

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST C of E VOLUNTARY
CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Whitwick, Coalville, Leicestershire

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120172

Headteacher: Mrs P Baldry

Reporting inspector: Mr G. Cooper
23647

Dates of inspection: 9th – 12th December 2002

Inspection number: 248107

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Parsonwood Hill, Whitwick, Coalville
Postcode:	LE67 5AT
Telephone number:	01530 832 116
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Skelding
Date of previous inspection:	8 th – 9 th June 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23647	Mr G. W. Cooper	Registered inspector	Special educational needs; English as an additional language; science; geography; history	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13450	Mrs J. Madden	Lay inspector	none	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
32345	Mr H. Bailey	Team inspector	mathematics; physical education	None
18344	Mr D. Earley	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage; art and design; design and technology	None
21243	Mrs L Moore	Team inspector	educational inclusion; English; information and communication technology; music; religious education	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?	10
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?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. John the Baptist Primary is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled school with 286 boys and girls aged five to eleven on roll. It is similar in size to most primary schools. The school is moving to a class structure where some pupils are in mixed age range classes. This is because the number on roll is declining. Almost all pupils come from white British backgrounds. An average number of pupils are identified as having learning difficulties but more than usual have a statement of special educational needs. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. The school admits a larger than usual number of pupils who have specific medical conditions. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Some children enter full time school with extensive knowledge and skills. Many enter with limited prior learning. Overall, knowledge, skills and understanding are below average when children first start school. Fewer than average numbers of pupils are eligible for free school meal. However, validated social and economic data shows that the area is more disadvantaged than advantaged.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is very effective and improving rapidly. This is the result of powerful leadership and management. Teaching and learning is much better than previously. Although this has not yet had the desired effect on National Curriculum test results, standards of work seen are average throughout the school in all the subjects of the curriculum. Although the school spends more per pupil than most schools, its considerable strengths ensure that good value for money is provided.

What the school does well

- There is very good leadership and management from the headteacher, all staff with management responsibilities and the governing body.
- Teaching is consistently good. The skilled staff benefit from the school's very good strategies for the development and support of teaching.
- The school plans well for improvement and ensures that priorities get the spending allowances they need.
- The school has efficiently managed and considerably reduced a deficit budget, in a time of financial difficulties.
- The school's very good support for the personal development of pupils results in very good behaviour, attitudes and excellent relationships.
- Standards are rising significantly: overall pupils achieve well.
- Children in the Foundation Stage get off to a good start in their education.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment have not yet shown the full impact of much improved teaching and learning
- Some aspects of teaching are not always consistent throughout the school.
- Information and communication technology skills are not used sufficiently to support learning.
- The quality of books in the library does not support effectively enough opportunities for pupils to find out things for themselves or promote a love for literature and independent learning.
- A proportion of pupils arrive late for their first lesson of the day.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in June 2000 when Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools judged that it no longer needed special measures. Good improvement has been made since then. The key issues of that inspection have been successfully resolved through improving standards of attainment, a better quality of teaching and appropriate arrangements for children in the Foundation Stage. Elsewhere improvements have been made in pupils' personal standards and the provision made by the school for personal development, the curriculum provided and in its enrichment, in provision for assessing the progress and further needs of pupils and in the partnership with parents. Leadership and managed have also improved.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	D	D	C
mathematics	E	D	D	C
science	E	D	D	D

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

In the light of evidence presented by the school about the local social and economic context, similar school grades have been raised one point. The usual comparison factor – free school meals – is not valid in the case of this school. National Curriculum tests results for eleven year olds were below average in all areas tested. When compared with schools in a similar social and economic context, results in English and mathematics were average and below average in science. In National Curriculum tests for seven year olds, results were below average in reading and well below in writing and mathematics. Compared with similar schools, these pupils' results were average in reading, below average in writing and mathematics. Until 2001 the school rate of improvement in national test results lagged behind other schools. In 2002 the school caught up with and matched the national trend of improvement. Traditionally the school's published targets for English and mathematics when pupils are 11 – based on prior attainment – have been low. Targets were achieved in 2002. The targets for 2003 are set lower because of significant learning difficulties identified by school measurements of prior attainment. Pupils are on track to achieve their targets. Higher and more challenging targets have been set for 2004.

