5 and 6 classes. This shows teaching quality at Key Stage 1 has been maintained, but some decline at Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. Very good lessons were observed in two Year 5 classes.

In these very good lessons, teachers were very clear about what they wanted pupils to learn, sharing clear objectives with pupils at the start. Expectations of standards of work were high, teachers' subject knowledge was very good, and the lessons were conducted at a brisk pace. Skilful questioning and well focused intervention moved pupils' learning on very well. As a result, pupils covered a good amount of work. In one lesson, very effective questioning led pupils to their own discovery of the meaning of a technical text. As a result, they could begin to describe the meaning of the specialist vocabulary and understand the importance of its use. In the good teaching in Years 5 and 6, pupils respond very well, working with good intellectual, physical and creative effort.

89. In other effective lessons, teachers build well on pupils' previous learning. This was seen in a Year 1 lesson in which pupils were comparing basic story elements and explaining their preferences for story choices. Well-modelled expressive reading by the teacher promoted good speaking skills, and effective questioning encouraged pupils to think more deeply about story structure and characterisation. The good level of support from well deployed classroom assistants ensured all pupils fully understood the work and remained fully involved throughout the lesson. Overall, teachers have a better understanding of the National Literacy Strategy than at the last inspection when this was a new initiative.
90. Planning in Years 2, 5 and 6 is stronger than elsewhere in the school. In Years 3 and 4, it is least effective. The result is that pupils' writing does not develop as well as it should in Years 3 and 4. There is too great an emphasis on exercises in text books and insufficient attention is given to developing skills in independent writing. Furthermore, the work in Years 3 and 4 is not building sufficiently on that covered in Key Stage 1. Sometimes the same tasks are planned for all pupils. This prevents the higher attaining pupils making the amount of progress of which they are capable in some lessons. In the weaker, although satisfactory, teaching overlong introductions to lessons leave insufficient time for pupils to write. The pedestrian pace of these lessons also limits the amount and quality of work produced. Where pupils are taken out of class for special educational needs support, the provision is good and pupils make good progress towards their targets set in individual education plans. Progress is less effective in the classrooms when work is not carefully matched to pupils' needs. The very few pupils with English as an additional language, in Key Stage 2, make similar progress to other pupils in the class. They are not at an early stage of learning English and do not require specialist language support. Nevertheless, their needs are recognised and met.
91. Throughout the school, work is marked regularly. The best marking provides constructive advice to help pupils improve their work. In many classes, however, marking does not contribute sufficiently to pupils' learning. It is superficial and, on occasions, careless marking praises incorrect and poorly presented work. There is too little use of pupils' computer skills in classrooms to support learning in English, particularly in drafting and editing writing. Other subjects such as geography and history provide good opportunities for the application and development of literacy skills, with a good focus in most classes on subject vocabulary.
92. There are satisfactory strategies in place for assessment in English, and there is some good use of testing as at the last inspection. The use of information from assessment to guide planning is unsatisfactory, with insufficient progress made in this area since the last inspection. In particular, this adversely affects the learning of some higher attaining pupils, notably in Key Stage 2. Reading records list books read, but provide little constructive information to identify where pupils need help.

This was also identified as a weakness at the last inspection and it has not been rectified. Target setting is at a very early stage of development. Few teachers refer to targets when marking pupils' work. Pupils have little knowledge of what their personal targets for learning are and, consequently, are not mindful of these when doing their work.

93. The co-ordinator, who has been in post since January 2001 only, has very good expertise in the National Literacy Strategy. She has already started to give a clear direction for English and is bringing about developments. This is seen, for example, in a new planning approach in Key Stage 1. This new planning is being piloted in Year 2 as this is the year group in which she teaches. The National Literacy Strategy has been effectively implemented in the school, with sessions at the end of lessons used well to reinforce teaching points in many classes. There has been some checking of teaching and the contribution of the curriculum to pupils' learning. The extent to which this is taking place is unsatisfactory, however, as there has been no concerted emphasis on looking at why standards have fallen at Key Stage 2. The school recognises that this is an area in need of development.

MATHEMATICS

94. Pupils' results in the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum Tests in 2000 were above the national average. They were average when compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. While the percentage of pupils reaching at least the level expected of most eleven year olds was close to the national average, the percentage reaching a higher level was well above the national average. Boys performed better than girls in 2000, but the difference was not significant. There was no difference between the performance of girls and boys over the previous three years. Standards in 2000 were similar to those achieved in 1998, the year of the last inspection. The trend in the school's mathematics results over the last three years is broadly in line with that found nationally.
95. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000, pupils' results were very high and in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Pupils' performance was equally high when compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Not only did all pupils reach at least the level expected of most seven year olds, but the percentage reaching a higher level was very high. The results in 2000 represent an improvement since 1998 due to good teaching. They also reflect the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, especially the emphasis on mental arithmetic and discussion, using correct mathematical language.
96. This year, the evidence from the inspection of pupils' school work shows that standards remain above average in Year 6 and well above average in Year 2. Pupils in Key Stage 1, and in Years 5 and 6, are currently making good progress because of teaching that fosters positive attitudes and provides challenging tasks in all aspects of the subject. Progress in Years 3 and 4 is slower, although satisfactory, and this contributes to the difference between the very high standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and the above average standards at the end of Key Stage 2. The progress made by pupils while in Key Stage 1 is better than at the last inspection.
97. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils count, read, write, order and add and subtract numbers to 100. They have a secure understanding of place value to at least 100. They count on in fives from a given starting point, for example, 1, 6, 11, 16, to over a hundred. They explain why this is a 1, 6, 1, 6, pattern. At least half the pupils can count just as quickly backwards as forwards. Pupils know the two, five

and 10 multiplication tables and double numbers quickly and accurately to 40. They interpret simple graphs for 'eye colour' or 'how we travel to school'. They know the names and properties of simple shapes, for example that a circle has no straight sides, just one curved one. Pupils have a good understanding of time, reading and recording the hour and half hour accurately. Problem solving skills are fostered through shopping activities that involve giving change and by challenges such as 'can you find a way of ordering these parcels other than by mass?'. Pupils weigh themselves correctly to two kilos and understand metric weights. Their skills in all aspects of mathematics are well above those expected for their age.

