

INSPECTION REPORT

WOODLANDS INFANT SCHOOL

Lincoln

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120436

Headteacher: Mrs M Hobson

Reporting inspector: Mrs S E Hall
21750

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th March 2002

Inspection number: 244671

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 school

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 7

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Woodfield Avenue
Birchwood
Lincoln

Postcode: LN6 0LP

Telephone number: 01522 683557

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Rev J Pavey

Date of previous inspection: October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21750	Mrs S E Hall	Registered inspector	Mathematics Art and design. Geography History	The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What could the school do to improve further?
1329	Mr K Oliver	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes and values. How well does the school care for its pupils or students? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18709	Mrs N Bee	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Design and technology Music	
25623	Mr J E Cox	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Physical education Religious education. Special educational needs Equal opportunities English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	9
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	21
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	24
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	25
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Woodlands Infant School is in the Birchwood area of Lincoln. The school is smaller than average with the equivalent of 148 pupils aged from three to seven. Fifty-two children attend the 26-place nursery on a part-time basis. Forty-one per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. There are 53 per cent of pupils on the school's special educational needs register, which is well above average. There are three pupils with statements of special educational need. The vast majority of the pupils are of white ethnic heritage, and one pupil speaks English as an additional language. Many families experience severe social and economic difficulties. The attainment of pupils on entry to the nursery is well below average and it is below average on entry to Year 1, especially in the development of communication and language skills.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with several aspects that are very good. The school is caring and both the pupils' personal and academic development are seen as important. Because teaching is good, pupils make good progress and, from an often low start, they attain standards that are in line with national expectations in most subjects at the age of seven. Leadership and management are very good and the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership and management of the school are very effective, financial management is efficient and the internal and external accommodation of the school is excellent.
- The provision for pupils' personal and social education and for their moral, social and cultural development is very good and pervades everything that the school does.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and provision for the youngest children is particularly effective.
- Provision for the large number of pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Curriculum planning is good overall and extra-curricular provision is very good.
- The pastoral care of pupils is good and the assessment of pupils' needs and the progress they make is good.

What could be improved

- The pupils' interest and involvement in activities and their attitudes to their work.
- Pupils' communication skills and vocabulary.
- The levels of attendance.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been generally good overall improvement since the previous inspection of the school in 1997 and many of the strengths seen then have been maintained. There has been good progress in the key areas previously identified for improvement. The tasks and teaching support available in English and mathematics lessons have been reviewed to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met effectively. There has also been good improvement in building on the partnership with parents by increasing opportunities for them to be involved in children's learning. There has been some improvement in developing teachers' expertise in music and design and technology. Annual reports now consistently identify the progress pupils make. The previous strengths of good quality teaching and very good leadership and management have been maintained alongside the very caring nature of the school. The school has recently been awarded a national School Achievement Award.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
Reading	E	E	C	A
Writing	D	E	C	A
Mathematics	C	D	D	B

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

The table shows that at the age of seven, in 2001, pupils' attainment was average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics when compared to schools nationally. However, when the standards are compared to those of schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals, attainment was well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. This year-group of pupils achieved the best results the school has had in national tests. There has been a gradual trend in improvement since 1998, with some rises and falls in each subject depending on the abilities of the different groups of pupils.

The findings of the inspection are that standards in reading and writing are at present below the national average because the current Year 2 pupils have low levels of speaking and communication skills and this limits their achievement in other areas. Standards in mathematics and science are average, as they are in all other subjects except art and design where they are slightly above average. Children enter the nursery with skills that are often well below average for their age, especially in the development of language skills. Pupils make good and sometimes very good progress as they move through the school and most pupils achieve well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	While pupils' attitudes to the school are satisfactory overall, many have a low level of interest and curiosity in the range of learning activities provided. Several pupils have very muted responses to learning activities. They are lethargic, take little part in discussions and often struggle to maintain concentration.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall. The behaviour of the majority of pupils is appropriate and often good and this has a positive impact on their learning, although a significant minority of pupils do not behave well.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The school has a good programme to support pupils' personal and social education. Relationships between staff and pupils and between most pupils are good. When opportunities are presented, pupils take on responsibilities happily.

Attendance	Poor. Overall attendance is well below the national average. Several pupils do not attend regularly, some families take holidays in term time and a few pupils arrive late for the start of school. All of these issues affect the progress pupils make.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good and has been maintained since the previous inspection. Teaching is often best in the nursery and reception where it is very effective and this enables the youngest children to make rapid progress in most areas of their learning. Underpinning the quality of teaching is the teachers' commitment to enabling the pupils to develop their self-esteem and all pupils are valued for their achievements. The planning of lessons is very thorough. Different but linked activities are usually planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. There is a good level of challenge in most activities. This enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs to learn well and to make good progress as they move through the school. Teachers have generally good knowledge and understanding of the learning needs of young children and of how to teach the skills of literacy and numeracy and the range of other subjects. The subjects of English and mathematics are taught well. However, very occasionally, teachers talk for too long and do not plan enough tasks of a practical nature where pupils can be active in their learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The curriculum is carefully planned and provides a broad range of activities to extend pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in all relevant areas. However, at times pupils are expected to sit for too long and have difficulty concentrating. Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Planning and provision for the large proportion of pupils with special educational needs is effective and enables them to have access to the curriculum at a level that is appropriate to their needs. The quality of support provided is very good and has a positive impact upon the progress made.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Provision for moral, social and cultural development is very good and a strength of the school. Staff make very clear to children the difference between right and wrong and what behaviour is appropriate. Art and music activities and visitors to the school enhance cultural development appropriately.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The pastoral care of pupils is very caring and supportive. Assessment routines and the use of assessment information to inform lesson planning is good and most effective in the planning of activities for 'sets' of pupils in English and mathematics.

The school has good links with parents and they think highly of the school. However, relatively few parents actively support the education of their children.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership and works closely with the deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators to provide a firm steer to school development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are generally well informed, very supportive of the school and fulfil their legal responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has adopted an effective programme for the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning during different parts of the school year. Staff make effective use of an appropriate range of information to track the progress that pupils make and to set targets for further improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school is very successful in accessing and using funding for a range of projects. The principles of 'best value' are applied well to purchases. The school has a good number of teachers and a very good number of highly effective support staff. School accommodation is excellent. Resources are often very 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"> • That children are happy at school. • That the school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. • Children make good progress in school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several parents are unsure whether the school provides an interesting range of activities outside school. • A small number of parents would like more information about how their children are getting on at school.

Inspectors agree that most pupils are happy at school, that the school expects them to work hard and that they make good progress. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities and pupil reports are good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 Information which is collected on entry to the nursery and reception classes, shows that most children have levels of attainment which are below those expected for their ages. Many children have limited speaking skills, they have restricted vocabularies and several are very quiet, speaking only in single words or short phrases. This low level of skill affects their learning in all areas throughout the school. Staff have to work very hard to counteract the effects of social and economic difficulties and possible barriers to learning for some children, including sporadic attendance. Children make good progress as they move through the Foundation Stage because the quality of teaching is good. By the end of their time in the reception classes most children are likely to reach the expected levels in creative and physical development. However, most are unlikely to reach the expected levels in all other areas of learning and especially in communication, language and literacy.

2 National Curriculum tests in 2001 show that at the age of seven standards in reading and writing were in line with the national average, while standards in mathematics were below average. However, when attainment is compared to that in schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals, standards in reading and writing were well above the average for these schools and attainment in mathematics was above the average.

3 Overall in 2001 pupils achieved the best results the school has had in national tests, with more pupils achieving the expected Level 2 than previously and with particular improvement in standards in reading and writing.

4 Throughout the school the restricted vocabulary that many pupils have is a major limiting factor in what they can achieve across the range of subjects. This is illustrated in most class and group discussions and in how several pupils offer little or nothing in the wide range of classroom activities. Over several years, standards in reading have been very low and stubbornly slow to rise despite the best efforts of staff, because of the pupils' low levels of speaking skills and limited interest and concentration. Standards in writing have been consistently well below the national average. There have been slight improvements in standards in some years with several higher attaining pupils achieving well in 1999, but overall there has been only a slow but gradual trend in improvement.

5 Standards in mathematics have usually been above those in English as seen in national tests from 1998 to 2000, but attainment dipped slightly in 2001. Teacher assessments in science in 2001 indicate the school's performance to be above the national average. A major factor in recent improvements has been the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. This has become embedded across the school and had time to make an impact upon the standards reached in 2001 and has had a 'knock on' effect in all other subjects.

6 Inspection findings are that current standards in speaking and listening, and writing are below average. Whilst standards in reading are often a little better, these are slightly below the national average. Standards in mathematics and science are broadly in line with the expectations for the age of the pupils. These findings mirror the school's assessment information that shows that the current Year 2 group has a high number of pupils with special educational needs who will struggle to meet an average standard. Relatively few pupils are on course to achieve standards above the average. Standards in all other subjects are average, except in art and design where they are slightly above average. Standards in most

subjects have been maintained since the last inspection except in art and design where they have fallen slightly. In music progress is better than previously. This represents satisfactory improvement overall.

7 Data from the national tests indicates there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls in English but that in four of the last five years boys have done better in mathematics than girls have. There currently appears to be no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. The school does not have to set school targets for pupils' attainment at the age of seven but individual targets are set for all pupils, which are shared and discussed with parents. This is something appreciated by parents who feel better informed since this process has been introduced.

8 The majority of pupils learn well and make good progress as they move through the school because of the consistently good quality of teaching. This enables most pupils to achieve the standards that they are capable of. The needs of different groups of pupils are well met through 'setting' arrangements in English and mathematics. Here higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 work together in a 'set', as do average and lower attaining pupils. Higher attaining pupils are provided with a good level of challenge in such activities and achieve suitable standards. The school has identified a small group of pupils as gifted and talented and they learn well. However, some pupils do not have positive attitudes to their learning and have emotional and behavioural difficulties. These individuals do not consistently achieve the standards of which they are capable.

9 Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards that are below average but appropriate for their level of understanding and they make good progress relative to their abilities. This reflects the position at the previous inspection. Their good progress is the result of carefully planned work that matches their individual needs. It is enhanced by the very good quality support they receive from classroom assistants and visiting teachers. Pupils with special educational needs follow all the subjects of the National Curriculum and are included in all activities. The only pupil who speaks English as an additional language is in the Foundation Stage. He is not at an early stage of learning to speak English and makes the same good progress as the rest of the children.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10 The previous inspection reported that pupils were happy to come to Woodlands Infant School. This is still largely the case. The majority of pupils enjoy their days in school. For them it is a calm, caring and safe place where they can learn and play with their friends. Parents who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire and had contact with the inspection team confirmed this judgement. A typical comment was "She can't wait to get to school".

11 Pupils are, with a few exceptions, polite to the adults who work with them. Relationships are generally good. Most pupils get on well with each other, their teachers and all the other adults around them. They respond well to praise and are clearly delighted when they receive certificates and stickers for doing well. A pupil with major behavioural problems, for example, was thrilled when he was rewarded a sticker for good behaviour during lunchtime. Pupils are delighted when their friends do well. For instance in an excellent Year 1/Year 2 religious education lesson about Moses, there was delight and congratulations all round as everyone took turns to re-enact the parting of the Red Sea.

12 The attitudes of pupils to the school and their learning are satisfactory overall. Whilst the majority of pupils are interested in their lessons and keen to get on with things there are some who are less well motivated. This is a change from the previous inspection when inspectors found that all pupils were eager to learn and worked hard. This change is

particularly noticeable in the Year 1 and 2 classes where a minority of pupils are reluctant to get really involved with their lessons and work hard. In some lessons, particularly where there is not a regular change of activities, up to 25 per cent of pupils can lose interest and therefore do not make as much progress as they should. In contrast to this, pupils in the nursery and reception classes have good attitudes to learning. In a session about the school and its environment, for example, reception children were interested and worked well together and discovered maps and related photographs to their surroundings.