In the work seen during the inspection, children in the Reception class make good progress. Given below average attainment on entry to school, they achieve well. Most are well on course to achieve the learning goals at the end of the reception year. Progress is maintained through Years 1 to 6. Both seven year olds and eleven year olds are on course to achieve the standards expected for their age in all subjects of the curriculum and in religious education. This is the result of good learning in all year groups of the school. The progress made is consistent through the school. Pupils acquire appropriate basic skills in English and mathematics. They use them effectively in other subjects of the curriculum. Good practical and investigative skills are taught in science. Pupils are developing useful skills in information and communication technology as they use the new computer suite. These skills are not yet used sufficiently day by day to promote learning in other subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because they get good classroom support. Many higher attaining pupils do well, although some lessons do not challenge them as well as others. Achievement is good in the school overall, given a legacy of underachievement still working its way through the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are eager to come to school and to work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. There is no wasted time in lessons and pupils play well together at break. There have been two recent very short-term temporary exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils grow steadily in maturity. The relationships among the pupils and between adults and pupils are excellent.
Attendance	Satisfactory. A number of pupils arrive late after morning lessons have begun.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching has improved well since the previous inspection. There is a much higher incidence of very good and good teaching. There are no longer any unsatisfactory lessons. The recent development of teaching skills is beginning to have a profound effect on the quality of learning. The quality of teaching is consistent through the school. It is characterised by very positive relationships that encourage pupils as learners. Pupils are managed very well and this is successful in achieving very good behaviour with consequent good concentration on tasks. Pupils get through a good volume of work because there is no wasted time in lessons. This gives them good opportunities to show what they have learned. Teachers make confident use of their subject knowledge and this makes pupils confident in their learning. English and mathematics are taught well. As standards of attainment rise, pupils are acquiring a good range of basic skills in literacy and numeracy. They use these well to show off their learning in other subjects. Good support for pupils with learning difficulties means that they make good progress. In the best lessons, higher attaining pupils are challenged well to make the best of their learning opportunities. This challenge is not completely consistent throughout the school. Most pupils get good feedback about their learning through day-to-day assessments during lessons and through marking. Some marking is not always helpful and informative. The work of skilled learning support staff in lessons is a strength of the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school meets everything the law expects within the curriculum. Lessons are enriched well by visitors to school and visits out of school. A good range of activities out of school hours is provided.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Secure school procedures meet the expectations of the revised Code of Practice. Pupils with learning difficulties and with physical disabilities are dealt with sensitively and effectively.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Clear procedures are consistently applied. Significant strengths in the strategies provided are designed to achieve high self-esteem, knowledge of right and wrong and good social skills. Multi-cultural development is less well provided for although there are strengths in cultural provision overall.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. School is a caring establishment that ensures pupils are safe and protected well. A watchful eye is kept on the progress pupils make. The school is determined to include all pupils in the education it provides.
Partnership with parents	Good. Parents take a very positive view of the school and they are right to do so. A great deal is done to cement the relationship between home and the school in the best interests of the pupils as learners. An area for development is the encouragement of better punctuality.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher is resolute in her determination to raise standards. This is ensuring a better quality of teaching and higher standards. She is supported well by all staff with management responsibilities. Delegated duties are carried out well. The commitment of all staff to improving standards and provision is excellent.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors know the school very well. They are very clear about their role and effective in carrying out responsibility for strategic management. They have a high profile involvement in the school's overall management strategies.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school is rigorous in identifying its strengths and areas for development. It is clear about planning for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. In a time of deficit budget school has managed its finances well. This has provided a well cared for building suited to learning needs of pupils, well-deployed and skilled staff and sufficient resources in most areas of need. All resources are used effectively.
Use of principles of best value	School has been acutely aware of the need to get best value for all its spending decisions and has done so well. It makes good use of the principles of best value in all its work. This has been an important factor in its rapid improvement.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and makes good progress. • Behaviour is good and school helps children to become more mature and responsible. • Teaching and leadership and management are good. • The school has high expectations. • Parents feel well informed about their child's progress and can approach the school confidently to discuss any difficulties. 	<p>A minority of parents expressed concerns about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework. • Activities out of school hours. • Some parents expressed concerns about classes with pupils from a mixture of year groups.

The inspection team strongly agrees with parents' very positive view of the school. Parents have a good understanding of the strengths of the school. The team judges that the school has the balance of homework about right. There is a good range of activities at lunchtime and after school, involving pupils in sport, music and other areas of interest. Most of this is for the older pupils and it is reasonable provision.