98. By end of Key Stage 2, pupils work confidently with very large numbers. They understand the link between equivalent fractions, percentages and decimals. They have good skills in mental arithmetic. Average pupils, for example, count on in steps of 0.4 from a starting point such as -1.8 . Higher attaining pupils round numbers such as 8.971 to the nearest whole number and calculate in their heads that the difference between the two numbers is 0.029. Most pupils do paper calculations such as 9874 divided by 16 accurately. They calculate the area and perimeter of regular and some irregular shapes, and record this correctly. Higher and average attaining pupils understand terms such as 'range', 'median' and 'mode', and construct scatter graphs. They have a good understanding of the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes, and measure and construct angles accurately. Pupils use a calculator confidently and, by estimating the answer first, understand whether the answer using the calculator is reasonable. When measuring the height of a door they know that the answer can be recorded as 1842mm or as 1.842m. They have an understanding of imperial and metric approximate equivalents.
99. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, it is satisfactory overall, with good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Some instances of good teaching were also seen in Year 3 during the inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is similar to that found at the last inspection, although teaching then was more consistently good in Key Stage 2. Very good teaching was observed during the inspection in two Year 5 lessons. One of these very good lessons was with a class of lower attaining pupils, including 11 with special educational needs. The teacher's very effective use of challenging questions, varied according to the ability of the pupils, allowed pupils to consolidate and extend their knowledge and understanding of tables, and of how area and perimeter are calculated in real-life problems. The teacher's very good relationship with the pupils and effective use of praise also contributed very effectively to learning by giving pupils confidence and encouragement to do well. There was also very good use of a learning support assistant who worked with the pupils with special educational needs on tasks well matched to their prior attainment. In the other very good lesson, higher attaining pupils were well motivated by the imaginative approach of the teacher. In the mental mathematics session, pupils were challenged to solve a code consisting of a set of statements in random order relating to a table. The very good response of pupils to this task consolidated their knowledge of tables and effectively fostered their problem solving skills. These skills were further challenged during an activity in which they worked in role as production managers to deal with a real life problem. The interest generated ensured pupils worked at a very good pace with a high level of concentration.
100. All teachers use the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy effectively to promote learning. This is particularly so in mental mathematics. Most teachers maintain a brisk pace, enthuse and involve all pupils by skilful questioning. They expect pupils to explain clearly the reasoning behind their response using the correct

mathematical vocabulary. In Key Stage 1, class work is organised so that the tasks, though challenging, match the prior ability of the pupils. In Key Stage 2 pupils are taught in higher, middle and lower attaining sets. While there is some variation of tasks within the set by some teachers, there is an over reliance on providing only one task for the whole set. In a Year 4 middle set lesson, where pupils were predicting and calculating the number of cubes in a series of shapes, almost half the pupils found the task too challenging and their progress was limited. In another Year 4 lesson with the lower set, where pupils worked on sequencing using a 'number line', some pupils set problems for their partners in the range -20 to $+20$, whilst the higher attaining pupils within the set worked in the range -50 to $+50$. As a result, the learning by all pupils was good.

101. Learning support assistants and booster classes provide good additional help for those pupils who require it, including those with special educational needs. Teachers mark books regularly. There is some use of encouraging comments to raise the self-esteem of pupils for correct work or when a particular pupil has made a good effort, but there are very few comments that help pupils to improve their mathematical skills. Suitable homework is set regularly.
102. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to support the teaching and learning of mathematics. The school has a satisfactory range of software and access to programs via the Internet to assist with work in number, space and shape, and data handling. The school also has programmable toys and 'screen turtles' to support work in shape, and some of the resulting work was observed in wall displays. In information and communication technology, satisfactory use is made of graph data handling software to consolidate learning and enable pupils to produce, for example, pictograms and bar graphs. Where mathematics is applied in other subjects, for example science and design and technology, learning is good. The emphasis on listening attentively during mental mathematics sessions effectively promotes speaking and listening skills.
103. Mathematics is well managed. The co-ordinator, who has been in post for a year, has a clearly defined role. Planning, which is done in year groups, is checked and there has been some observation of teaching. The checking of teaching and learning is an area that the school recognises needs to be more systematic. It was also identified as an area needing attention at the last inspection. A recently introduced tracking system, devised by the assessment co-ordinator, enables the results of the statutory and optional tests to be analysed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the year group and aspects of teaching that need to be improved. As a result, the school has employed additional learning support assistants for pupils in Key Stage 1 and for the lower attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4. This is in addition to the provision made in the upper part of Key Stage 2 for booster classes and the school's involvement in the 'Springboard' initiative. Tracking analysis is also used to help allocate pupils in Key Stage 2 to the appropriate set within the year group and to set targets for pupils. One outcome of the checking of the subject's performance by the subject co-ordinator is that the school development plan reflects suitable priorities for development. These include the use of information and communication technology to consolidate and enhance learning.

SCIENCE

104. Pupils' results in the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 2000 were above the national average. When compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, they were broadly average. The percentage of

pupils reaching at least the level expected of most eleven year olds was above average, and the percentage reaching a higher level was well above average. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were also above the national average in 1998 when the school was last inspected. The trend in the school's science results over the three years, from 1998 to 2000, has been broadly in line with that found nationally. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000, teachers assessed pupils' performance as well above the national average. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have improved since the last inspection. This improvement is the result of careful planning and teachers' high expectations of pupils.