13 Pupils with special educational needs are generally well behaved and have satisfactory attitudes to learning. However, a significant minority, often with emotional and behavioural difficulties, find it difficult to maintain concentration and are easily distracted. Their subsequent unacceptable behaviour disrupts lessons and adversely affects their learning and that of other pupils. Most children in the Foundation Stage settle in well in the nursery and enjoy coming to school. Behaviour is very good in the nursery and in the reception classes and the children develop good relationships with the adults who work with them and with each other. The children develop satisfactory personal independence as they get changed for physical education sessions and all children have positive attitudes to tidying up at the end of sessions.

14 The overall standard of behaviour in and around the school is satisfactory. Pupils are well aware of the school's behaviour code and the reward system that supports it. The majority of pupils behave well during their lessons but a minority does not. The result is that in most lessons, pupils make good progress but in those where inappropriate behaviour distracts the teacher, progress is not so good. Lunchtime is peaceful as pupils sit at their desks to eat and drink their packed lunches. The playground is a happy place with pupils playing a mixture of running, jumping and chasing games with each other. Small groups play games such as 'What's the time Mr Fox?' with their supervisors and others just stand or sit and chat with their friends. There was a little rough play but no bad behaviour or bullying seen during the inspection. There have been no exclusions recently.

15 Pupils enjoy responsibility. They contribute to the running of the school and for the most part rise to the challenge of learning to look after themselves. They deliver registers to the school office, help to keep their classrooms clean and tidy and set up chairs and equipment for assemblies. Older pupils help look after music, books and the library. Recently pupils have had a hand in the redesign of the layout of the school playground. At the beginning of the year everyone contributed to the drawing up of class and playground rules.

16 Pupils are aware of each other's needs and although there are some squabbles and arguments they are generally kind to each other. Two pupils, for example, gently 'mopped up' a new pupil who was feeling insecure and tearful in her first few days in Woodlands. In the popular Breakfast Club two Year 2 pupils look after a pupil from the reception class. Pupils generally are very tolerant of those who have emotional and behavioural problems.

17 Attendance levels, which were criticised by the previous inspection team, are now poor with figures for the last school year that are well below national averages. Figures so far in this current year are similar to last year's. The main reasons for this are: the high levels of absence of a small number of pupils; some pupils going on holiday during term time and families moving out of the area without notifying the school that their children have left. The majority of pupils are punctual and the school day starts on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18 The quality of teaching and learning is good and as a result pupils make good progress as they move through the school. This maintains the overall findings of the previous

inspection, but there is now a higher proportion of teaching that is very good or better than previously seen.

19 In the 37 lessons observed during the inspection teaching was excellent in eight per cent of lessons, very good in 22 per cent, good in 38 per cent, satisfactory in 30 per cent and unsatisfactory in less than three per cent of lessons. Overall, all groups of pupils make good progress as they move through the school, and most achieve well in relation to their prior learning. Underpinning the very effective teaching is the teachers' commitment to enabling pupils to make progress in their personal and academic development. This is a caring school where the efforts and progress made by pupils at all levels of achievement are supported and valued. Teachers generally have good relationships with pupils and make clear to pupils exactly what they have to do and how to behave. However, many pupils have a low level of interest in their work and in learning and staff have to work hard to overcome the lethargic and muted responses and 'lukewarm' attitudes of many of the older pupils.

20 Teaching is best in the Foundation Stage when it is often very good and occasionally excellent. This has a positive impact upon children's learning and enables the youngest pupils to settle well to school routines and make rapid progress in their early learning. The adults interact well with children, activities are very interesting and opportunities are not missed as the staff reinforce skills and vocabulary previously taught which has a positive impact on progress over time and clearly shows good or better learning during lessons. Teachers' planning and day-to-day assessments are good.

21 A particular strength in teaching throughout the school is the very effective teamwork of teachers and classroom support assistants who work closely together. Support staff are used well. They are appropriately trained and well briefed and often have a very good level of understanding of their role, sometimes playing an almost equal role in showing the children what to do in group activities. The good number of such staff ensures that in many lessons there are three or four adults per class. This enables many higher and average attaining pupils to achieve well and those pupils with special educational needs to make good progress towards the targets identified for them.

22 Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the learning needs of young children are good overall and are often very good in the Foundation Stage. In the nursery and reception classes expectations of what the children can achieve are high and children learn well. This is reflected in the wide range of activities specifically designed to enhance the youngest children's communications skills through developing their low levels of imagination and ability to communicate their thoughts and feelings. This is epitomised in the very effective use of a very large wooden sailing boat in the school grounds in which the pupils sit in the bright spring sunshine to enjoy a story with their senses fully stimulated. In all classes throughout the school, staff provide good quality role-play activities and resources to stimulate both personal development and language skills. For instance, pupils enjoy using the Veterinary Surgery, Woodlands Hospital and other stimulating areas where they make good progress in developing their relationships and sharing resources.

23 Most staff have high expectations of pupils and this supports learning well. Where teachers have established good relationships with the pupils they are keen to live up to the expectations of the adults around them. For instance, in an excellent lesson the younger pupils made very good progress when discussing the work of famous artists and how paintings represent their experience and ideas. With the very effective encouragement of the teacher, children drew up a list of descriptive words when studying the beauty of nature. Subsequently the teacher modelled the techniques of observational drawing, whilst another group of children made excellent progress when producing waterlily pictures in the style of Monet. Meanwhile lower attaining pupils also made very good progress when receiving very

effective support from a classroom assistant when they used 'gutta' to make outlines of their flower designs onto pieces of silk as a preparatory activity for silk painting. The activity was completed by an excellent discussion where question cards were used to encourage the children to answer a very good range of questions such as "how would you do it differently next time".

24 The teaching of basic skills is satisfactory overall and is best in the Foundation Stage. The high level of challenge in tasks for the younger pupils is well disguised as fun and this supports children's learning well. Some teachers have good strategies of 'forgetting' what they have to do next and asking the children to help by giving instructions. However, staff teaching pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop high level speaking skills. There are not enough occasions when pupils make presentations to the class or take part in drama activities or reading poetry. For quite large parts of some lessons pupils are expected to listen to the teacher and several pupils offer nothing in question and answer sessions. Some pupils find listening very difficult and concentration easily wanders and behavioural issues can occur. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good. The teaching of the skills of reading and writing is good, as is the teaching of numeracy skills because there is an effective match of task to the ability of different groups of pupils. The teaching of all subjects is good with the exception of design and technology and physical education where teaching is satisfactory.

25 The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well and the teaching of English and mathematics is good overall. The school has developed effective 'setting' arrangements for the teaching of literacy and numeracy activities in order to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. The planning of these lessons is good. The more able groups of pupils, and any that are identified as gifted and talented, are taught in mixed Year 1 and 2 groups and within the sets pupils' work is usually organised at three different levels. This generally provides a well matched level of challenge to the pupils' understanding. The lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs in Year 1 and 2 are taught within a distinct group, which provides a relevant level of challenge to the pupils and enables most of them to make good progress in relation to their abilities. This supports the social and educational inclusion of all pupils well.

26 The planning of other lessons is satisfactory overall but occasionally variable. The school is rightly very aware of the need to provide equal access to learning experiences for the pupils. Lessons in non-core subjects including history and design and technology are organised together by teachers and delivered in a similar manner. Whilst this is generally suitable, occasionally where the chosen tasks are not well matched to pupils' ability, this is problematic. For example in two Year 1 and 2 design and technology lessons teaching was barely satisfactory because the task to design a winding mechanism was too difficult for several pupils and limited the progress they could make. Here, teachers produced worksheets that were designed for groups of pupils to use whilst the teacher concentrated on other pupils, but the worksheets were too difficult for the pupils to read and resulted in inappropriate behaviour.

27 Teachers use a variety of suitable methods and techniques to engage their pupils' interest and keep them on task. Staff work hard to provide bright and attractive displays of pupils' work to enhance their self-esteem. In the best lessons they take account of the fact that many of their pupils have short attention spans, and vary the range and pace of activities including practical work that pupils prefer. A Year 1/Year 2 religious education lesson that involved storytelling, drama, and sharing ideas was an excellent example of this approach. In other potentially good but ultimately less successful lessons, such as an art appreciation lesson about Van Gogh, pupils lost interest because they had to sit and listen for too long.

28 The management of pupils is generally good, although the behaviour of some pupils is at times unsatisfactory. Where teachers make absolutely clear to pupils exactly what is acceptable behaviour and then stick to these rules, behaviour is good. However, occasionally teachers ignore some pupils who are not concentrating and inappropriate behaviours escalate. In one unsatisfactory personal and social education lesson about crossing the road, the management of behaviour was weak. Similarly in a mostly satisfactory physical education lesson the poor attitudes and behaviour of a significant minority of pupils who were not managed effectively, affected the quality of other pupils learning.

29 The quality and use of day-to-day assessment is good. Verbal feedback to pupils is effective in identifying what the pupils have done well. The marking of pupils' work is also good and is generally consistent across the school. Marking is completed conscientiously and indicates what the pupils need to do next to improve their work and this aids learning. The use of homework is generally good. Pupils are encouraged to take home and share their reading books regularly. There are also a variety of other formal and informal tasks for pupils to undertake although not all families actively support their children in such tasks.

30 The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. The teachers know their pupils well and carefully plan activities that are matched to their needs. Individual education plans contain well-thought-out targets for improvement that are clearly devised to meet the needs of each pupil. The care taken with planning is seen in lessons when pupils with special educational needs, working usually with the group of low achieving pupils, are given work that is simplified further to meet their specific needs. Support staff are used effectively which has a positive effect on learning and this helps pupils make good progress.

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

31 The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils is good and has been maintained since the previous inspection. The school teaches all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education for an appropriate amount of time. Pupils' intellectual, moral and physical developments are promoted effectively. Religious education conforms to the locally agreed syllabus and contributes effectively to pupil's personal development. Very good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education. Relevant programmes are provided for health and sex education and awareness of the misuse of drugs. The school makes satisfactory provision for including pupils in the activities that it offers.

32 The provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good. It is planned according to the guidelines for children of that age. There are good, regular opportunities for structured outside play for all children that make very good use of the developing facilities.

33 The National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy have been successfully introduced. The school has good strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills. Literacy skills are effectively reinforced in other subjects such as religious education, history and geography. Numeracy skills are developed appropriately in science, information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology.

34 There is very good provision for personal, social and health education. This is a strength of the school and it pervades everything that happens in the school. It has a big effect on the way the school treats its pupils and dictates the approach to their moral, social, and cultural development. The school adopts a four-part approach, covering the areas of self-esteem, relationships, keeping healthy and drugs and medicines. There is a well-thought-out

framework for pupils in the Foundation Stage and infant classes covering all the topics over a two-year period, during which lessons devoted to personal, social and health education are taught. The topics are further supported in assemblies and in subjects such as religious education and physical education. Trophies are awarded to pupils each week to boost their self-esteem for reading, creativity, sport, kindness and handwriting. The winners are also given a certificate bearing their photograph and these are much valued and appreciated by pupils and parents. The class with the best attendance record for the week is also presented with a trophy. Pupils are taught about the dangers of drugs through the 'Drugs in Primary Schools Initiative' and this and other health and sex education matters are reinforced by visits from the school nurse and a health visitor.