A number of parents have concern about mixed age classes in the school. These classes are the result of a declining number of pupils attending the school and a challenging budget to balance. The inspection team believes that the teaching is good in these classes. Governors and school staff are aware of the potential difficulties and complexities and are well prepared to meet these effectively.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of work seen during the inspection are average for all subjects of the national curriculum when pupils are eleven. Given below average attainment on entry to full time school, pupils achieve well during their time in school. Standards have improved since the previous inspection

Strengths in the standards achieved are:

- the good progress made by children in the Reception Class (Foundation Stage¹) that enables them to achieve the expected learning goals² for their age;
- the sustained progress made by pupils from Year 1 to 6 enabling them to achieve the standards expected for their age in all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education;
- the use pupils make of their literacy and numeracy skills to support their learning in other subjects;
- pupils' growing practical and investigative skills in science;
- progress made in acquiring skills with computers.

Areas for development are:

- results in National Curriculum tests that more accurately reflect current standards seen in lessons;
 - the use made of information and communication technology to support achievement in subjects across the curriculum;
 - the use pupils make of the school library in developing their reading skills and love of literature.
2. Standards in the National Curriculum subjects seen in lessons and in the analysis of work samples are shown in the tables below.

In the Foundation Stage:

Area of learning	Personal, social and emotional development	Communication, language and literacy	Mathematical development	Knowledge and understanding of the world	Physical development	Creative development
Expected goals for age	On course to achieve expected goals	On course to achieve expected goals	On course to achieve expected goals	On course to achieve expected goals	On course to achieve expected goals	On course to achieve expected goals

¹ Foundation Stage: in this school, children in Reception classes.

² Expected learning goals: the targets for learning identified for children in the Foundation Stage.

In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2³

Standards attained	By the age of seven (Year 2)	By the age of eleven (Year 6)
English	average	average
Mathematics	average	average
Science	average	average
Art and design	average	average
Design and technology	average	average
Geography	average	average
History	average	average
ICT	average	average
Music	average	average
Physical education	average	average
Religious education	average	average

3. Children in the Foundation Stage enter school from a below average starting point. They get off to a good start in all areas of learning. Because they make good progress, they are well on course to achieve the expected learning goals for their age. They achieve well. The work planned for them is carefully matched to progression through the ‘Stepping Stones’⁴.
4. Results for the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2002, show that pupils’ attainments are below the national average in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics. However, when compared with schools in a similar social and economic setting, results are average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. In national tests for eleven-year-olds in the same year, results are below the national average in English, mathematics and science. Compared to similar schools, results are average in English and mathematics and below average in science.
5. It would be useful to talk about the school’s improving trend of results overcoming previous difficulties. At the moment this reads quite negatively. In past years the school’s results have lagged behind the national trend of improving results. In 2002 the school caught up with the national trend of improvement. This is because of improvements in tracking pupils’ achievement and a better quality of teaching and learning. The school is aware of some continued difference in the attainment of boys and girls but has worked hard to limit differences.
6. As exemplified in the table above, pupils make satisfactory progress in all subjects taught in the school, achieving standards that match those expected for their age. This improvement is because the teaching team has been strengthened and developed in recent years. The school has taken strong action to develop and extend teaching skills. The work of teaching assistants has been beneficial. Because pupils with learning needs are well supported, through tasks that match their needs, through effective plans for their learning and through the support they get during lessons, they make good progress. Their progress is rarely sufficient for them to achieve the standards expected for their age, but some do make sufficient progress to be removed from the list of those requiring special help for learning difficulties. The school has been successful in promoting the challenge necessary to support the learning needs of higher attaining pupils. However, this challenge is not yet completely consistent in all classes. The school works hard to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunity and access to the full curriculum provided. This includes provision for pupils with specific medical conditions. English is the language of the home for all pupils.

³ Key Stage 1 contains pupils in Year 1 and 2; Key Stage 2 contains pupils in Year 3 to Year 6.

⁴ ‘Stepping stones’: the step-by-step progression through to the achievement of the Early Learning Goals identified within national guidance for the Foundation Stage curriculum.