105. This year, the evidence from the inspection of pupils' school work shows a similar picture to that of the 2000 tests. Standards are still above average at the end of Key Stage 2 and well above average at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils are making good progress at Key Stage 1, and satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. This is a change since the last inspection, when pupils' progress was considered to be better at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1. There is no significant variation in the performance of boys and girls at either key stage.
106. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils very competently undertake experiments on many aspects of their work, for example, when tackling tasks on electricity. They have a very secure understanding of the meaning of a fair test, and readily record their findings, both in writing and in pictures. Pupils name the main external features of both the human body and a flowering plant, and know the items needed to sustain life. They describe the differences between living and non-living things, and identify examples of both. Pupils recognise and name common materials, such as metal, plastic and wood, and describe their various uses. Pupils know the effects of heating on materials, such as chocolate and jelly, and they understand that some of the changes caused are reversible and others are not. Pupils know that some items will dissolve in water, and others will not dissolve. They understand that pushes and pulls are examples of forces, and that pulling is a force that will stretch certain materials. Pupils confidently explain the role of batteries, wires and bulbs in making an electric circuit, and know that a switch can be used to control a circuit. Pupils know that light comes from a variety of sources. They recognise that there are many sources of sound, and describe how some sounds are quiet and others are loud.
107. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are confident in undertaking a wide range of experiments. On occasions, they select their own apparatus. Pupils make predictions and record observations and measurements, drawing conclusions from their findings. They recognise that there is a great variety of living things, and know that different organisms are found in different habitats. Pupils identify many of the internal organs of animals and can, for instance, explain the role of the various parts of the ear. Pupils confidently discuss the harmful effects of alcohol, drugs and tobacco, on humans. They describe the main functions of the parts of a plant, such as the roots and leaves. They understand food chains. Pupils are aware of the properties of a variety of materials, and confidently describe the differences between solids, liquids and gases. They have a secure understanding of magnetism, filtration and evaporation. They explain how a solution can become saturated. Pupils confidently describe the different effects that burning has on various materials. Pupils know that a complete circuit is needed to make electrical devices work, and explain the effects on those devices of linking them in parallel or series. Pupils have a secure understanding of gravity and air resistance as forces, and knowledge of physical phenomena such as how light travels.
108. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, it

is satisfactory overall, with some good practice observed in Years 5 and 6. Teaching has improved since the last inspection at Key Stage 1, but it is not as good now as it was then at Key Stage 2. Throughout the school, lessons are mainly well planned, with teachers making particularly good use of practical activities. Teachers are also careful to use and emphasise the correct scientific terminology, which has a beneficial effect on pupils' overall learning. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, and provide clear instructions and helpful demonstrations of the work to be undertaken. Such demonstration helps pupils carry out their own work effectively.

109. At Key Stage 1, planning helps to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding as they move through the key stage, not just within individual lessons or a series of linked lessons. Learning opportunities are of good quality, and teachers have high expectations of their pupils' work. Particularly clear and helpful advice is provided with the result that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in their scientific knowledge. At Key Stage 2, while planning is detailed, there are occasions when work is repeated in different years, with no apparent increase in difficulty to suit the needs of older pupils. In the work on sound and life processes, for example, the study of the ear is the same in both Years 3 and 5. In the same way, there is little difference between the tasks undertaken on electricity in Years 2 and 4. This has an adverse effect on pupils' overall progress because they are repeating work without developing what they already know and understand.
110. Occasionally, other issues limit pupils' progress in lessons. In one Year 3 class, for example, pupils became so involved in their practical activities that a minority of them lost sight of what they were trying to find out. The teacher did not ensure that they were kept well enough focused in this lesson. In one Year 4 class, the demonstration provided at the start of the lesson could not be seen clearly by many of the pupils. During these lessons, however, the teachers continued to provide suitable advice and support during the practical sessions, and all pupils were able to make satisfactory progress. Teachers at both key stages are enthusiastic, and this gains pupils' interest and involvement. Pupils' behaviour is good and they settle to their activities with concentration, interest and enjoyment. They work well with other pupils in carrying out activities, are very aware of safety procedures and produce their work neatly and carefully. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but few comments of praise or advice are usually added. This weakness in marking was reported at the last inspection and it has not been rectified.
111. The school has a satisfactory scheme of work, which has been introduced since the last inspection. Through adequate planning, all aspects of work are covered, although the repetition found in Key Stage 2 hinders progress. The co-ordinator has had responsibility for science for only two months. She has, however, started to identify some of the strengths and weaknesses in the provision. She sees teachers' planning, but as yet neither studies samples of pupils' work nor observes lessons taking place, to see the outcomes of provision for herself. Such checking should have revealed the shortcomings in planning. Satisfactory arrangements are made for assessing pupils' work, and suitable records are kept. Insufficient use is made of this information, however, to provide work in lessons suited to the needs of individual pupils. The written work undertaken by pupils, especially that relating to reporting on practical activities, provides support to the school's initiative in literacy. Counting and measuring activities, in various aspects of the subject, support the school's work in numeracy. Information and communication technology is also used effectively to enhance the work in science, such as in the use of CD Roms, to undertake research work on the human body, in Year 5. The study of some of the wonders of science, especially in practical work, successfully enhances pupils' spiritual

development.

ART AND DESIGN

112. It was only possible to observe part of a lesson in Key Stage 1. From this observation, the scrutiny of displays and an analysis of planning, standards achieved in art and design at the end of Key Stage 1 are above those expected nationally. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils also achieve standards above those normally found. Progress is good across the school for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The good standards found at the last inspection have been maintained.
113. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are competent in using a variety of materials, such as pencil, charcoal, wax crayons, powder paint and collage. They mix colours and produce subtle shadings as backgrounds to their paintings and drawings. They blow black paint through a straw in order to create effective winter scenes of tree silhouettes. Pupils make good copies of the colours and designs from pieces of fabric and wallpaper. They use wax crayons and pencil to make rubbings of outdoor man-made materials, such as walls, the playground surface and drain covers, in order to produce an effective collage of textures. Pupils use bright colours well to illustrate characters in the stories they hear in the literacy hour. They weave paper strips and produce neat patterns of stitches on fabric.
114. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have extended their skills and knowledge of different art forms. Year 5 pupils produce good observational drawings of their shoes and trainers, and compare these with their impressionistic drawings. They develop good skills in using the different media of charcoal, pencil, wax crayons and chalk, to successfully reproduce the texture and shape of their 'objects of meaning' – treasured objects which they bring to school. The work of well known artists inspires Year 4 pupils to produce very good drawings of chairs, either copied from paintings, such as those of Van Gogh or Manet, or using classroom furniture. Year 6 pupils design and paint 'advertising hoardings' of popular products, which form colourful and eye-catching perimeters to the football field for the school's 'World Cup' tournament. Projects on the Tudors and the Greeks inspire pupils to produce effective collage, for example, to reproduce portraits of Tudor monarchs or ancient Greek mythic monsters. They use clay to make good copies of Greek pots, and design and apply decoration.
115. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages, as it was at the last inspection. A very good lesson was seen in one Year 6 class. A suitable range of activities is provided at Key Stage 1 to develop pupils' knowledge and skills of a range of techniques. There is good attention to the teaching of skills, and this is particularly effective in Key Stage 1. Teachers at Key Stage 2 build on these skills well. This is seen, for example, in the development of skills of observing and recording. Pupils learn to shade and to show the effect of texture and perspective. Teachers make good links with other curriculum subjects, such as physical education. The production of football field hoardings in Year 6, for example, in the design stage was linked to mathematics. Pupils had to estimate and measure the graphic design. While teachers encourage the design aspect of the work, sketchbooks are used inconsistently throughout the school for pupils to practise technique, and to act as a record of work done.
116. The school has a thriving after-school art club open to Year 3 and 4 pupils. This operates on a termly basis to enable all those who want to join it to have the