35 The good links the school has with the community are strengthened when pupils learn about citizenship through visits by the mayor, community police officers and representatives from the flying ambulance service. Pupils visit the local health centre and the church. However, the school is keen to further develop a full programme of visits to places of interest or visitors to the school, and this is an area for further improvement. The provision of new seating and play equipment in the playground enables pupils to talk and play together in small groups and makes the areas around the school much more interesting and child-friendly places to be.

36 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and is a strength of the school. Pupils are given the same opportunities as others, both inside and outside the classroom. There are clear guidelines for responding to the needs of these pupils. They are well supported within the classroom and when withdrawn in small groups by the support assistants and visiting teachers. The work they are given is linked well to targets identified in their individual education plans as well as to the work being done by other pupils in the class.

37 The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are able to take part in a range of clubs covering areas as varied as sports, mathematical games, computing and gardening. New clubs for recorders and cooking will start soon. Pupils take part in competitions and parents are encouraged to work with pupils. However, several parents would like the school to provide more such activities.

38 There are good relationships with partner institutions. The school uses the local authority specialist teachers very well to support pupils identified as having special educational needs. Links with the local junior school are good; pupils visit the school and records are sent on transfer. Good links have also been established with the local secondary school. Students from the secondary school visit as part of their coursework and adopt a Year 2 pupil with the object of writing a story with the infant pupil as a main character.

39 Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall and has slightly improved in that provision for pupils' cultural development is better now than during the previous inspection of the school. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good and the school meets statutory requirements for acts of worship. Pupils think about their understanding of God in religious education lessons when they write questions to Him and say what they think He looks like. Pupils take part in a Christingle service every other year and the local vicar takes assemblies regularly.

40 Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and act as excellent role models. Moral issues are explored well in assemblies. For instance the vicar explored the emotions felt by Mary and Joseph when Jesus was missing after the visit to the temple and asked pupils to consider if it was right to upset people, pointing out that this could not always be avoided. Pupils in the infant classes devise their own class rules. In the Foundation Stage, rules are often implied rather

than being written down. For example, pupils know they cannot paint without wearing an apron and when all the aprons are in use they must find another activity. Staff, including lunchtime supervisors, acknowledge pupils' good behaviour and the way they care for each other and school property by awarding stickers and trophies. The good effect this has on pupils was seen when a boy and a girl comforted a new pupil who was crying because she did not know where her classroom was. Pupils support charities for people less fortunate than themselves.

41 The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. The new equipment in the playground encourages pupils to play and talk together. All classes have good role-play areas so that pupils can act out situations and improve their communication skills. Sweatshirts bearing the school badge help develop a feeling of belonging to the school. A fun day is organised and the funds raised help to pay for educational visits. Pupils willingly take part in sponsored events to raise money for equipment for the school.

42 Pupils' cultural development is now very good and has improved since the previous inspection. They are taught traditional playground games and country dancing. Pupils learn maypole dancing and show their skills at the local gala. Musicians and artists, including a fire-eater and juggler, perform for pupils. A visiting author has talked about his writing to pupils and parents. The school has a good collection of objects from Africa and pictures by Japanese artists are displayed as well as a good range of paintings by well-known Western artists such as Picasso and Seurat. Pupils' work in lessons such as history is enhanced by a growing collection of objects from Victorian times. Visits to places such as the local park and health centre add to pupils' understanding of their local environment and culture. Pupils' knowledge of other faiths and cultures is enhanced when pupils are shown what utensils Jews use to celebrate the Feast of the Passover and a Hindu visitor demonstrates traditional dances and typical Hindu clothing.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43 The previous inspection team praised the ways that Woodlands Infant School cared for all its pupils. This care is still good and both parents and pupils recognise this. Pupils spend their days in a happy, clean and secure environment. The headteacher and governors pay great attention to all health and safety matters. The school takes prompt action to deal with problems such as a small gap appearing in the car park fence, as and when they arise. There are regular checks of the buildings and grounds and a comprehensive risk assessment system is in place. Accident and incident records are comprehensive and up to date. There is one fully trained first aider on site and all staff have had basic first aid training within the last three years.

44 The headteacher is responsible for all child protection matters and good procedures, which include appropriate links with all the local agencies and briefings for all staff, are in place. Last year the school set up a Breakfast Club in order to provide care, at the beginning of the day, for pupils who need it. Teachers and all the other staff know their pupils very well. They use praise and encouragement well to try to persuade everyone to work hard and get on with learning. They are particularly aware of the needs of pupils who have low self-esteem and are not keen to communicate. They also take account of the needs of more able pupils. They make good use of the local education authority's advisory services to deal with things such as speech therapy, behaviour management and support for gifted and talented pupils.

45 Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by their teachers and the learning support assistants who work with them. Baseline and spelling tests are used to measure pupils' attainment and to help teachers provide work focused on individual pupils' needs. The good links the school tries to set up with parents pay benefits when for example a pupil's individual education plan is designed to take into account the pupil's fondness for pretending to be a teacher. In this case, the pupil has been given responsibility for recording her own progress in putting her lunch box away and keeping her desk tidy.

46 A system of rewards and sanctions is used effectively to create a climate in which good behaviour is the norm. Stickers and certificates and shields for all sorts of achievements such as writing, sport, attendance, behaviour and creativity are a major part of life in this school and children are obviously delighted when they receive them. Parents and pupils note that the Friday awards assembly is a major event in the life of the school. A school-wide behaviour and anti-bullying code is in place. Class rules are prominently displayed around the school and pupils are constantly reminded about what is expected of them. The result is that for the majority of time lessons move along successfully with any inappropriate behaviour which does occur, having minimal effect on progress. An example of this was a Year 2 English lesson about words with opposite meanings in which everyone made good progress. Unfortunately, in spite of the system, some lessons are disrupted by the poor behaviour of a small number of pupils.

47 Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. The school has almost changed over to a computer-based attendance monitoring system. Records are suitable and the staff work with the local education welfare officer to monitor and deal with attendance problems. There are appropriate incentive schemes, such as the weekly cup for the class with the best attendance record. Unfortunately, the level of attendance, which was criticised by the previous inspection team, remains well below the national average. The school therefore needs to revisit its systems, rewards and incentives and, in conjunction with local agencies, come up with ways and means to improve the situation. A number of options are under consideration, including extension of the Breakfast Club to attract greater numbers of pupils. Staff intend to take a more forthright stance when contacting families about regular absences.

48 Assessment procedures, which were praised by the previous inspection team, are good and used very effectively throughout the school. Teachers use a range of national tests, observations and tests that the school has devised, to monitor every pupil's progress and plan accordingly. At the start of their time in nursery and reception, pupils' basic communication, mathematics, literacy and social skills are checked using a combination of national tests and the school's very good in-house system. The results of these assessments are used to plan each child's teaching and learning so that pupils have the best possible start to their school life. This system successfully identifies those who have either special educational needs or particularly high ability, enabling plans to be made to meet their particular needs.

49 At the end of every term, all pupils are assessed in the core subjects of English and mathematics. The results of these assessments are used to set targets, which are shared with pupils and parents, for the next year. Half way through the school year, pupils' progress is checked against the targets and where necessary adjustments are made to plans of work. Teachers also use a combination of observation and marking to monitor pupils' progress on a weekly basis and make appropriate modifications to their lessons. A real strength of the school assessment system is the quality of the individual educational plans for pupils who have special educational needs. These plans are regularly revised as a result of on-going assessment, work with specialist advisors and the results of end-of-year tests.

50 Assessment is very good in English and uniformly good in all other subjects except religious education. Plans are however well in hand for the introduction of a comprehensive system along the lines used for all other subjects. Pupils follow nationally specified programmes of work and teachers use the appropriate recommended assessments to check on their pupils' progress. A typical example of teachers' approach to assessment is to be found in physical education where the results of one week's work are automatically used to help with the planning of the next.

51 Although there are no formal systems to check progress in personal, social and health education great attention is paid to how pupils are getting on. Teachers observe and use a range of informal methods to check progress and plan accordingly. The quality and use of assessment in this subject is one of the main reasons why it is so successfully delivered in Woodlands Infant School.

52 Class teachers and those who are responsible for particular subjects use the results of all the above assessments effectively to develop their contributions to the school improvement plan and keep the governors informed of progress. This ensures that the school makes the best use of time and resources to ensure that pupils make good progress towards the achievement of higher standards.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53 Parents like Woodlands Infant School. They believe that it is a very good school. They like the way that it looks after their children, keeping them safe and secure throughout the school day. They feel that their children are well taught and make good progress. The overwhelming majority of parents, who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire and met the inspection team, have real confidence in the headteacher and all the rest of the staff. They believe that the school is well managed and support the home-school agreement. These findings confirm the judgements of the previous inspection. However, despite the best efforts of the school several families take little active part in supporting the education of their children and not all children arrive in school ready to learn.

54 Formal information provided for parents such as the prospectus is good. Regular newsletters are a feature of school life and deal with subjects ranging from assessment through to health and hygiene and social events. A comprehensive programme of visits and information leaflets, during the time leading up to the start of school, prepares new pupils and parents for the smoothest possible transition from life at home and in the nursery to the daily routines of the reception class. The local 'Sure Start' scheme also helps parents prepare their children for a good start to their education.

55 Parents are kept in touch with how their children are getting on through termly meetings with class teachers and an end-of-year report, which is sent home just before the summer term meeting. These meetings are well attended and provide opportunities for teachers and parents to share children's learning targets, celebrate achievements and tackle problems. The end-of-year reports, which were criticised by the previous inspection team for being inconsistent and lacking information, are now good. There are comprehensive comments on achievements across the curriculum and, in some cases, targets for improvement. They also include pupils' contributions and space for parents to add their own comments. The parents of pupils who have special educational needs are closely involved in regular reviews of their children's progress and contribute to individual education plans.

56 The school has successfully responded to the previous inspection team's challenge to get parents more involved with their children's learning. Everyone at Woodlands Infant School believes that parents have a crucial part to play in their children's education and works hard to bring parents closer to the school. At the beginning of every term parents are given a very good, comprehensive pamphlet which outlines what their children will be learning. There are also occasional briefing meetings about the curriculum. Teachers welcome informal contact with parents. Parents report that teachers are approachable. Those who come into class to deliver their children know that they can always have "a quick word" about anything that is urgent and that teachers are always available at the end of the school day. The headteacher operates an 'open door' policy and will, whenever possible, meet parents who have worries about any aspect of their children's education and welfare.

57 The community room is the centre of all sorts of activities that involve parents. These activities include: computer courses which lead to nationally recognised qualifications, parenting skills and the very successful 'family learning' scheme through which parents become involved in their children's learning both at school and at home. The school provides an excellent crèche so that parents with pre-school children can join in these activities. The community room is also the home of the successful Breakfast Club, which was set up, after consultation with parents, just under a year ago. From 8 a.m. every morning it provides food and care for up to twenty pupils. The school regularly seeks parents' ideas and views on what the school is doing and where it is going. Examples of this are questionnaires on what should be in the school improvement plan and a new approach to homework.

58 One of the school's most popular home-parent initiatives is the learning support assistant training programme that is run in collaboration with a local college. Up to 20 parents attend this at any one time and, as a result, the majority of lunchtime supervisors and support assistants are either current or past parents. Other parents work in school as volunteers, listening to readers and helping out in the classrooms. There is no parent-teacher association at Woodlands but a small 'friends group' has recently been formed. This group is already organising some fundraising and social events but many more parents support major one-off events such as the Christmas fun day and summer sports day. However, while the school tries hard to involve parents in the education of their children several parents choose not to actively support their children's learning at school and at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59 The leadership and management of the school are very good. This judgement mirrors the findings of the previous inspection of the school. The headteacher is very effective in leading the school forward. She is very firmly committed to the pupils, families and community that the school serves and to promoting high standards of behaviour and raising attainment further. She manages the school efficiently and very effectively and provides a strong steer to school development. Whilst the school rightly takes account of the diverse group of pupils and their families and the large number of pupils with special educational needs, no excuse is made for low attainment or poor behaviour and the school continuously seeks ways in which to further raise achievement in all areas.