7. Speaking and listening skills are above average by the time pupils are eleven. Pupils acquire sound skills in literacy and numeracy. They use these well to report on their understanding in science, religious education, history and geography. Pupils also acquire good research skills, for example, they have an extensive knowledge of how to find out about the topics they cover in geography and history. They know how to conduct a scientific investigation so that it is valid. Pupils with specific medical conditions get good opportunity to be learners. The school does not let any physical disability become a barrier to learning. The school is able to admit pupils in wheelchairs. Good arrangements are made for all pupils including those with specific physical difficulty go on outings and residential opportunities. This is good practice in educational inclusion. Although pupils acquire good basic skills in information and communication technology making good use of the opportunities provided in dedicated computer lessons in the computer suite, they do not yet use these skills extensively in support of their learning in a range of other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. This is a significant strength of the school. Relationships are excellent, whilst pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are all very good. This is an improvement on the previous report when they were said to be good.

Particular strengths in this area of school life are:

- pupils' interest and involvement in lessons;
- their enthusiastic support for school activities;
- the positive rapport in all classes between pupils and staff;
- the regard in which pupils hold staff;
- the care and respect with which pupils treat each other in the school and playground;
- the desire of all pupils to do their best in lessons;
- co-operation in pairs and groups.

There is one area for development:

- Whilst the great majority of pupils arrive in time for the start of the first session of the day a minority arrive late and consequently waste their own and other pupils time.
9. Pupils are keen and enthusiastic about their work, listen to their teachers very carefully and are excited by new learning experiences. For example, in a Year 6 geography lesson, pupils studying the mountain environment had a clear idea of what they needed to do to make further progress in the next lesson. Pupils with special education needs are fully involved in all the activities offered by the school, in and out of classes, whilst the support they receive from other pupils and teaching assistants is a constant boost to their self esteem.
10. Behaviour in all parts of school life is very good, in the classroom, playground and when making visits. The school has received numerous letters of praise from organisations and individuals who have noted pupils' behaviour away from the school. In lessons their good behaviour allows teachers to make full use of the time available and to challenge pupils in their learning. Playground behaviour is similarly very good, pupils are very active because of the wide range of activities on offer to them and no rough or boisterous behaviour was observed during the inspection. Two pupils have been excluded in the past school year, both for a one day fixed period

11. Relationships in the school, which are excellent, are modelled by the staff and permeate every thing that happens in the school. The co-operation of pupils in groups and pairs ensures that all pupils make progress and is well planned to make sure pupils have partners who will support and encourage the weaker partner. Pupils are, as a consequence, confident to answer questions and take part in discussions because what they say is respected and valued. One particular example of these relationships occurred in a Year 3/4 class where one boy remarked, *“he wasn’t here yesterday so I need to show him what we done”*.
12. Pupils readily accept responsibility for themselves, others and for tasks in class and around the school. They particularly enjoy the school fete where they run stalls and make items to sell. Pupils organise fund raising activities for a variety of charities including Jeans for Genes, Children in Need and Red Nose Day.
13. Attendance is satisfactory and unauthorised absence continues at low levels. However, a minority of pupils arrive in the classroom late after lingering in cloakrooms or entering the classroom late through unlocked doors. This has an adverse effect on the start of the school day and reduces the time for learning in the first period.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

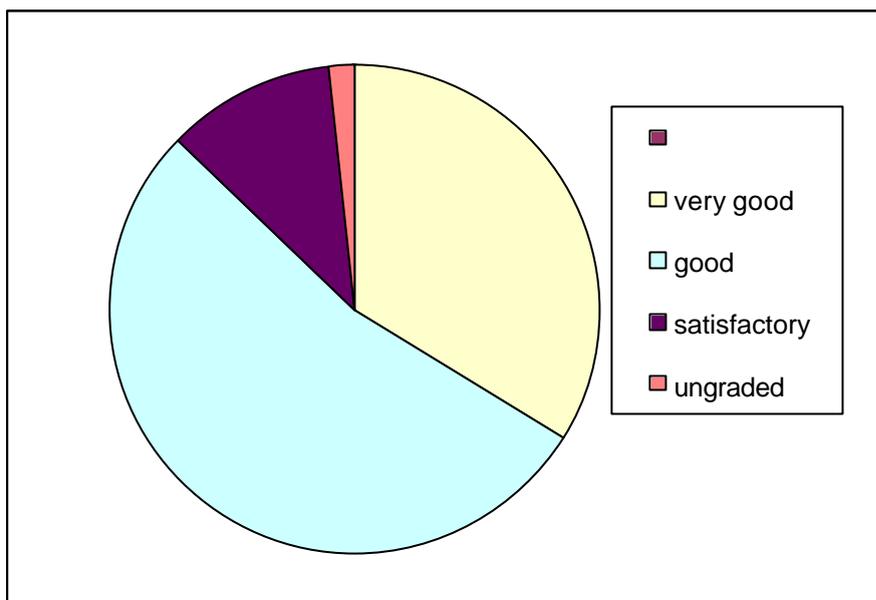
14. The quality of teaching is good. This is an improvement since the previous when teaching was judged to be satisfactory. The school has successfully resolved a key issue of that inspection, to raise the proportion of good teaching. There was no unsatisfactory teaching during this inspection. This, too, is an improvement as one in ten lessons were unsatisfactory at the previous inspection.