opportunity. The activities are carefully planned so that pupils continue to develop their knowledge and skills in the club. Pupils obviously enjoy this opportunity. Thirty pupils in Year 5 are participating in a sculpture project, which is led by a local artist and a sculptor from the twin town of Vence in France. Models are already in progress, the idea of creating mythical Greek monsters coming from the pupils. The use of computers to support pupils' learning in art and design is unsatisfactory. It is planned to develop this now programs have been purchased for both key stages.

117. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and guidance to colleagues, as at the last inspection. She has recently introduced a new scheme of work based on national guidance. The policy is to be reviewed to bring it in line with the recent changes. She has identified the need for staff training and is seeking ways to provide this. The co-ordinator is not involved in checking the teaching and learning in the subject in order to identify precisely where there is a need for training. In the absence of a portfolio of work, there are no records of how well pupils develop their knowledge and skills. There are no procedures for assessment and, consequently, information from assessment is not used to guide planning. Resources are satisfactory to meet the requirements of the new scheme of work. It is planned that they will be added to in order to extend the range of artefacts and visuals that represent different cultural forms and art forms, such as sculpture and installations. Pupils do not have the opportunity to visit local art galleries, although their work is displayed in the local town gallery from time to time. The weaknesses in assessing pupils' attainment and progress and in checking the quality of teaching were also identified at the last inspection, and they have not been rectified.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

118. Standards of work in design and technology are above those expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 1. They are well above the standards expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 2. The good standards identified in the last inspection have been maintained, and in Key Stage 2 they have been improved upon. The weaknesses in recording skills highlighted at the last inspection have been rectified at both key stages.
119. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils design and make good models of playground equipment, a variety of toys using a winding mechanism and textile embroidered binca mats. They produce effective plans with clear diagrams. The finished artefacts are of good quality, incorporating a suitable variety of materials. Pupils have a good knowledge of joining techniques involving glue, masking and sellotape, staples and sewing. They have a good understanding of the design and making process. Designs are well labelled, listing resources required and explaining the process, for example for making models of playground equipment or toys. Careful evaluation identifies what pupils had noticed, aspects they found difficult and ways in which their products could be improved.
120. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils investigate an increasing range of materials, making use of technical construction kits and electrical components in some of their work. Pupils design playground equipment, building on the skills developed in Key Stage 1. Photographic evidence shows careful testing by pupils in response to challenging questions. Well-labelled and detailed plans are drawn up for equipment before pupils make their planned artefact. These are thoroughly evaluated and modified in the light of the evaluation. Pupils consider safety aspects, examining what worked well, what did not work, and why. This work is of a very good standard. In investigating how controllable vehicles move, pupils acquire a very good range of

technical vocabulary. They confidently talk of 'cogs', 'drive-shafts', 'wheel axles' and 'pulleys'. They disassemble some vehicles to explore the workings before re-assembling them. Pupils have a very clear understanding of the 'design, make and evaluate' process. Some very well written evaluations support the work of the higher attaining and some average pupils. In sketch books, pupils clarify their ideas through drawing from different angles. These are of a high standard, accurately represented, very well labelled and often with well-written explanatory text.

121. The quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages, as it was at the last inspection. Teachers follow the recently introduced national guidance, providing a broad and balanced curriculum. Skills and techniques are carefully taught and systematically developed alongside knowledge and understanding. Learning objectives are clearly defined and tasks are meaningful and challenging. Pupils often view the task with excitement and enthusiasm, particularly in Years 5 and 6 where teaching is sometimes very good. There is good questioning to help pupils to evaluate their work with an increasingly critical eye. Explanations are effective so that pupils are clear about what the design briefs are and what is expected of them.
122. In a very good Year 5 lesson on containers, pupils worked in pairs to design and make an appropriate packaging for a teddy. Clear instructions and well-prepared resources contributed to the effectiveness of this lesson. Very good links were made to mathematics and mathematical language when drawing three-dimensional boxes. Pupils were encouraged to identify reasons for error and to make informed decisions for themselves, giving them a good understanding of their own learning. In response to the very good teaching, pupils worked carefully and precisely, measuring accurately. They concentrated very well, the brisk pace moving the lesson on very effectively. Pupils work together well, supporting each other and sharing well.
123. Pupils with special educational needs and other lower attaining pupils are well supported by additional classroom helpers. This support allows them to communicate ideas and, for example, to design details through labelled sketches. There is insufficient use of computers to support pupils' learning in design and technology.
124. The high standards are a result of the very good subject knowledge and good teaching of many of the teachers. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. There is no strategy for assessment in the subject. This weakness was identified in the last inspection and it has not been rectified. Although photographic records are maintained, there is no formal system for the checking of teaching and learning.

GEOGRAPHY

125. Standards of pupils' work in geography, by the end of Key Stage 1, are in line with those expected nationally. At the end of Key Stage 2, they are above the nationally expected standards. The standards at Key Stage 1 have declined since the last inspection, but have been well maintained at Key Stage 2. The decline at Key Stage 1 is due to some topics being covered in less depth than previously. Satisfactory progress is made by pupils in Key Stage 1 and good progress is being made by pupils, including those with special educational needs, as they move up through Key Stage 2.
126. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils identify features such as different types of houses in their locality. They draw a simple map of their route to school. Higher attaining

pupils include keys and labels on their maps and have some idea of a plan view, but most pupils are insufficiently aware of the idea of looking down on the ground or objects from above. Pupils suggest simple ways in which their school environment might be made safer. They are developing a good awareness of more distant places, having enjoyed the adventures of a toy bear called Barnaby, who has accompanied various parents and members of staff on their travels around the world. 'Barnaby' sends reports to the school, by postcard and email, of the different countries visited. In this way, pupils have learned something of life in Sweden and New Zealand, to name but a few destinations. Photographs of the bear in various locations have enhanced pupils' knowledge of different countries and they locate them on a globe.

127. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are confident about how to find a distance on a map and how to mark higher land, as well as knowing how four and six place grid references work. They have good knowledge of the symbols on Ordnance Survey maps and some higher attaining pupils can begin to distinguish different sorts of terrain associated with the mountains in Wales. They have a good understanding of the various types of settlement and describe, for instance, the differences between a village and a hamlet. They are confident using maps of the local area and can spot various facilities. In their river work, they understand a good range of terminology. Higher attaining pupils define and locate significant examples of various types of river delta. They are aware of concepts such as the rain shadow cast by mountains. Pupils investigate ways of improving the local environment and use new technology, such as a digital camera, to illustrate their work. Through work on early villages in Roman and Anglo Saxon times, pupils understand the influence of historical cultures on the place names of today.
128. The overall quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, with good aspects relating to the development of pupils' world knowledge. In some work on mapping skills in Year 1 and one Year 2 class, however, teachers' expectations are not sufficiently high. There are missed opportunities to develop work about a visit to the seaside from a geographical viewpoint. The teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is good overall, with particular strength in the teaching in Year 5. An unsatisfactory lesson was seen in Year 4. Pupils learn well because teachers have good subject knowledge and are also well supported by advice from the subject co-ordinator. Resources are of a good standard and have been carefully built up over a number of years so there are sufficient air photographs and good quality maps to support the areas studied. These resources are used well to support learning. Teachers give pupils as many 'hands on' experiences as possible.
129. All units of study involve pupils in answering some enquiry or specific question. Pupils learn to appreciate that competing interests have different opinions and justifications for their views. So, for example, pupils understand that some people think closing the High Street to traffic all the time is better, while others want to unload goods and consequently resist this policy. The good lessons seen in Key Stage 2 had very clear geographical objectives. Well-paced activities ensured that pupils got on quickly and efficiently with the tasks and developed their knowledge appropriately. In the unsatisfactory lesson, the pupils' attention was not sufficiently drawn to the relevance of the task to their geographical enquiry. The pace of the lesson was slow and pupils lost interest as a result.
130. The leadership and management of geography are satisfactory. Insufficient attention has been given to how teachers assess and record pupils' progress. Assessment was also an area of weakness at the last inspection and it has not been dealt with

adequately. Work is underway to address this issue in relation to pupils' map skills, but other elements should also be recorded, so plans can be amended and further matched to pupils' specific needs. Pupils' books and the year group plans are checked, but this has not led to the identification of the weaker teaching. The planning is satisfactory. It is the way the planning is delivered which requires checking and guidance. The checking of teaching and learning was found to be 'at an early stage' at the last inspection, and it has not moved on well enough. The co-ordinator has recently developed a scheme of work based on new national guidance. This is the first year of its implementation. New technology is already well used for researching information, such as that relating to the Year 6 topic on mountains and in making computer based maps in Year 5. Geography makes a satisfactory contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills. A unit based on 'geography and number' helps pupils' numeracy skills.

HISTORY

131. Pupils' work in history is of the standard expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 1. At the end of Key Stage 2, it is above nationally expected standards. Standards have been maintained in Key Stage 2, but have fallen in Key Stage 1 since the last inspection. The fall in Key Stage 1 standards is the result of some topics not being covered in as much depth as at the last inspection. The present standards at the end of Key Stage 1 result from teaching that is satisfactory overall. At the last inspection, teaching at Key Stage 1 had been found to be good. Pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress while in Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, all pupils make good progress.
132. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of homes through the ages. They know that technological improvements have occurred. They understand that children's toys have changed a great deal. They recognise that modern ones are often made of plastic, whereas older ones were often made of natural materials. Some pupils have a good understanding of the importance of famous people from the past such as Florence Nightingale and Samuel Pepys. They know, for example, that Samuel Pepys' diary is an important source of information about how people lived at the time of the Great Fire of London. Due to variations in standards in different classes in Year 2, some pupils' have only a superficial grasp of such historical issues. Most pupils are aware of reasons for past events, such as the Great Fire and the Plague. They know key facts, for instance, that the fire was spread by the strong wind and because the timber frame houses burnt easily. Pupils are confident in using historical terminology such as 'past' and 'present'. They are beginning to recognise the difference between primary and secondary sources of information. Their sense of time passing is starting to develop, with pupils in one Year 2 class able to suggest key events right back to the Great Fire that could be placed on a timeline. They clearly understood how long ago it was that this event occurred.
133. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a secure knowledge of a range of historical periods, such as the Romans, Anglo Saxons, Tudors, Egyptians, Ancient Greeks and the Victorians. They have developed a good sense of chronology and can place these periods in the correct order. They are able, from Year 3 onwards, to understand how times change and can compare various aspects of each period. They know, for example, how writing and writing materials have changed through the ages. Pupils make connections between the different periods studied. When discussing Victorian children's school experiences, they were very interested to analyse how they varied from their own experiences. Pupils use a range of sources

to gather historical information. They draw inferences about the nature of society now and in past times.

134. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. It is inconsistent in Year 2, with good teaching in the class taught by the co-ordinator. Teaching overall is not as good now in Key Stage 1 as it was found to be at the last inspection. Most teachers present work in a lively and imaginative way that involves pupils. This ensures that their learning about past events and important figures from history is effective. In a lesson for Year 2 pupils, the teacher effectively captured pupils' imaginations by pretending to be the King and answering questions about why he had not personally helped put the Great Fire out. The use of television programmes made for schools also helps pupils to understand events and to remember key facts. In another Year 2 class, higher attaining pupils had insufficient opportunity to record their own thoughts and understanding of the Great Fire of London as they only recorded what the teacher had written for them. Teachers have a good grasp of history. They use lots of resources, so pupils are supported in making good gains in their learning regarding what happened and how people responded to it. The use of open-ended questions such as 'Why?' and 'What do you think?' as well as comments such as 'Your ideas are important, not mine' in one class served to challenge pupils' thinking.
135. The overall quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 is good. In a Year 3 lesson on Anglo Saxon writing, the teacher captivated the pupils' interest and developed their learning effectively as they considered the materials available for writing and how this affected the style they adopted. They were keen to write their names using Anglo Saxon letters. In Year 4 lessons on Ancient Greece, pupils make good gains in their understanding of the culture and its legacy to the modern world. Higher attaining pupils make detailed studies of Greek theatre. All develop their knowledge of the prevailing religious beliefs as well as understanding how the Olympic games started. Work on the Tudors in Year 5 shows good cross-curricular links, with pupils designing and making houses of the period. Detailed work is done on the nature of evidence, for example, as pupils study the Mary Rose to find out about the role of shipping in Tudor times. Year 6 work is imaginatively presented. Teachers take on the role of Victorian teachers, for example, and in one class pupils also dressed up. This activity required pupils to use information from their research. This work is well extended by reference to primary sources such as old school registers and art works depicting the period. All pupils gained a clear understanding of the conditions and curriculum in the schools at that time. They were quite clear that they did not want to return to such conditions. They could give cogently argued reasons for their opinions by, for example, comparing today's attitudes to children and discipline to those of the Victorians.
136. Although teachers have an adequate overview of the learning achieved by their classes, there are no formal procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. This is of most significance in Key Stage 1 where higher attaining pupils, in some classes, are not sufficiently challenged. The co-ordinator is well established and has ensured that a broad coverage is given to the subject according to national advice. The scheme of work has been updated recently, and it makes good use of visits to stimulate pupil's interest in the topics. The resources for history are good. With the notable exceptions of Year 3's work on Anglo Saxon artefacts and Year 5's work on Tudor costumes, the displays are generally mundane. There is no adequate checking of teaching and learning in order that weaknesses, like the discrepant standards in Year 2, are rectified. Adequate use is made of new technology, such as CD Roms, for finding information. Good attention is paid to

developing literacy skills, and some good extended writing was seen in both key stages. Of special note was the work by some pupils in Key Stage 1 on the reasons for Remembrance Sunday.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

137. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. The school has maintained the standards identified at the last inspection, even though the demands of the information and communication technology curriculum are now greater. The recent purchase of computers for classrooms, and computer software, has been a contributory factor in the maintenance of standards. Another factor is the way in which the school has successfully addressed the issues identified in the last inspection report. The school makes good use of the computer suite in which all pupils have a timetabled lesson weekly. Pupils with special educational needs make equivalent progress to that of other pupils in the same classes.
138. By the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are confident users of the computer. They have good control of the cursor using the mouse. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the keyboard and describe what they are doing when using the various 'toolbar' icons of the software. They log on and log off and save their work. They use a word processing program to write simple text for stories and information. They add clipart to illustrate their work. Year 1 pupils have written two sentences about themselves and added an appropriate clipart graphic. They know that a computer is used to control things. They write commands that enable a screen turtle to draw shapes such as a square. They check this on the floor using a programmable toy. To support learning in mathematics, they enter information they have collected, for example about how pupils travel to school, to produce pictograms. Pupils also use tape recorders during reading time.
139. By the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils show confidence in the use of the computer. They log on, log off, load programs, move programs from one window to another, and save their work. When accessing programs that require a user name and password, they know that the password they type will appear as asterisks and that it is important to type the password using the correct upper or lower case. They use a word processor to format their work in a variety of ways using different fonts, colours and sizes of text. They combine graphics with text, re-sizing and rotating the graphics to obtain the effect they want. Year 5 pupils use graphics effectively when using a drawing program to create a plan of a village or of their classroom. Those creating a plan of a village were able to choose an appropriate colour for the roads and put a white line in the middle of the road. Year 6 pupils use their skills to produce news sheets with headlines and columns. They understand how to enter a formula in a cell to facilitate calculations in spreadsheets. Pupils enter information into a database to produce pie charts as in a Year 4 lesson where pupils entered information about eye colours. Pupils use CD Roms to research information, for example about Mariner, the unmanned spacecraft's journey to Mars. Pupils' understanding and knowledge of how things are controlled by computer are satisfactory.
140. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages. There is good teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6. At the time of the last inspection teaching was identified as being good, although standards were judged only to be in line with national expectations. The curriculum now makes more demands on teachers, who now need a greater knowledge and understanding themselves, and this accounts for the apparent drop in the quality of teaching.
141. Where teaching is good, in Years 5 and 6, the purpose of the lesson is made clear to pupils. Key vocabulary is identified and the tasks are challenging. There is also a

link with another subject. In a Year 6 lesson introducing a unit of study about spreadsheets, key vocabulary such as 'cell', 'formula' and 'calculate', was identified. The task challenged pupils to change the order of the numbers in the bottom row of a pyramid to see whether they could increase the number at the top of the pyramid. They had to investigate why numbers in the other rows automatically changed as they altered the order of the numbers in the bottom row. This well selected task generated a high level of interest and concentration. The pupils worked very well in pairs. As a result of this activity, and the good use made of the time at the end of the lesson, the teacher was able to congratulate the pupils on what they had learned. In a Year 5 lesson, that was the last in a unit of study about graphical modelling, there was a good link with a geography lesson from the day before. The teacher used questions effectively to recap the use of a drawing program. The task challenged pupils to draw a plan of a village in pairs in ten minutes and then to add a text box in which they had to describe what they had done. The response of pupils to the high expectations of the teacher was again very good. As a result, the learning in relation to geography was consolidated and the extent of pupils' progress in information and communication technology was assessed. Some displays, such as a glossary of computer terms in a Year 6 classroom, are effective in supporting learning.