60 The headteacher works closely with the deputy headteacher and their complementary skills provide an effective focus for school improvement. This is seen in the manner in which assessment routines have been improved and the use of assessment information to inform planning to meet the different needs of groups of pupils. The delegation of responsibilities is well organised and clearly understood by all staff who work very effectively as a team to support school development. Staff with responsibility for co-ordinating the work of the early years team fulfil their roles well. Senior staff work very effectively with subject co-ordinators to extend the monitoring and evaluation of the life and work of the school.

61 The special educational needs co-ordinator manages the provision for special educational needs very well and is up-to-date with all recent changes in this area. She monitors pupils' individual education plans thoroughly and provides very good support to teachers to help them write the plans. She has provided teachers with a list of statements showing the small steps that pupils with special educational needs are required to take towards their targets. This means that the plans can be made to match more closely the needs of the pupils. Individual education plans are very clear and informative, with achievable targets that help pupils make good progress. The plans are reviewed regularly and parents are given the chance to be involved at every stage. The school makes very good use of the funds available for special educational needs and actively seeks extra funding to maintain the high level of staffing provided in this area. Support teachers from outside agencies have positive views about the school and the provision it makes for pupils with special educational needs.

62 Governors fulfil their statutory duties efficiently. The governing body is a generally supportive and effective group and most governors are developing their role in school development planning well. The role of senior governors in shaping the direction of the school is good. Governors are linked to certain subjects and specific areas of school provision such as special educational needs and are developing links with school co-ordinators well. Governors' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school is mostly good although some are not as active in attending relevant activities as others. Their involvement in financial planning and monitoring is good overall. Whilst not all governors visit classrooms on

a regular or formal basis they are kept informed through their links with co-ordinators and through reports and information from the headteacher and senior staff. The school is keen to develop the direct involvement of governors in day-to-day activities even further. This is not only to ensure that governors are informed at first hand of the work of the school but also to ensure further burdens are not placed upon staff to provide information to others.

63 The school has implemented an effective strategy for appraisal and performance management. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are good. The school has long and well established routines for such activities. In the autumn term the headteacher and subject co-ordinators monitor the quality of teaching in the full range of subjects across the school. This is effective practice. However, some of this monitoring is focused on curriculum coverage and sometimes lacks the necessary rigour to identify further areas for individual development of teaching skills or how to raise standards even further. The monitoring of pupils' work in the spring term is effective and helps to focus on the small steps needed to raise attainment further. In the summer term monitoring and evaluation are supported through discussions with pupils about what they have learned and enjoyed.

64 The appropriateness of the school's priorities for development is very good. School development planning is very thorough and effective and takes account of the wide range of information to appropriately identify areas for further development. The school takes suitable and effective action to meet its targets and bring about improvement. There is a very clear sense of a team working well together and a very good commitment to improvement and capacity to succeed further. The school has rightly recognised the need to streamline development planning to ensure this is not overly burdensome for the hardworking team of staff of this small school who all co-ordinate more than one subject and sometimes hold additional areas of responsibility.

65 The school has satisfactory procedures to induct staff new to the school although some questions were raised by temporary staff during the inspection as to how well briefed they had been in areas such as behaviour management. The school is not currently involved in training new teachers but is rightly considering such developments.

66 The school's procedures for financial planning and management are very good. The headteacher, administrative staff and chair of the governors' finance group are all well briefed in the production and monitoring of school budgets. The school has fully adopted the principles of best value and applies these well to all purchases. Whilst the school has a higher than average carry forward from the previous year, this is earmarked specifically for the next stage of further improving the school accommodation. The headteacher is very effective in seeking and managing funding for specific schemes including the Breakfast Club and the 'Sure Start' project which have the potential to help the school improve pupils' attitudes and raise standards. Specific grants are used very effectively for their designated purposes. Finance for projects including the New Opportunities Fund are used well to support the development of ICT. The school makes very good use of new technology both to support management and financial procedures and also to support teachers' planning.

67 There is a good number of suitably qualified teachers for the number of pupils in the school. All permanent staff are very experienced in meeting the diverse needs of young pupils and in managing the behaviour of sometimes troubled children. There is a very good number of well trained, enthusiastic and effective support staff who add considerable value to the quality of help offered to pupils in both pastoral and academic areas. This is seen to great effect in several observations where, because of good understanding of their role, without prompting, staff move to offer support and sometimes physical reassurance to pupils. The large number of these effective staff means that in most lessons at least two adults are available to help pupils and in many activities three or four adults work with individuals or

groups of pupils. Some staff specifically support pupils with special educational needs whilst others offer general class support. Whilst some parents have a perception that additional support is only available for pupils with behavioural problems this is far from the case and all groups of pupils receive additional help from the full range of staff. This supports pupils' learning very effectively and is a significant feature in improving standards.

68 The school also considerably benefits from the very effective work of the site manager who provides a high level of commitment and support to staff in many day-to-day matters. The quality of this work ensures that the internal and external accommodation of the school is continually improved and maintained to a high standard. Similarly the quiet but efficient work of the school administrator supports the work of the school well.

69 School accommodation is excellent. The school was initially the only infant school serving this large estate when it was built. Since this time several other schools have opened and there are no longer the numbers of pupils in school that there once were. This has enabled the school to develop several rooms for activities other than formal lessons. All classrooms are of reasonable size. They are well equipped and have direct access to the external play areas. There is a very good sized hall, which is used for assemblies, school events and physical education activities. The school has developed the former kitchen area well as both a community room and computer suite. This ensures that the computers are seen as an integral part of learning to all users. A classroom has been developed into a resources area, which is also used as a multi purpose room. Another classroom is currently used for the teaching of groups of pupils and activities such as the 'Sure Start' project and other community activities where space is needed for a crèche whilst parents work alongside their children.

70 The external learning environment is of a high standard. Care has been taken to ensure that security fencing is maintained to preserve the good order of the building. Imaginative projects have included the building of the very large wooden boat with a large sail in which a whole class can sit for activities. The school has also developed other play areas very well and there are a large number of markings on the playground to encourage co-operative games. Great care has been taken over the development of the grounds in order to improve facilities to support personal development, confidence and communication skills. This is epitomised in the introduction of triangular shaped seating where pupils sit and face each other rather than sit in a straight line.

71 Resources are very good and they are used effectively to support learning. The school has spent a good amount of money on providing high quality reading materials both for day-to-day use and for the capacious school library. The school has rightly identified the need to make a positive statement to the parents about the importance of reading to the children. Resources in most other subjects are also very good and used well to interest and motivate the pupils to learn. This is seen in the very effective displays of Victorian artefacts used to support a current project for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The quality and use of resources are having a positive impact upon pupils' learning.

72 Overall, taking all factors into account including the good rate of progress made, the good quality of teaching and the very effective leadership and management of the school, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

73 In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and where appropriate the governors should: -

1. Enable pupils to develop greater interest and positive attitudes to their learning by:
 - encouraging parents to ensure that pupils arrive alert and ready for school (paragraphs 17, 19, 53, 111);
 - ensuring that pupils do not spend too long listening to adults (paragraphs 24, 27, 91);
 - providing a balance of activities in order to give pupils more opportunities to make choices in their learning and learn at first hand through well structured practical tasks (paragraphs 12, 13, 24, 26, 28, 101);
 - providing a wider range of visits to and visitors from the local and wider community (paragraphs 35, 138).

2. Improving pupils' communication skills by:
 - using more directed questions to involve quieter and reluctant speakers to become more involved in discussions and to speak at greater length (paragraphs 24, 92, 112);
 - extending the vocabulary pupils use in describing the activities they are involved in (paragraphs 20, 23, 24, 91, 92, 110, 131);
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to speak or perform to other pupils, staff and parents both informally and formally (paragraphs 22, 24);
 - extending the opportunities to make presentations to groups of pupils and take part in poetry and drama activities (paragraphs 24, 27).

3. Improving the levels of pupil attendance to at least the national average (paragraphs 17, 47).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	8	14	11	1	0	0
Percentage	8.1	21.6	37.8	29.7	2.7	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	122
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	50

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	17	61

English as an additional language	Nursery	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	92.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	93.9
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	19	30	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	18
	Girls	27	28	29
	Total	43	45	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (61)	92 (67)	96 (89)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	18	18
	Girls	28	28	29
	Total	45	46	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (65)	94 (85)	96 (79)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	97
Any other minority ethnic group	3

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 – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	82.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.6
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	411,910
Total expenditure	380,396
Expenditure per pupil	2,334
Balance brought forward from previous year	18,860
Balance carried forward to next year	31,514

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	174
Number of questionnaires returned	38

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	37	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	71	26	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	53	0	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	58	37	3	0	3
The teaching is good.	71	26	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	32	11	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	84	11	3	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	29	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	66	29	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	61	29	0	3	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	34	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	31	0	0	28

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

The parents who responded to the questionnaire have generally positive views of the quality of education offered to their children. All think their children are happy although several are uncertain as to whether the school offers enough extra-curricular activities.

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

74 Since the previous inspection the school has maintained the high quality of its provision for the youngest children in the school. Provision is very good and follows the guidelines for this age group of children. The school provides a wide range of well planned, interesting activities. Resources are good and are used well to promote all areas of learning. The children quickly settle into the nursery and later into the reception classes because an effective induction programme is successfully implemented and parents are happy with the education their children receive. The children enter the nursery at three years old and at the time of the inspection there were 52 children who attend part time. In the reception classes there were 44 full-time children. Approximately one third of the children have been identified as having learning or behavioural difficulties. A fifth of the children have extra support from the speech and language therapist. This is well above the national average and affects the standards which the children are likely to reach by the beginning of Year 1. There is one child who does not speak English as the first language but this is not hindering progress.

75 Information, which is collected when children enter the reception classes, indicates that in the current reception classes attainment on entry is below average. Approximately half of these children have special educational needs and a few have speech and language difficulties. The children's low level of language affects the standards they reach in all areas because many have great difficulty taking part in discussions or explaining what they have learnt. The majority of the current cohort of children is unlikely to reach the expected levels in most areas of their learning with the exception of creative and physical development. Progress is good. This is because personal and social skills are continually reinforced which results in good relationships and positive attitudes to learning being developed. Adults continually promote basic skills, in particular speaking and listening, in all activities and children are managed well within the classes. Teaching is good, often very good and sometimes excellent. Support staff are used well to promote learning in all classes in particular when developing on-going assessments of individual children.

76 Good quality day-to-day assessments enable adults to place children into ability groups. Clear records, which indicate what each child can do, are kept in reception classes. The Early Years co-ordinator has plans to devise a consistent format where records are developed on entry to nursery and further developed in the reception class. Links between the nursery, reception and the main school are very good. The nursery and reception teachers plan well together and share the secure outdoor play areas. The reception children go into assembly with the older pupils and the nursery children occasionally join them. All classes use the school hall for physical development sessions.

77 Learning resources are good to promote all areas of learning. Facilities for outside play are good and in the process of further development. The children have secure outdoor play areas, which are used effectively. Bright markings on the playground surfaces allow them to play games and develop role-play areas; for example a row of shops has been painted along one side. There is a large wooden boat and an island for children to play imaginatively, and a garden area where children can watch how plants grow. Social skills are developed well as the children play with the good range of outdoor equipment, for example, as they pretend to be mechanics in the local garage. They use wheeled vehicles imaginatively, for example as refuse collectors and pretend to put out the bins and wait for them to be emptied. They learn to play co-operatively in small groups and confidently develop skills as they use wheeled vehicles and begin to understand the importance of safely when on roads.