Strengths in teaching and learning are:

- the way teachers manage pupils and pupils respond with very good behaviour;
- the way time and resources are used during lessons, ensuring that no time is wasted;
- the contribution made by teaching assistants;
- the quality of planning that ensures well directed and confidently taken lessons;
- the use teachers make of their subject knowledge;
- the provision made for children in the Foundation Stage;
- good use of questioning to clarify and build on what pupils already know and understand;
- excellent relationships that encourage pupils to be effective learners.

Areas for development are:

- a more consistent challenge to pupils, especially higher attaining pupils;
 - better use of ICT skills on a day-to-day basis across the subjects of the curriculum;
 - a more consistent approach to marking so that all pupils get good feedback about their work.
15. The chart that follows shows the proportion of lessons judged to be very good, good and satisfactory. One lesson was seen for insufficient time to make a judgement on the quality of teaching.



16. Because teaching is predominantly good and very good, the quality of learning is similar. The strengths in teaching are reflected in the quality of pupils' learning. Progress is satisfactory overall because pupils consistently build on the good progress established in the Foundation Stage. Teaching in English and mathematics is good. As a result pupils acquire good literacy and numeracy skills. They use these efficiently in other subjects of the curriculum. Good use is being made of the new computer suite. Pupils acquire good information and communication technology skills, although these are not being used sufficiently day-by-day in the classroom to promote learning in a range of subjects.
17. Teachers manage pupils very well. Relationships are excellent between pupils and teachers and among pupils. This is a key factor in achieving very good behaviour. Both teachers and pupils can then make very good use of the time available for learning. Because no time is wasted, teachers can spend all their time concentrating on the learning intentions of the lesson and pupils get plenty of time to work at their task and to practice new skills. Resources are well planned and used during lessons, and this helps pupils to settle quickly and get on with their work. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to the work in the classroom. Frequently they are targeted on the needs of those who find learning difficult. Because they know the pupils well and are familiar with what these pupils have to do next, pupils with learning difficulties make good progress. Although this progress rarely is sufficient for them to achieve the level expected for their age, some pupils do make sufficient progress to move down the levels of the Code of Practice for special educational needs. Indeed, sometimes pupils move off the Code of Practice.
18. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They plan well together. This good practice ensures that lessons can be taught at a good pace, involving and challenging most pupils. Lessons go confidently and this encourages pupils to get involved and to be confident in their own learning. Many teachers have effective questioning strategies. This clarifies what pupils know already. It checks on the attainment of individuals, especially where the teacher asks different questions of different pupils to ensure that all levels of ability are involved in the discussion. It establishes where the starting point of the lesson needs to be so that the plan can be adjusted if necessary.
19. Good provision is made for children in the Foundation Stage. The teacher and teaching assistants work well together. They plan helpful and meaningful activities for the children.

Good relationships in the Reception Class help the pupils to settle well and to become confident and purposeful learners. As a result the children make good progress and achieve well.

20. Many teachers make great demands of all pupils. The school is determined to include all pupils in what it provides. Occasionally where the pace of the lesson is less brisk where pupils are not as well settled and managed, the higher attaining pupils are not as well challenged. The school is successful in supporting many pupils through the higher levels of the National Curriculum. Some pupils can achieve even higher levels. Although pupils acquire good ICT skills in lessons taken in the computer suite, there is very little evidence of computers being used on a regular basis to support the daily classroom lessons. For example, computers in the classroom were frequently switched off, or where switched on, were unused. There is little in pupils' books, for example in history, geography or science that shows evidence of the use of ICT. There is evidence of pupils using good word processing skills to present writing tasks. There is some very perceptive and supportive marking of pupils' tasks. This is particularly the case where the teacher asks demanding questions as part of her marking strategy. However, this is not consistent through the school, meaning that some pupils get very good support and feedback about how well they are doing. Other pupils are not as well supported.
21. The quality of teaching in mixed age classes is good. Teachers plan in teams to ensure that the needs of pupils in both age groups are well considered. This is an area of concern for some parents. It is an aspect of the life of the school to which the school gives a great deal of attention and support.