142. In satisfactory lessons in other year groups, teachers demonstrate adequate subject knowledge. Questions are used well and instructions are clear to ensure that pupils understand the tasks set for them. Pupils are supervised well, with the teacher moving from group to group, providing help where needed. Time is used effectively at the end of lessons to reinforce learning and to check pupils' progress.
143. The management of information and communication technology is good, as it was at the last inspection. The co-ordinator is supported by assistant co-ordinators so that there is a better overview of the subject. The co-ordinator has attended in-service courses to develop her competence, for example in control technology. An analysis of the requirements of the revised National Curriculum, and an audit of the school's resources that was included in the school's development plan, led to thoughtful spending. As a result, resources are good and facilitate full delivery of the National Curriculum. They also support learning in other subjects. There is currently a problem with email access that is outside the control of the school. This should be remedied soon. Displays of work indicate that information and communication technology is used to support learning in a range of subjects, including mathematics, history and science. In all mathematics lessons observed pupils were using a computer, individually or in pairs, to consolidate learning. There is still insufficient use of information and communication technology across the full curriculum.
144. The recently revised policy, though needing minor amendment in relation to the Foundation Stage, addresses all the issues identified in the last report. There is now good guidance for teachers. The scheme of work ensures continuity and progression in pupils' learning. The scheme of work is supported by a recently introduced assessment and recording system that enables teachers to record attainment at the end of each unit of study. Planning is checked to ensure that the curriculum is covered. The co-ordinator recognises that more thorough procedures for checking teaching and the curriculum are needed to further recognise the strengths and weaknesses in provision to raise standards. Teachers' professional development needs are being met through the national training scheme.

MUSIC

145. Standards in music are as expected nationally at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. This is a decline since the last inspection, when standards were above average. There have been changes to the music provision since the last inspection. Previously, a specialist teacher taught much of the music in Key Stage 2. Since September 1999, music teaching has been the responsibility of class teachers, many of whom lack confidence and are cautious in the musical activities they provide. Most music lessons seen during the inspection focused on singing with the use of compact discs from a commercially produced scheme to provide accompaniment. The wide range of activities detailed in the last inspection report as taking place in lessons was not evident during the inspection.
146. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils sing tunefully and in several parts, articulating the words clearly. They demonstrate a good awareness of rhythm as they clap or tap out the rhythm of a song. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils vary the pace and pitch of their singing while following notation. They recognise that pace and pitch are important in communicating mood, such as in 'Smile' by Charlie Chaplin. They have a satisfactory awareness of posture and breathing when singing. They know the meanings of some technical terms such as 'crescendo' and 'diminuendo'. Pupils in one Year 5 class, who are taught by a specialist teacher, competently add an accompaniment to a calypso song using untuned percussion instruments such as claves and tambourines. Those in Years 3 and 4 who have guitar lessons achieve a good standard in relation to their experience, and have made good progress in the short time they have been learning.
147. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages. This is a decline since the last inspection when teaching and learning were good. Instances of good teaching were seen in the teaching of a song in one Year 2 class and in a Year 5 lesson taken by a specialist teacher. An unsatisfactory lesson was seen in Year 1. In the good lessons seen, the teachers were very clear about what they wanted pupils to learn. They were well prepared for the lessons, with all resources ready prior to the start. Their subject knowledge was secure and the lessons were taught confidently and at a good pace. Pupils responded well to the teaching in both these lessons, being interested and well involved. They followed instructions carefully and made good gains in their learning.
148. In most lessons, teachers are very reliant on the commercial schemes of work and are less aware of the range of needs of pupils in the mixed ability classes. Pupils are provided with satisfactory experiences through which they apply and sometimes develop their skills in singing or the use of untuned percussion instruments. There is little, however, to challenge pupils who have potential for higher attainment. The management of pupils is good and teachers clearly communicate their expectations of attitudes and behaviour. There are weaknesses in some teachers' preparation for lessons. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, time was lost at the start of the lesson because the teacher had not ensured that the compact disc player was set in the right place for the lesson. In the unsatisfactory lesson seen, the teacher lacked the necessary expertise to develop the quality of pupils' singing. As a result, tasks were repetitive and some pupils became restless.
149. At the last inspection, the co-ordination of music was unsatisfactory. This is still the case. There is no permanent co-ordinator, and the headteacher has been looking after music temporarily since January 2000. There is a lack of clear direction for the subject. Two commercial schemes have been introduced to support teachers. Teachers have not, however, had sufficient training in the basics of music teaching to enable them to be a little adventurous in their use of these schemes. While the

headteacher receives teachers' medium-term planning and has seen some lessons, there is no close checking of the quality of teaching or the implementation of the schemes of work. There are no assessment procedures to guide teachers in planning activities. The curriculum for class music lessons is not as rich as it was at the last inspection. Nevertheless, pupils have the opportunity to join a recorder group in Key Stage 2. Their response to this is good, with five groups operating ranging from 'beginners' to 'super recorders'. Pupils also have opportunities to learn the guitar, drums or clarinet. There is a choir for Year 5 and 6 pupils and a school orchestra. While pupils are being taught satisfactorily overall in their class lessons, the weaknesses in assessment and in the checking and development of teaching are preventing them from achieving more highly.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

150. Standards in physical education are above those expected nationally at the end of both key stages. Pupils make good progress as they move up through the school. The standards found at the last inspection have been maintained.
151. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils move confidently around the hall, showing clear awareness of space and other pupils. They successfully travel on both hands and feet, and perform a good range of jumps and turns. They are particularly skilful in introducing balances into their work. They confidently develop quality in their movements. In dance, pupils control their movements well, showing changes in speed, direction and level, They confidently introduce gesture into their movements, especially when responding imaginatively to music. Pupils understand the short-term effect of exercise on their bodies.
152. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have good games skills of throwing, catching and travelling with a ball. They apply these skills well in hockey, netball and football activities. Pupils in Year 5, for example, accurately throw and receive a netball, paying particular attention to the importance of their footwork. Pupils develop their gymnastic skills, competently performing a variety of turns, rolls, jumps and balances, using both the floor and a range of apparatus. Pupils in Year 6 introduce symmetrical shapes into their work, emphasising the need for tension and precision. They produce a sequence of movements, which they practise and then repeat. In dance, pupils compose and control their movements by varying shape, speed and direction, and expressing their feelings in response to music. They readily modify their movements to improve them. Pupils in Years 3 and 5 confidently perform movements based on dance traditions from China and Ireland. Pupils in Years 2 to 5 attend swimming lessons, and develop their confidence in the water. By the time they complete these sessions at least 90 per cent of pupils swim 25 metres unaided. Pupils in Year 6 develop their outdoor and adventure skills during an annual residential visit.

153. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages. Teachers now show increased confidence. They plan lessons well, and provide clear instructions and enthusiasm. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and have high expectations of pupils' performance. Together with a good and varied range of resources, these aspects of teaching allow all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make good gains in their skills. All members of staff change for lessons and join in and demonstrate for pupils. Demonstration helps pupils identify areas where they might improve themselves. Teachers often take the opportunity to use pupils to demonstrate good practice, but opportunities are sometimes missed for the pupils to discuss the quality of the work seen. In most lessons, pupils respond to the teaching by making a good physical and creative effort, and take pride and pleasure in the quality of their performance. Usually, lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, with teachers showing good control and management skills. Very occasionally, for example in a lesson seen in Year 3, a small minority of pupils do not give their full attention to their teacher and do not take the activities seriously. Teachers provide help and support to pupils in all aspects of their work and, in particular, they emphasise the need for safety. In turn, pupils show good attitudes, usually behave well, work well alone and with a partner or group, and carry equipment carefully and safely.
154. The school has a satisfactory scheme of work, and all relevant aspects of work are covered. An overview of what is taught and when has been drawn up by the co-ordinator to ensure that this happens. The co-ordinator gains an awareness of what is happening throughout the key stages by seeing teachers' plans. He has no opportunity to observe any lessons taking place, however, and is unable to keep an eye on the progress pupils are making in other classes. Assessment is listed in teachers' planning, but little information is recorded about individual pupils to identify their attainment or learning needs. This shortcoming was identified at the last inspection, and it has not been rectified. Activities involving counting and measuring, in various aspects of physical education, give appropriate support to the school's initiative in numeracy. The learning of dances from other parts of the world enhances pupils' cultural development. The school makes good provision for extra-curricular sporting activities for older Key Stage 2 pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

155. The standard of pupils' work in religious education meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at Key Stage 1. Standards at Key Stage 1 are similar to those found at the last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the key stage, and this is built on well in Key Stage 2, where pupils make good progress. By the time pupils' reach the end of Key Stage 2, standards exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are higher than at the last inspection as a direct consequence of improvements in the quality of teaching.
156. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of Christian stories and the meaning behind important celebrations, such as Christmas and Lent. They effectively re-tell stories of the miracles of Jesus, and reflect on how worship music makes them feel, for example "happy and to think about Jesus". Pupils think about why they are special. They understand the significance of special occasions, such as christenings and weddings. They record their feelings during the wet weather and floods of the Autumn. One pupil, for example, wrote "when it is cold and wet and windy, I feel unhappy because I can't see any very nice colours from all the beautiful butterflies". Year 1 pupils use pictures and captions to record what they know about

Jewish and Hindu celebrations. While Year 2 pupils show in their recorded work that they have a good knowledge of Christian stories, there is less evidence that pupils have the expected awareness of how a belief in God is reflected in the celebrations and special occasions of other major religions.

157. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils apply their moral and spiritual understanding to wider issues, such as how they can actively care for the environment. They develop well their knowledge and understanding of the importance of faith and the practices and rituals of different religions. They construct very effective prayers for a better life. One pupil wrote, "Our father who is in heaven, stop bullies from teasing others who aren't very good at a particular thing". Pupils know about the Five Pillars of Islam and show their good understanding of the practices of different beliefs by, for example, making the connection between the practice of Zakat (the giving of alms) and Christian charity. They develop a deeper understanding of significant stories in the Bible, and relate these to their own experiences. Creation stories, for example, help them reflect on the 'wonderful world'.
158. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. This is an improvement at Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. At both key stages teachers give plenty of time for the discussion of issues and ideas that come from the stories and topics that introduce the lessons. In Key Stage 1, teachers use stories that interest and stimulate pupils. They are careful to build on pupils' previous learning, so that they can make connections between the stories and information they hear. Pupils listen well, and good questioning helps pupils develop understanding and relate what they learn to their personal lives. In one lesson in Key Stage 1, the teacher built on pupils' excitement about 'Pancake Day', and used careful questioning to help pupils explore the place and significance of food in celebrations. This led to an introduction to Lent. The evidence of the work in pupils' books shows, however, that there is an uneven balance between the teaching of Christian ideas and stories and those of the other major religions in Year 2. This restricts the extent to which pupils develop a wider understanding of the beliefs of other major religions as outlined in the locally agreed syllabus.
159. In Key Stage 2, teachers introduce pupils to the beliefs and rituals of the major religions. In Year 5, the teacher uses the topic of Zakat to guide pupils to explore the idea of giving. Through this focus, pupils are helped to understand that there are other ways of giving, such as listening to others and helping others. Teachers in Year 6 provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss and debate issues, carefully guiding them from the wider issues of the global environment to considering ways in which they can improve their own environment. Overall, teachers have high expectations of their pupils and are careful to extend their understanding. Teachers positively value pupils' contributions.
160. In most classes, teachers are careful to use activities that develop literacy skills. Pupils at Key Stage 1 record the stories they have heard. Much of the writing is of good quality and shows a good range of interesting and relevant vocabulary. In Key Stage 2, teachers encourage pupils to record in a variety of ways, using accounts, cartoons, drawings and drama scripts. There is evidence of independent research, for example on the practices of Islam, using books and the Internet. Tasks are modified for pupils with special educational needs, who also receive the support of teachers to help them to achieve well. The use of computers in religious education is not established throughout the school.
161. The school has recently adopted the revised locally agreed syllabus. The policy is

scheduled for review to bring it in line with the new syllabus. The subject is supported by a satisfactory selection of resources and artefacts, including videos. While the co-ordinator has provided effective guidance to teachers on the themes to be covered, systems are not in place within the school to enable the co-ordinator to check teaching and learning. There are no procedures for assessment of pupils' understanding to guide the planning of work. Visits and visitors enhance pupils' understanding and enjoyment of the subject. The local vicar is a regular visitor and has recently demonstrated a 'christening' for pupils in Key Stage 1. Pupils visit the local church for Harvest Festival and older pupils visit Lincoln Cathedral. The school does not arrange visits to places of worship of faiths other than Christianity or have links with religious leaders other than for Christianity. The weaknesses in the checking of teaching and the curriculum and in procedures for assessment were identified at the last inspection. They have not been rectified.