Personal, social and emotional development

78 Teaching is good in this area and is effectively promoted in everything the children do. Adults in all classes promote basic social skills well, resulting in most children developing good relationships with each other and with the adults who work with them. The children make good progress because they enjoy coming to school and develop positive attitudes to learning although several are very quiet. Behaviour is good and the majority of children sustain concentration well during lessons because the activities which they are offered are interesting and teachers have high expectations about sitting properly and listening. During assemblies the reception children listen very well. A few children have difficulty sharing equipment at times. There are good opportunities to work in pairs and small groups, for example in the exciting role-play areas in each classroom. All children begin to develop the skills necessary to work independently and confidently select activities. They tidy away well at the end of the sessions. The children begin to develop an idea of different cultures, for example in the nursery as they look at posters of the different breads available in The Baker's Shop. The children learn about different celebrations at certain times of the year. Most begin to develop an understanding of when their birthday is and what happened on the first Christmas. However, by the end of the reception class most children are unlikely to reach the expected levels in this area.

Communication, language and literacy

79 The quality of teaching of communication, language and literacy skills is very good. In all lessons, basic communication skills such as the importance of listening carefully, are well promoted and children listen and most concentrate appropriately for their ages. However, speaking skills are at a low level and this is a major area that the staff throughout the school have to work hard to address. Progress from a low base is good. In the best lessons learning is very good because teachers speak slowly and clearly to the children and have high expectations regarding all children being involved in answering questions and developing speaking skills.

80 The youngest children in the nursery enjoy sharing books with the adults who work with them. They handle them carefully and more able children begin to happily talk about the pictures. In the reception classes above average children read their reading books fluently and confidently attempt to sound out words which they do not know. Average attaining children recognise a few familiar words but do not consistently match their voice to the text, which they point to. Most recognise a few familiar words. Below average children generally tell the story by looking at the pictures. All enthusiastically sit and listen to stories. The love of books and opportunities to read are well promoted in all classes.

81 In the nursery many children demonstrate weak pencil control as they learn to copy over a model. Above average and average children begin to write their names. All put marks on paper but below average children show little evidence of writing any letters. Average ability children in reception begin to develop an understanding of what a sentence is as they write confidently with satisfactory independence. Above average children write with support about pictures they have drawn. For example one child wrote 'I think God looks like this.' Below average children are well supported as they develop their pencil control by copying over and underneath models and by attempting to write independently. The majority of children are unlikely to reach the expected levels by the beginning of Year 1.

Mathematical development

82 Teaching is good in this area. Adults promote mathematical skills well in all activities and learning within lessons is good. Over time pupils make good progress as they develop mathematical vocabulary although few are likely to reach the expected levels by the end of the reception year. In the nursery, average attaining children trace over shapes as they develop better pencil control and learn the names of basic shapes. All begin to count and recognise numbers up to five. Many have difficulty counting accurately. Basic mathematical vocabulary such as 'big' and 'small' is taught and reinforced in other areas.

83 Mathematical displays in all classrooms enhance the skills and vocabulary previously taught. For example, displays in the reception classes show children have learnt how to measure and have looked at measuring using handspans, footprints and in centimetres using a ruler. In one lesson learning was good as the children developed a good understanding of mathematical vocabulary: 'heavier' and 'lighter'. In the same lesson resources were used well as the children were taken outside to use the numbers painted on the playground. Above average children understand 'one more than' and 'one less than' but others are confused with this concept. All children have many opportunities to develop mathematical skills in the activities they are offered. Adults work hard to promote mathematical vocabulary. As they complete counting activities they begin to develop an awareness of what numbers look like when written down.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

84 Teaching is good and sometimes very good in this area. There are many opportunities given to the children to develop a better understanding of the world around them and they make good progress. Children in all classes are able to watch plants grow inside their classroom and outside in the school gardens and this helps them become aware of what plants need to survive. Planning in the nursery shows that children have good opportunities to develop an idea of basic food hygiene as they select fillings and make sandwiches after listening to the story of 'The Giant Sandwich'.

85 Children in all classes develop a growing awareness of computers and they receive good quality support from all adults who work with them. In the reception classes children use the mouse satisfactorily to move the cursor around the screen. Many need support but all children happily use computer programs to support learning in other areas. Children were seen using the computers to put weather symbols on a map in the nursery and in reception they develop word processing skills. In all classes children use art programs to make paintings and patterns using a variety of tools which they select from the screen.

86 By the time they leave the reception classes most children are unlikely to reach the expected standards; many have difficulty contributing during discussions because of limited vocabulary. However many develop a satisfactory awareness of the geography element in this area. Some excellent teaching was seen as children in reception were taught about basic environmental issues. The children responded enthusiastically and learning was very good. From an early age they are taught about their local area. In the nursery they look at the weather each day and decide which weather symbol to put on the weather chart. In reception they look carefully at objects outside and then try and transfer their thoughts onto a map. All children learn about their senses and about how important it is to listen and look carefully. Many have little idea of basic colours in the nursery but in the reception classes most name the colours they use accurately and relate them to what they see around them. All children select materials with confidence from a limited range to develop skills needed to cut, stick and thread materials together.

Physical development

87 Teaching is satisfactory in this area. Progress is sound and most children are likely to reach the expected levels by the end of the reception year because children have an appropriate level of physical co-ordination and enjoy such activities. There are good opportunities for all children in the nursery and the reception classes to develop physically using a wide range of outdoor equipment in the safe and secure outdoor play areas. Children use the selection of wheeled vehicles safely and confidently. Children regularly use the hall for physical development lessons. They behave well as they develop a satisfactory awareness of space and others as they move using large apparatus. A dance lesson was seen in reception where children moved confidently and with enjoyment as they pretended to move like animals. Children have many opportunities to develop skills by working with construction toys and soft materials such as pastry dough. Most children handle scissors, paint brushes and pencils confidently and safely but a few have difficulty controlling them. Resources are good to promote this area. There is a good range of small apparatus and the school uses a colourful 'parachute' in some hall sessions, which promotes pupils' physical and social development and their personal independence.

Creative development

88 Progress is very good in this area because teaching is very effective and adults link activities with all areas of learning. In the nursery, children make puppets from paper bags using a range of different materials. A few need support from the teacher when gluing and sticking the materials together but most attempt the task keenly and with confidence. Most use paints confidently. In the reception classes children make very good progress because of excellent teaching when looking at the work of famous artists such as Claude Monet and very carefully painting pictures in his style. They paint on silk and there is good reference to how people in China paint on silk. Observational skills are developing well and reception children match colours accurately as they draw spring flowers such as daffodils.

89 There are regular planned opportunities for all children to sing and play percussion instruments. For example, children in reception composed a 'sound story' using body parts and musical instruments and then created a music score which they followed. All children sing songs with enjoyment in well-organised sessions. The children have daily experiences to express their own ideas and communicate their feelings through well-organised and resourced role-play sessions in all classrooms. Displays are very good and show that all adults who work in the nursery and the reception classes value the children's work. This area promotes pupils' social and cultural development well. By the end of reception most are likely to exceed the expected levels in this area.

ENGLISH

90 Attainment in English is below average. This indicates a decline in standards since 2001 when the results of national tests produced average levels of attainment. Pupils in the current Year 2 are not as able as those who took the tests last year. However, most pupils, including those with special educational needs and others with higher than average abilities, currently make good progress, having entered Year 1 with skills in using English that were below average, and sometimes well below average for their age. Overall improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the very good provision for pupils with special educational needs;
- the good teaching of basic skills;
- the quality of marking;
- very good leadership of the subject.

Areas for development are:

- standards of work produced by pupils;
- pupils' speaking and listening skills.

91 Standards in speaking and listening are below average by the time pupils reach the age of seven. Many pupils enter school with limited knowledge of language and several, but by no means all, make good overall progress in this area. The main weaknesses lie in pupils' inability to find the correct words and language to express themselves, which leads to a significant number of them being reluctant to give answers and contribute to class discussions. For example, in a lesson with lower achieving pupils, about a third of pupils were reluctant to take part in the group reading session unless specifically asked to do so. When these pupils did try to answer questions, they spoke indistinctly and gave one-word answers. Some average attaining six-year-olds do not confidently know all the letter sounds and consequently have difficulty pronouncing letter blends such as *bl* and *sp*. Lower attaining six-year-olds speak indistinctly and miss words out of their sentences.

92 Teachers in all classes work hard to increase pupils' knowledge of words and language. They use the correct terms when talking about 'authors' and 'illustrators' and in lessons in the computer room. Teachers encourage pupils to think carefully about what they say and to answer in sentences. They give sensitive support to pupils who are hesitant about answering to encourage them to express their thoughts. This enables many pupils to make good progress as noted when one pupil explained that, "My mum is going to knit with me at the weekend because she will be relaxed then." Teachers use questions and prompts well so that higher achieving pupils gave clear descriptions of how the soldier in the story, *Stone Soup*, tricked his customers. However, more use could be made of directed questions to involve reluctant speakers.

93 Standards in reading are slightly below those expected for the age group but are improving. There was a significant improvement in reading in the national tests in 2001 when the number reaching higher than expected levels was close to the national average after several years when results were well below average. Inspection evidence shows that fewer pupils are likely to reach this level this year. Although some pupils change their voices when they read speech, few read very expressively. Pupils tend to read word-by-word, which means that their reading is not fluent and does not allow them to develop a sense of the story as they read. An exception to this was an average achieving pupil who chuckled with delight as he read a story about a kangaroo. Although most pupils say they have books at home, few can name any titles or authors. The authors who were named, Roald Dahl and Mick Inkpen, were chosen because they write funny stories.

94 Pupils use a suitable variety of ways to work out new words. Higher and average achieving pupils use their knowledge of letter sounds, the clues they get from pictures and the general sense of the story to pronounce unfamiliar words. They recognise a large number of common words. Lower achieving pupils, however, tend to guess at words, looking only at the first letter, or wait to be told what the word is. The successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy means that pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and understand terms such as 'author', 'illustrator' and 'title'. Higher and average achieving pupils use the contents and index pages to find information although not all yet search the index alphabetically, looking through all the entries until they come to the one they want. They

know that the glossary provides information about words specific to that book. The simple but easily understood library coding system allows pupils to find books they want with reasonable ease.

95 Pupils make good progress in reading and there are signs that standards of the current six-year-olds are higher than the previous year group. Some pupils already have a satisfactory grasp of how to build words such as 'extraordinary' and respond to punctuation to make their reading more interesting. Teachers make good use of reading diaries to note how well pupils are doing and parents add their comments too.

96 Pupils are achieving standards in writing that are below those expected for seven-year-olds. This shows lower standards compared with pupils who left the school last year. Pupils' technical skills of writing are not as well developed as they should be. The pupils write for a range of different purposes and their writing includes stories, re-telling stories such as 'The Little Red Hen', letter writing and descriptions of themselves. Some higher achieving pupils respond well to the challenge of writing at length by producing stories over four pages long. The efforts made by teachers to improve pupils' range of vocabulary are rewarded when pupils use carefully chosen words such as 'slightly' and 'furious' and a pupil of average ability writes "James raced downstairs." Other pupils, however, do not write well-constructed sentences, many of which begin with 'and' or 'then'. Lower achieving pupils find it difficult to write their sentences without the help of an adult. The use of full stops and capital letters to punctuate sentences becomes more firmly established by higher achieving and some average achieving pupils. A few of these pupils are beginning to use the correct punctuation to show when characters are speaking or emphasise the strength of feeling in what they write with exclamation marks.