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

22. Curriculum provision is good. The school provides a broad range of worthwhile learning opportunities that are relevant to the pupils' needs and ensure equality of opportunity for all. The appropriate statutory curriculum is in place. The curriculum is enriched by visitors to school and by taking pupils on outings to interesting places. A good range of activities out of school hours is provided. The school makes good provision for special educational needs pupils and makes sure that higher attaining pupils get opportunities to extend their learning.

Strengths in the curriculum are:

- the school's full response to the statutory nature of the National Curriculum;
- planning;
- use of National guidance for the Foundation Stage curriculum;
- the way the curriculum is enriched;
- the very good provision for personal development.

Areas for development are:

- the continued monitoring of provision in mixed age classes;
- provision for the development of physical activity in Reception class;
- provision for understanding the nature of a diverse and multi-cultural society.

23. Good curriculum plans are in place for all subjects, appropriately based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance⁵. Teachers amend these according to the needs of their pupils. Curriculum provision for pupils in mixed-age classes has been planned carefully and well to provide opportunities for pupils to work at their own level, particularly in English and

⁵ National guidance and advice on the interpretation of National Curriculum requirements.

mathematics. The current arrangements for mixed age classes are working well.

24. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good. It is carefully planned against the 'Stepping Stones' of the Foundation Stage curriculum national guidance. This ensures that children get a rich variety of appropriate activities. The school has limited provision for developing pupils' gross motor skills in pedalling and steering. It is aware of these limitations and makes careful compensation in other areas of physical development.
25. The curriculum is enriched through a wide variety of extra-curricular opportunities that are offered to pupils throughout the year, both during the school day and after school. These include a residential visit, visitors to school and visits to places of interest.
26. Strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are satisfactory and incorporate the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies appropriately. "Booster" classes and other similar strategies are used to provide support pupils of various abilities in English and mathematics. Initiatives, such as Additional Learning Support and Early Learning Support provide extra help for younger pupils. This has enhanced the attainment of pupils who get this additional support. Provision for pupils' personal and social education, including health education, sex education and attention to drug misuse is good.
27. The school benefits from positive links with the local community and has developed very constructive relationships with local High Schools, the area "pyramid" of schools and other relevant institutions. Parents and their children participate in the Family Literacy programme. Not only does this enhance the partnership with parents but also it gives parents a deeper insight into what children should be achieving.
28. Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good and this aspect is a strength of the school.
29. There is very good provision for spiritual development. There are formal opportunities for prayer and quiet reflection in Collective Worship and many other times throughout the school day when pupils have the opportunity to experience a joy and wonder for the world around them. The use of high-quality photographs of art from around the world encourages pupils to explore the symbolism, colours, shapes and materials used to depict the Christmas message. Times of shared joys and sadness within the school community are dealt with sensitively and openly. There are good links with the Parish Church, which is used for class visits and services such as the Year 6 Leavers' Service. Consistent role modelling from adults and the valuing of pupils' contributions to the life of the school makes good provision for raising self-esteem and boosting confident learning.
30. Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils are taught, through the school code of behaviour, the Golden Book and examples set by staff, the difference between right and wrong. There is a consistent reinforcement of the school ethos by all staff that encourages pupils to respect each other, their surroundings and the wider environment. Much of the Collective Worship is based upon themes upon which moral discussions and judgements need to be made by pupils. Pupils have good opportunities to discuss themes relevant to their school life and life in general when they gather in a circle to have planned discussions.
31. The school makes very good provision for the pupils' social development. The school ethos permeates throughout all activities, helping to establish positive relationships, opportunities to take responsibility and the development of an understanding of living in a community. Good opportunities for social development are provided in many lessons, for example, in science and ICT, where opportunities are made for pupils to work together in groups and pairs. Older pupils are given responsibility for younger pupils, for example, when the new Reception Class

pupils come into school. Pupils are encouraged to take part in local social events, for example the Lantern Parade and Summer Gala. Year 6 pupils run stalls at the school's Summer Fete.

32. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The pupils' own culture is well promoted through activities within the locality, such as support for a local farmer during the Foot and Mouth crisis, the Lantern Parade and Carols for Cancer. The religious education curriculum covers a wide range of religions and pupils are starting to build up a picture of their country as one of many different cultures. As the school's immediate community is almost completely white British, lessons about cultures and religions often lead to a picture of the differences between cultures, instead of the similarities that they share. There is room within provision that is very good overall to improve this multi-cultural element of personal development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. There are very good procedures in the school for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. The promotion and monitoring of behaviour are very good.

Other strengths in this area are:

- the promotion of self-esteem for all pupils in every area of school life;
- high expectations teachers have of pupils;
- very good pupil management;
- good induction for pupils new to this school and for eleven year old pupils moving to the secondary school;
- very good use of praise at the appropriate time;
- a great deal of assessment information is gathered;
- the school makes good use of this information, particularly in English and mathematics, to help in its planning and to set individual and group targets for improvement.

There are two areas for development:

- implementation of tighter procedures to discourage pupils from arriving late in the classroom;
 - improve the consistency of assessment in history, geography and music.
34. The head teacher is the designated person for child protection purposes and all staff members are aware of the action to be taken in cases of concern. Procedures are based on the local guidelines, but the school is unusual in that it has not created its own policy for child protection. Health and safety matters are the responsibility of the governors' premises committee, which makes termly checks on the school. The site manager, who is also a governor, makes daily checks to ensure the safety and well being of pupils. The school has undertaken all the necessary risk assessments, including those needed before school trips and residential visits can go ahead.
35. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory. However, the school has little involvement with the education welfare officer to deal with those families that fail to ensure the regular attendance of their children. Some parents take their children on holiday in term time and a small minority of children are often late for the first lesson. This has an impact on the progress of these pupils and on the prompt and smooth start of the first lesson of the day. There are no procedures in place to make immediate contact with the parents of those pupils who fail to attend school without previous notice.
36. Procedures to promote the very good behaviour of pupils are based on the consistent use of the

assertive behaviour management and reward system. Teachers manage pupils well through skilled teaching, good supportive relationships and an enthusiasm for learning resulting in little time or inclination for inappropriate behaviour. The head teacher, with the involvement of parents, swiftly deals with the rare instances of bullying. Pupils are very aware of the action needed to stop any bullying by immediately reporting it to an adult. This is learned through the personal and social curriculum, assemblies and discussion in 'Circle Time'⁶. The school's very strong culture of inclusion, self-esteem and respect for others means that a caring atmosphere permeates the whole school

37. There is good support for all pupils' personal development. Teachers have a very good knowledge of pupils in their class and more generally across the school. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from knowledgeable teaching and differentiated work particularly in literacy and numeracy ensure that all ability ranges can work at their ability level. The Code of Practice Code for special educational needs is securely in place and links with outside agencies, for example educational psychologists, helps to support pupils.
38. The school has thorough and comprehensive systems for assessing pupils' progress in English and mathematics, including National Curriculum tests. The school carefully analyses its results so that it can identify areas for improvement for groups and individuals and help with planning work. For example, in mathematics, the school identified the need to focus on pupils' skills in understanding the language used in extended problem solving. In English, the school provides extra classes develop pupils' writing skills as a result of its analysis of their performance in tests. Pupils also discuss individual targets for improvement with their teachers so that they are aware of their own learning needs. The school keeps careful records of pupils' results in mathematics and English so that it can follow pupils' progress and help to predict future attainment. Although systems for assessment are not as comprehensive in science, pupils are tested regularly so that their progress is checked. The school is in the process of introducing further testing in science in order to enhance its assessment systems. The school has effective, but less detailed systems for assessing and recording pupils' progress in most other subjects of the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. The school has effective links with parents and parents feel that this is a very good school.
40. The only areas of contention are the level of homework provided by the school that some parents feel is too much, and the amount of out of school activities that they feel, is too low. Homework is set in line with government guidelines and the school is happy to discuss this provision with individual parents. The inspection team finds that the level of extra curricular activities is good and the balance of homework is satisfactory.

Particular strengths include:

- the number of parents trained in classroom support who help in the school on a regular basis;
- the regular, friendly and informative newsletters;
- the pre-school information and involvement of prospective parents;

The one area for development is:

- work with a number of parents to improve their child's punctuality.