97 Although pupils' spelling is below average, they benefit from effective lessons in which they are taught good strategies for learning to spell words, for example learning that *ck* follows a short vowel, as in 'back', while *k* in 'look' follows a long vowel sound. This enables pupils to make good progress with spelling during the course of the year. Higher achieving pupils, whose spelling at the beginning of the school year was recognisable through the sounds in the words, spell common words more accurately by the spring term and gain the confidence to try more adventurous words such as 'delicious'. However, some average attaining pupils do not have secure knowledge of letter sounds and do not listen carefully enough to the sound of words. For example, one pupil wrote 'toeid' instead of 'tried'.

98 Standards in handwriting have been maintained since the previous inspection by average and higher achieving pupils. They make good progress throughout the year so that the letters are generally properly formed and consistent in size. Work is neater in handwriting practice books, where pupils have also started to join letters but this is not yet carried into other parts of writing in English lessons and other subjects.

99 The quality of teaching is good overall and half the teaching observed in the inspection was very good. Planning is good in all lessons. Very good teaching is characterised by the enthusiasm that the teachers communicate to pupils, the good pace of the lessons and the suitability of the challenge in the work. Teachers have good knowledge of how to teach basic skills. For example, they improve pupils' reading skills when they show how punctuation such as speech and exclamation marks give clues about how to read more expressively. Teachers try hard to increase pupils' vocabulary. In a very good lesson, the teacher encouraged pupils to use a thesaurus to find opposites so that higher achieving pupils learnt to use words such as 'narrow' and 'shallow'. Good questioning and careful prompting by the teacher led pupils to work out the meaning of 'tranquillised' that they read in a book about a vet.

100 The setting of pupils by ability, started shortly before the previous inspection, has now been successfully extended to all English lessons in Years 1 and 2. This system of working allows teachers more easily to plan work that matches the abilities of the teaching groups. Teachers have received training on using letter sounds to improve pupils' writing and reading and on using a commercial scheme that links together handwriting and spelling. The school makes very good use of the learning support services to help with areas such as speech and language development, hearing-impaired pupils and gifted and talented pupils.

101 Teachers try to include pupils in all parts of lessons. They make great efforts to provide work that is suitable for all pupils' abilities, even to the extent of providing individual work when pupils have difficulty with specific parts of lessons. Teachers do not always get the results that their efforts deserve because some pupils cannot concentrate for very long and become easily distracted, creating disturbances that divert the attention of other pupils and the teacher from the lesson. Teachers manage these disturbances well in English lessons and the best lessons move at a good pace. Teachers give clear instructions and explanations so that pupils know what they have to do. They use marking well to show pupils how well they have done and how they can improve their work. Teachers make satisfactory use of ICT when they allow pupils to copy written work, using word processing skills they have learnt in the computer room. Teachers make good use of English in other subjects. For example, in religious education, pupils compile questions to ask God about his life and work. They re-write the Lord's prayer and add captions to a series of pictures describing the birth of Jesus. In history, pupils learn to compare a Victorian bath night with their own experiences and, in doing so, develop better descriptive language through discussion and writing.

102 Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support. They are given work suited to their needs, including help for problems such as poor speech. Classroom assistants work hard to make sure that these pupils take an active part in lessons. This enables these pupils to make good progress. No pupils in the infant classes have English as an additional language.

103 The management of the subject is very good. The headteacher and subject co-ordinator monitor lessons to ensure that the literacy strategy is taught correctly. The school has very good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Pupils' work is checked each term, which gives the school a clear picture of progress made by pupils and the areas of the English curriculum that need more attention. As well as the National Curriculum Tests, pupils are tested using National Curriculum vocabulary lists, tests devised by the school and a commercial reading test. This enables teachers to set targets for individual pupils and some teachers write targets inside the cover of pupils' books so that they are reminded what they have to do to improve. This is effective and gives a close focus to subsequent work. The school uses baseline tests and the National Curriculum vocabulary tests to identify gifted and talented pupils, who receive extra teaching from a visiting teacher.

104 The headteacher actively seeks funds to improve provision in these areas and to maintain the high level of classroom support in the school. Resources are very good. There are plenty reading books, stored so that teachers and pupils have easy access to them. New books have recently been bought to provide reading material to interest boys. The library is well organised and deficiencies identified in an audit by the Schools' Library Service have been addressed. The school uses a simple classification system for non-fiction books that is easily understood by pupils. Pupils benefit from occasional performances by visiting theatre companies. The school involves parents in pupils' education. Family learning sessions take place each week when parents are taught to help pupils with literacy. Given the enthusiasm of the co-ordinator, the determination of the headteacher to raise standards and the good teaching, the school is in a good position to raise standards in English.

MATHEMATICS

105 The results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests, taken at the age of seven, were below the national average. However, when these standards are compared to schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals, attainment was above average. Whilst standards dipped slightly in 2001 pupils are again on line to achieve better standards in mathematics than English this year. Inspection findings are that standards are currently in line with national expectations. This maintains the findings of the previous inspection and there has been satisfactory improvement since this time.

106 The trends since 1998 have been gradually upwards. In three of the past four years standards in mathematics have been consistently above those in reading and writing. However, there is only a small number of high attaining pupils within the current Year 2 group. Few pupils are likely to achieve standards above the average and there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs within the cohort. There are no pupils speaking English as an additional language in the key stage. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls, although boys tend to dominate discussions and in four of the last five years boys have out performed girls in national tests. The school is very aware that there are currently few pupils identified as gifted and talented and staff are having to work hard to enable many pupils to attain even the lower stages of the expected Level 2 in national tests.

107 When pupils enter Year 1 their attainment is below average and staff have to work hard to eradicate the gaps in pupils' learning. Throughout Year 1 and 2 most pupils make good progress and the majority, including the high number of pupils with special educational needs, achieve well in relation to their abilities. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy well and this underpins the progressive acquisition of skills to support pupils' learning. Classroom support staff play an integral role in enabling all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress towards the targets identified for them. Staff have good awareness of the importance of ensuring pupils receive equality of opportunity and access to a curriculum that is appropriate to their needs. In Years 1 and 2 the school groups pupils in 'sets' based upon their previous levels of achievement. This is successful in ensuring a good match of task to pupils' understanding and effectively ensures that all are fully included in mathematical activities.

108 Whilst most pupils make reasonably good overall progress there are strengths and areas for further development. Most pupils have a soundly based understanding of number and this is generally a strength in the subject. In mental mathematics activities, higher attaining pupils are able to put two digits together and identify which is the tens figure and which the units and several are able to put three digits together and identify the hundreds. They know that division is grouping numbers equally. When using a number line they count back in twos and work out how many twos there are in 14. Some lower attaining pupils are able to use a 100 square in a satisfactory manner to identify numbers with one ten, and other numbers that are ten more than a given figure. Average attaining pupils identify that 46 is four tens and six units. However, throughout the school such calculations are not as speedy as often seen and some pupils clearly struggle to carry out such computations without the aid of resources.

109 Recent work shows that, by the age of seven, higher attaining pupils recognise and use fractions such as a half and quarter with good understanding so that they accurately work out a quarter of 20 apples. Most pupils find the difference between two numbers to ten and often the difference between two coins to the value of 20p. All pupils enjoy carrying out computations with money and many work out how much change they will get from a 50p piece when buying a chocolate bar for 30p. Most pupils continue the pattern of different coloured, shaped and patterned beads and complete patterns with missing numbers. They

halve numbers and match clock faces to the correct time showing hours and often half-hours. Pupils have reasonable understanding of shape and identify and name most common three-dimensional shapes. Pupils have collected data through a class survey of children who are right or left handed and represented this and other data on Venn diagrams. Work on display shows that are able to produce block graphs of class birthdays with adequate understanding.

110 Pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to use and apply what they know in new activities and problem solving tasks shows they have limited self confidence and are often reliant upon adults to tell them what to do. Pupils' mathematical language is often limited, and the school is working hard to reinforce the development and use of mathematical vocabulary. This is seen in a higher set activity where pupils have difficulty in giving reasons why they have come to some answers in their work. This growing emphasis on understanding and using appropriate mathematical language is contributing well to pupils' progress and is something the school has rightly identified as a priority for further development.

111 The quality of teaching and learning is generally good. Teachers throughout the school have good subject knowledge and understanding of the different needs of pupils. Expectations of what the pupils can achieve are good. 'Setting' arrangements ensure that an appropriate level of challenge is provided within classes. As a result, pupils become slightly more confident in their abilities. However, some pupils are very lethargic in their approach to learning and do not have very positive attitudes to their work. In several lessons observed the staff worked considerably harder than the pupils did. Overall, pupils' attitudes to mathematics whilst highly variable are satisfactory overall. Some pupils do not try as hard as they could and several struggle to maintain concentration and are very easily taken off task which affects the concentration of others.

112 The deployment and use of support staff are particularly effective throughout the school and have a very positive impact upon pupils' learning. This means that in all lessons at least two, and usually three or four adults, support different groups of pupils. This is very effective in ensuring that pupils are managed well so that most remain on-task for a reasonable amount of time. As a direct result behaviour in such lessons is generally good. Teachers' planning is good and within 'sets' work is usually planned at three different levels. They share the learning aims of lessons with the pupils, which helps clarify what they have to do. However, in introductory activities and in discussions at the end of lessons teachers do not always make enough use of directed questions to involve those pupils who offer little or nothing in such activities. The marking of pupils' work is positive and makes clear to them what they need to do to improve. Satisfactory use is made of homework to consolidate what pupils have learned in lessons.

113 The curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced and suitable attention is paid to the development of mental mathematics skills. Opportunities to apply numeracy skills in other subjects are used appropriately in science, design and technology and geography. Mathematics makes a suitable contribution to the pupils' moral and social development through the range of paired and small group activities offered to them. Some use is made of ICT to improve pupils' learning in mathematics but this is generally an area for further development.

114 Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject co-ordinator is well involved in the monitoring of planning, teaching and learning and provides suitable feedback to colleagues. She has been instrumental in enabling the school to adopt the National Numeracy Strategy well and in supporting colleagues in planning and resource matters. However, there is now a need to ensure that more rigour is achieved in monitoring activities so that staff are able to identify issues such as the non-involvement of several pupils in

introductory and closing discussions to lessons. The school does not have to set statutory targets for improvement within the subject, but recently staff have set individual targets for pupils which are shared with parents. This is a good strategy and it has the potential to help raise individual attainment over a period of time. The school has good assessment procedures and uses this information well to ensure that a generally good level of challenge is provided for pupils. However, as yet, this has not been fully successful in ensuring that a greater number of pupils achieve levels above the average.

SCIENCE

115 In 2001, teachers assessed that the percentage of seven-year-olds attaining the expected Level 2 was above average. The number of pupils who reached the higher Level 3 was well above average. During the inspection no lessons were seen. Judgements have been made by scrutinising work completed this academic year, looking at planning and through discussions with pupils and teachers. Teaching is good and this is similar to that reported in the previous inspection. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught well through science activities. Planning is satisfactory and teachers use the day-to-day assessments satisfactorily to determine what pupils have learnt. Teachers' marking is supportive and in the best instances informs the pupils about what they need to do to improve.

116 Inspection findings are that standards are average by the age of seven and pupils make good progress. These results reflect those reported during the previous inspection. During discussions with pupils they all showed enthusiastic attitudes towards the subject and a reasonable recall and understanding of the different areas of their work. Science is planned using the national guidelines, which ensures that skills, knowledge and understanding are taught progressively.

117 Year 2 pupils have a basic understanding of forces and photographic evidence shows how they complete experiments with cars and ramps to see what makes cars move fast and what sort of surface is needed to slow them down. Literacy skills are reinforced well in science lessons as pupils write sentences describing how things move for example, 'You have to pull a drawer when it is stuck'.

118 Pupils look at different materials and complete experiments to show which materials are waterproof. As they do this, they predict and record the results neatly using simple charts. Pupils collect data and record their findings as they look at objects and decide whether they are 'natural' or 'man made'. Most develop a satisfactory understanding of materials and many higher attaining pupils begin to use words such as 'transparent', 'translucent' and 'opaque' accurately. Average attaining pupils use these words to describe objects they see around the room. All pupils begin to classify objects, for example when sorting paper into different types, and record their findings under different headings. They touch and feel other objects and identify properties as they answer questions such as, 'Will this twist or stretch?'

119 Pupils identify electrical appliances they see at school and home and begin to understand the dangers of electricity. They group electrical appliances according to what they do. For example those that give out heat, light or sound. Although many have difficulty articulating what they have learnt, when prompted, they display a satisfactory understanding of scientific vocabulary.

120 Good quality displays in the classrooms effectively promote and reinforce what has been taught in science. For example, a display on 'Materials' clearly shows what the pupils did and learned. Work is neatly presented and indicates that pupils show a good

understanding of how to fill in simple charts using the data which they collect. There is little evidence of pupils using ICT to support the subject.

121 An enthusiastic co-ordinator has recently been appointed. Teachers plan together and this helps to support equality of opportunity and ensure that all pupils are included in the activities and that their needs are met. The headteacher has worked hard to develop resources to support them. Resources are good. Assessment procedures have been improved so that pupils' progress is recorded after they have completed each topic. There is an extra-curricular gardening club, which allows pupils to learn what plants need in order to grow and how gardens can enhance the local environment.

ART AND DESIGN

122 Pupils' attainment in art and design in Year 2 is slightly above the national expectation. However, standards are not as high as those seen in the previous inspection, when attainment was judged to be well above national expectations. The art element of the curriculum is generally suitably developed and provision is as sound as at the last inspection. Recent strengths have been in the very attractive and good quality work in weaving undertaken by pupils in Years 1 and 2. But, even though pupils have a sketchbook, the design element of the curriculum is not always as fully developed in the range of activities as it could be. Pupils' work is extremely attractively displayed around school and this considerably adds value to the actual standard of the pupils' work. The quality of display is noted by the parents to be something that gives visitors to the school a lot of pleasure and helps raise the self-esteem of the pupils.

123 It was not possible to observe any lessons in Years 1 and 2 but the sample of pupils' work, the range of work on display, photographic evidence and discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils support the inspection judgements. All pupils are fully included in activities and make good progress in developing drawing and painting skills as they move through the school and they achieve well in these important areas. Those pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates.

124 Whilst progress is generally good, there are limited opportunities to make large-scale models, use imaginative techniques or draw inspiration from the school environment. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have produced initial sketches and at least two good representations, each of the 'Great Fire of London', in work closely linked to a recent history topic. This work was of good quality. Pupils have produced a bold and colourful background of stripes of paint in hot colours on to which they have stuck black silhouette style cut outs of house shapes to achieve very attractive representations of the buildings on fire. Pupils have also produced effective versions of these pictures on computers using a drawing programme where the tools used included a 'spray can' effect to represent the sparks from the burning buildings. The use of ICT satisfactorily supports the development of art skills, although more could be done to develop the design element of the curriculum.

125 All pupils in Years 1 and 2 have recently produced several very attractive and good quality samples of weaving. They have used a range of materials starting with paper weaving then used materials such as ribbon and lace and subsequently made pieces using wool. This work carefully builds on the developing skills of the pupils and enables them to make good progress. The weaving in wool has been in different styles including the use of a series of plastic pegs in the style of 'French knitting' and other work in almost triangular shapes that is very attractively displayed in a wheel shape which pupils liken to slices of pizza. Pupils have also produced textured rubbings, charcoal sketches of houses, pastel drawings in hot colours and colour mixing activities. Planning indicates that pupils also study, and work in, the style of famous artists.

126 The sample of pupils' work shows that pupils take a pride in their achievements. Work is neatly presented and pupils try hard to improve their painting, drawing and cutting skills. Pupils have positive attitudes to art, at least partly influenced by the very positive approach of staff in the Foundation Stage to the subject. Because of this, from an early age, pupils enjoy art activities and this enjoyment is reflected in their pleasure when discussing the work they have recently produced.

127 Teaching in art and design is good. The sample of recent work shows that staff have good subject knowledge and a clear understanding of how to teach skills such as weaving in small stages in order to build up pupils' levels of competence. This work shows staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and have planned lessons well. Several teachers have a good level of interest in the subject, which is reflected in the high quality of the display of pupils' work, which does much to enhance the quality of the learning environment in school. Because teaching is good, pupils make good progress in the range of activities undertaken.

128 The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader has a high level of skill and interest in the subject as epitomised by the use of her own paintings to inspire the youngest pupils and her extremely effective work with children in the Foundation Stage. This level of subject knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject permeates other staff and across the school. The school has introduced simple but effective procedures to assess the quality of pupils' work and there have been suitable observations of the quality of teaching and learning. Work in art and design makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development through the study of a range of artists including Van Gogh and Monet.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

129 Pupils reach the expected standards in design and technology by the age of seven. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move through Years 1 and 2. These standards are similar to those reported when the school was inspected last. The teachers plan activities using the national guidelines, which ensure that skills, knowledge and understanding are taught progressively. Assessment procedures and resources have been developed along with these guidelines and this is an improvement since the previous inspection.

130 No pupils were seen making or evaluating their models but past work and discussions with them show that most pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of the processes of planning, designing and then making and evaluating their models. Designs completed during the inspection clearly show how pupils plan their ideas and list the materials they need as they work on the task of making a winding-up mechanism based on a nursery rhyme. This work is linked well with rhymes and songs they have previously learnt in literacy and music lessons. Some pupils turn their brief plans into labelled diagrams. Most pupils work co-operatively and behave satisfactorily. Many demonstrate good attitudes to learning, work hard and are keen to show what they have achieved.

131 Past work shows good links with literacy as pupils planned, designed and made and later evaluated their 'Moving Pictures'. They made these based on favourite stories, which they had either read or listened to, for example, 'The Enormous Turnip'. Discussions with pupils show that they develop good understanding of key words which are related to the subject such as 'sliders', 'handles' and 'axles', but explaining what they have done is difficult for many pupils because of limited language skills.

132 The quality of teaching is satisfactory and this is similar to that reported in the previous inspection. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and give clear instructions, which enable all pupils to know what is expected of them. Teachers generally interact with pupils well and this has a positive effect on pupils' confidence and contributes significantly to the learning within lessons. However, worksheets are not always accurately matched to pupils' abilities and they find them difficult to read. This continues to be an issue from the previous inspection report. In one lesson seen where teaching was good, worksheets had been adapted well to meet the needs of all pupils and learning was good.

133 The subject is soundly led and most issues from the previous inspection have been addressed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator has monitored teaching but is aware of the need to scrutinise and evaluate finished products. Resources are good, suitably stored and easily accessible. The use of ICT is under-developed.

GEOGRAPHY

134 Standards of attainment at the age of seven are in line with national expectations. All pupils are fully included in activities and all, including those pupils with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. This indicates that standards have been maintained at a similar level to those seen in the previous inspection. It was not possible to observe any geography lessons during this inspection as the subject is taught in blocks of time and during the inspection week the main focus was upon history. However, the scrutiny of pupils' recent work, displays and discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils confirm these judgements.

135 In Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the geographical features of the fictional Scottish island of Struay and are able to identify the main differences between Lincoln and Struay. They produce individual booklets, which include information on how to get to the island, where to stay and things to do. Pupils cut and stick pictures of features of Struay on to simple maps. They compare types of transport on Struay with those that enable them to get around their own city.

136 Pupils have looked at their school environment and have produced reasonable plans of items in the playground. Following a walk around the local Hartshome Park and after discussions about the aspects of the park that they like and don't like, they have added features such as a bridge and boathouse to a simple map. In geography activities linked to personal, social and health education pupils identify some ways of making their local area safer. They have produced simple individual posters to emphasise their thoughts about litter in the area. They study the exterior of the school and talk about whether Woodfield Avenue is a busy road and the types of traffic that use it. Higher attaining pupils make good progress when carrying out a survey of two local streets at different times of day and are able to use this information to identify which was busier at lunchtime.

137 The teaching of geography is good. The planning of activities shows that linked tasks are often well matched to the different needs of pupils. Staff plan good cross-curricular links to support teaching and learning particularly with English and mathematics. This is seen in the development in one class of the role-play corner into the 'Struay café/island tea-room'. This is effective in enabling pupils to act out the roles of shopkeeper, cook and customers using an appropriate menu to develop speaking and listening skills. Similarly, simple mapwork skills are effectively developed through the production of an island map on which pupils cut out and stick name labels onto the main geographical features and places such as the shop, post office and jetty. There are some, but relatively few, links with ICT through the production of computerised drawings of a character on Struay. Displays also show that pupils have recently studied aerial photographs of their local area and used weather charts

and pictorial symbols appropriately. All of these well-planned activities enable pupils to make good progress and learn well from an initially low base.

138 Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader is directly involved in the monitoring of planning and teaching and the evaluation of samples of pupils' work. This is effective in enabling the co-ordinator to have a clear understanding of standards across the school. The school has a very good range of artefacts including numerous items to illustrate life in Africa, which the pupils will study at other times as a contrasting locality to those recently studied. Resources are used well to stimulate pupils' interest. However, staff are aware of the lack of visits and field trips to extend pupils' learning and are keen to extend these opportunities.

HISTORY

139 Standards of attainment at the age of seven are in line with national expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress from a low start and achieve well. These judgements indicate standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. A particular feature of recent work has been the opportunity for pupils to compare and contrast the features of their own lives with those of children and people of different historical periods. All pupils are fully included in activities through the good efforts of support staff and the planning of activities to meet the different needs of pupils.

140 In Years 1 and 2, pupils sequence pictures that show the changes in the lives of young children from a baby to going to school with satisfactory understanding. As part of this work they make booklets entitled 'This is me' and identify what makes them special.

141 Pupils then make good progress when finding out about the life of famous people throughout history and what makes these people special. Pupils identify the differences in their clothes today and the ruffe, wig, dress coat, stockings and gaiters of men in 1666. When studying the story of the Great Fire of London pupils produce 'The Diary of Samuel Pepys' which shows they have made good progress in understanding what happened in the fire and why. Subsequently pupils are able to put in order a sequence of pictures and text about the fire and produce good quality pictures in linked art activities. However, pupils understanding of chronology is very patchy.

142 In Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of aspects of life for Victorian children, which has been the main focus for recent work. They make good progress in developing art skills when drawing a range of Victorian artefacts including a kettle, irons and bed warmers. In three parallel lessons pupils generally made good progress in learning and understanding about Victorian bath night so that they are able to recognise and compare the main differences in the Victorian practices and their own experiences. Pupils are very interested in this work. Without exception pupils, some of whom show very challenging behaviour in lessons in which they are not interested, sit in complete silence while watching a video of children 'travelling back in time'. They understand that nine or more children used a tin bath one after another and that the unchanged water would be cold and dirty, and are amused by the use of outdoor toilets and 'guzzunders'. Because these activities interest the pupils they have positive attitudes to their learning and they behave well. Many boys, including those with lower attainment and several with special educational needs are keen to offer their thoughts about whether they would have liked to have had a Victorian bath-time experience. However, despite the interesting range of activities some pupils choose to offer little to discussions.

143 The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have a high level of interest in the subjects and their good subject knowledge ensures that they are able to supply lots of

additional information about life in Victorian times which boosts pupils' learning well. A very good range of resources is used effectively to stimulate pupils' interest. This is shown in a good display of Victorian artefacts, photographs and illustrations including a school desk and a collection of items from Victorian homes. Such items not only provide historical authenticity to recent work but are also used effectively in cross-curricular art activities. There are suitable opportunities to extend literacy skills when writing about historical events and appropriate opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills through comparisons of children's lives then and now. Classroom support staff provide high levels of additional help which boosts pupils' learning well.

144 Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject co-ordinator is appropriately involved in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Staff have introduced simple but effective assessment procedures to identify what progress is made and inform the planning of future activities. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development by enabling them to become more familiar with local and national historical features and their own local heritage. However, there is only very limited use of ICT to extend pupils' learning and there is room for development in this area.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

145 Pupils' attainment is similar to that in most other infant schools by the age of seven. Throughout the school, pupils who have special educational needs make the same good progress as other pupils because of the good quality teaching and support they receive. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection and teachers are gaining in confidence because of the support of the headteacher, the committed subject leader and the training that they have had in support of national initiatives. Staff are aware that fewer than average numbers of pupils have access to computers at home and attempt to provide regular access to computers, although more could be done in some subjects including design and technology.

146 The school makes good use of the computer room to teach pupils skills that are then used in other lessons. Pupils often work in groups of half the class and these then change for subsequent lessons. In the only lesson seen, lower achieving pupils were taught to use a word bank to help them write a story. Pupils responded well to the patient and calm manner of the teacher as she showed them how to use the mouse to select words and use the keyboard to insert punctuation. Because of this good teaching, pupils successfully chose words from a list to write about 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. Good teaching ensured that pupils learnt the proper skills of computing. They used the shift key to make capital letters and corrected their mistakes using the delete key. However, many were unsure where the letters of the alphabet were on the keyboard and this slowed down their work. Most pupils successfully used the arrow keys to move the cursor around the keyboard in order to correct errors but some become confused when they tried to move from one line to another using the return key.

147 Alongside specific teaching in the computer room pupils also practise computer skills in lessons as observed when average and higher attaining pupils copied their writing in English and religious education lessons. They use computers effectively in history to draw houses to accompany their topic on 'The Great Fire of London'. Pupils show good control of the mouse to move objects about the screen when they build pictures of their own street in geography. Teachers show a commitment to providing a wide range of experiences when pupils learn how to use drawing programs to make pictures of bonfire night and produce symmetrical patterns. Pupils learn to name and save their work appropriately.

148 Particularly noteworthy is the emphasis the school places on teaching pupils to make a programmable machine follow a set path. Pupils work in small groups and write down instructions to make the machine trace out the shapes of letters and numbers and follow a route between cones. Good teaching reinforces mathematical skills when pupils are asked to estimate how far the machine will travel and to make it turn through 90°. Pupils are shown a practical application for this technology when the headteacher arranges for a programmable lawnmower to be brought into school. Pupils achieve well in this aspect of ICT.

149 Pupils learn how to switch on radio and compact disk players and the listening stations in each classroom. The organisation of lessons is good and allows half a class at a time to use the computers in the suite while the other half use the programmable machine. In this way, good use is made of the workstations and the other equipment so that pupils work in small groups to learn new skills. The time is used effectively because instructions are clear and direct and pupils are given maximum time on computers in the computer suite and on the programmable machines. Arrangements are made for pupils to use computers in English and mathematics lessons on alternate weeks, but computers are not used enough in these and some other lessons. More use needs to be made of computers in religious education, history and geography and other subjects. Nonetheless, from a low start, pupils achieve well in the work that they do.

150 The management of ICT is very good because the computer suite and programmable machine are used so well and there is a shared commitment to improvement in the subject. This is because of the enthusiastic management of the subject and the quality of monitoring which has considerably extended teachers own level of confidence in the subject. The school has very good resources and equipment. Funds have been used wisely to employ a technician to maintain the equipment and this enables the subject leader to concentrate on other areas of development including supporting colleagues. Taking into account the good resources and the commitment of the headteacher and the subject leader, the school is in a good position to raise standards in ICT.

MUSIC

151 Music is taught by a specialist musician who co-ordinates the subject effectively within the school which results in most pupils reaching the expected levels by the age of seven. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in acquiring singing and performing skills and in their ability to compose and appraise pieces of music. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is good and in the one lesson observed the teacher worked hard to get through the interesting activities planned. Speaking and listening skills were promoted well and she had high expectations regarding the clarity of singing. Vocabulary, which is related specifically to the subject such as 'rhythm' and 'pitch', was well promoted which resulted in pupils being able to explain what these words meant during later discussions. However, although learning was generally satisfactory, many pupils did not listen adequately. The lesson had been planned immediately after a whole school singing session and the pupils had been sitting and singing for too long which resulted in many having difficulty sustaining concentration.

152 Additional evidence was gained through discussions with pupils and by listening to pupils sing in assemblies, and in a whole school singing practice. Further evidence was gained by looking at planning and past work. During the whole school singing practice pupils sang tunefully and there was good emphasis on the necessity to sing clearly. There were good links with religious education as they sang a song about 'Mr Noah'. Vocabulary, which is specific to the subject, was promoted well. The teacher used praise effectively and most pupils responded positively. A few in each class had difficulty sustaining concentration.

153 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 sing co-operatively as a group, maintain the beat well and use instruments, voices and their hands to accompany their 'Thunder Storm' song. Past work shows how they have listened to the rhythms in their names and then tried to represent these using instruments. By doing this they learn about long and short notes in music and, using art straws and black paper, they represent the tunes they have devised. Discussions with pupils indicate that all abilities are keen to talk about what they have learnt. All enjoy their music lessons. One below average boy in Year 2 said that when music was written down it was like 'singing words'. Pupils talk about being given opportunities to be both the conductor and part of an audience and begin to name the percussion instruments, which they play. They talk very enthusiastically about the musicians who are invited into school to play for them.

154 Lessons are planned using the national guidelines and the co-ordinator has developed effective assessment procedures to link with these. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Resources are good and have been developed to complement the new national guidelines. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop the use of ICT to support the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

155 No lessons were observed in which pupils practised games skills or used large apparatus. In the dance lessons seen, standards in physical education were typical of those expected of seven-year-olds. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

156 Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. They understand the importance of warm-up exercises at the start of lessons and most join in sensibly. They look at Van Gogh's painting, 'Starry Night', concentrating on the swirling brush strokes. Pupils try to move their arms and bodies in 'O' and 'S' shapes to imitate the brush strokes in time to the music of Gustav Holst's 'Neptune' from 'The Planets Suite'. Although the majority of pupils in the lesson made appropriate arm and leg movements, a significant minority did not listen carefully enough to the music in order to match the rhythm. They moved too quickly about the hall, paying little attention to the teacher's instructions. The progress of these pupils was less successful because the teacher did not emphasise the quality of movement or allow pupils who did move well to demonstrate to other pupils. The quality of movement of another group of pupils improved when the teacher circulated among the pupils, reminding them which part of their bodies to use, stressing the mystic nature of the music and using her voice well to create atmosphere. This led to pupils thinking carefully about what they were doing, making light and graceful movements that complemented the music and painting.

157 Overall, the standard of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers give clear instructions so that pupils know what they have to do and choose suitable music to match the theme of the lesson. Teaching is more successful when teachers use pupils to demonstrate good movements and remind pupils as they work what they should think about as they listen to the music. This leads to pupils concentrating on what they are doing, working sensibly and producing movements that match the painting and music. It is less successful when teachers do not encourage pupils to improve the quality of their movements and when the unsatisfactory attitudes of a group of pupils disrupt the lesson. Good use is made of classroom assistants to help pupils with special educational needs move carefully and such pupils make good progress.

158 The management of the subject is very good. Planning has been adapted to follow nationally agreed guidelines and is very good. Teachers plan work to cover two weeks at a time, amending the second week's work depending on the success of lessons in the first week. Pupils' progress is assessed each half term. The co-ordinator checks teaching and planning and talks to pupils to find out how well they think they are doing. She has amended

the times when lessons take place to allow teachers more flexibility in what they teach and better progression through the curriculum for pupils. However, monitoring has not always identified the management issues observed during the inspection. The school has good resources for physical education and makes good use of visiting sports people to improve provision for pupils. For example, the Lincolnshire County Cricket captain has taken some coaching sessions and players from Lincoln City Football Club work with pupils as part of the Football in the Community Scheme. Pupils have had experience of short tennis and are able to take part in an out-of-school sports club. The school places great emphasis on developing pupils' personal, social and health education through physical activities. Pupils' self esteem is boosted when a sports trophy is awarded to one class each week. The outside play areas are in the process of being re-designed so that pupils can use them imaginatively for play and recreation.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

159 Standards are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus by the time pupils are seven years old. This is similar to the situation at the previous inspection and shows the school has made satisfactory improvement. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress from the below average level of skill and understanding on entry to Year 1.

160 By the age of seven, pupils have a sound understanding of the events surrounding the Christian version of 'The Creation of the World'. An average attaining pupil showed his awareness of the power of God when he wrote, "God only needed to talk to make things happen." Imaginative teaching enables pupils to think more deeply about the existence of God when they are asked to describe Him and write questions they might ask Him. They show their uncertainty about His existence when they say "I'm puzzled because I don't know where He is." Pupils are curious to know how God views their actions by asking "How do You feel when I am good?" Most pupils have sound knowledge of the events leading to the birth of Jesus and name some of the miracles He carried out. Seven-year-olds develop a sound understanding of the life of Moses up to the escape from Egypt and the giving of the Ten Commandments. They recount how Moses was hidden in the bulrushes and brought up as an Egyptian. Pupils name most of the plagues and understand why the Angel of Death passed over the houses of the Israelites. Some pupils confuse the plague when water was turned to blood with the escape across the Red Sea.

161 The quality of teaching in religious education is good with some excellent teaching in one class. In the best teaching, the teacher communicates her enthusiasm for the subject very well in the way she reads the story of the crossing of the Red Sea. She punctuates the reading with interpretations of the feelings and anxieties felt by both the Israelites and the Egyptians, asking pupils how they would feel in that situation. So captivated were the pupils and so caught up in the challenge of thinking like Israelites, that, after acting out the scene, they spontaneously applauded when the Israelites eventually escaped. The teacher made very good use of classroom assistants to support pupils with behavioural problems so that they were able to take a full part in the lesson.

162 Teachers make clear to pupils what lessons are about but sometimes have to work hard to get pupils to respond. In a lesson about the Passover, only about a third of the class initially tried to name the plagues visited upon the Egyptians. Teachers made good use of the school's resources to show what Jews eat at the Passover meal and explain the trouble they go to to find as many of the foods as possible. Pupils know the holy scroll is called the *Torah* and learn new words when the teacher uses the correct Jewish words such as *karpas* and *charoset* for items in the meal. However, opportunities are missed to extend pupils' learning

when staff do not explain the significance of unleavened bread or show pupils the patterns on the *seder* plate.

163 Although the co-ordinator has only recently become responsible for the subject, management of the subject is good. Religious education reflects the aims and values and caring nature of the school very well when pupils think about the meaning of the Lord's Prayer and are encouraged to think how both the Israelites and Egyptians felt. The scheme of work closely follows the locally agreed syllabus. The quality of teaching and planning is checked each year. The local vicar takes assemblies and has carried out training for the staff on the new syllabus. Resources for the study of Judaism and other faiths are good but the school does not make enough use of ICT in religious education lessons. Currently, there is no formal assessment of pupils' progress. Arrangements for pupils to receive extra help with English mean that they sometimes miss the start of lessons when the teacher is explaining what is to happen.