⁶ Circle Time: when pupils sit in a circle for discussions.

41. The school provides effective opportunities in the autumn and spring terms for discussions with parents. These are attended by the majority of the parents. Annual reports about pupils' progress are good with targets set for future improvement in literacy, numeracy and science. Also included is a good resume of pupils' personal development. Parents are encouraged to respond in writing to the reports and to meet teachers for discussion.
42. The school meets the requirements for pupils with special educational needs and the involvement of their parents fully. This requires that parents and pupils are full partners in discussions about the progress made by pupils with learning difficulties. Parents and pupils take a full part in target setting and reviews.
43. Parents make a good impact on the work of the school and pupils' progress. A considerable number of parents have been trained to give skilled help in classrooms and with the general life of the school. The Parent /Teacher association has a considerable impact on the school through the social activities that raise much needed funds for school projects, such as the improvement of the outside environment. Some parents are deeply involved in the progress their child makes through the support given to homework.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The quality of leadership and management is very good overall. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when the headteacher was new to the school. Governors play an effective and full role in the strategic management of the school. The school's strategies for self-evaluation are very good, giving strong support to improving standards and a much better quality of teaching. Good use is made of limited finances to provide resources that are used effectively to support pupils' learning. Overall, the school is very effective, providing good value for money.

Strengths in leadership and management are:

- the headteacher provides strong and resolute leadership;
- the shared commitment of all staff to improvement is excellent;
- the governors are very perceptive about their role in moving the school forward;
- the good management of a deficit budget;
- planning for improvement;
- the school's aims and values are clearly expressed in the behaviour, attitudes and values of pupils;
- the match of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of pupils and provide the curriculum required;
- the school has rigorous strategies for maintaining and improving the quality of teaching.

Areas for development are:

- further developing teaching to ensure consistency in every area, to continue to raise standards;
 - improvement of provision in the school library;
 - the monitoring of punctuality.
45. The leadership and management of the school are very good in all their aspects. The headteacher has established a clear sense of purpose and direction to raise standards. Much of this is contained in written guidance to staff and governors. The aims of the school are clear and set out a high challenge to staff and pupils. Because all staff work consistently towards

school aims, standards are rising, especially in the personal development of pupils. Pupils are very well behaved, very positive about their school life and develop excellent relationships with adults and other pupils. A network of appropriate policies support school aims. Policies are observed consistently well by all staff.

46. There is efficient and effective delegation of duties. The headteacher is particularly well supported by the deputy head through substantial areas of delegation. Other delegated responsibilities, for example, the duties of those who lead curriculum subjects and the duties of the member of staff responsible for the overview of provision for pupils with learning difficulties are managed to a high professional standard. The school has a strong policy for ensuring inclusion for all pupils. This is consistently supported and observed by all staff.
47. The commitment of staff to the continuing development and improvement of the school is excellent. This is the case both for those who work in the classroom and also for those who support the efficient management of the school outside the classroom. For example, the school is maintained in spotless condition, the school meals service is wholesome and the quietly efficient work of the office staff adds strength to the school's smooth day-to-day management. All these features add to the effectiveness of the atmosphere for learning.
48. Governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and what it needs to do to improve. They take a keen interest in the school's strategic management, for example, in the way they are involved in the budget planning and monitoring process. Committees and working parties monitor the work of the school efficiently. Good use is made of the range of experience and expertise within the governing body to benefit the pupils. Governors have good strategies for working alongside subject co-ordinators and for visiting the school on a range of planned visits that have a clear focus. They are active in the formal process of reporting to parents annually as required by law. Governors have been particularly concerned about the deficit budget. Together with the headteacher, they have carefully managed and monitored the school's finances. This has been done to the extent that the deficit has been considerably reduced and is now very low. At the same time, although there has been a shortage of money for some developments, most subjects have been provided with adequate resources. Important developments in the curriculum and teaching and learning have gone ahead. The accommodation has been well-maintained and classes have a good level of well skilled teachers and teaching assistants. All staff and governors participate in school improvement planning. The school plans well for improvement and makes sure that successful action sees that targets are met.
49. The quality of teaching has improved greatly over two years and this is reflected in pupils' learning. It is this that is having greatest impact on the rising standards. Lessons are observed, analysed and improved through guidance, advice and further training. But also, pupils' personal standards in attitudes and relationships are rising quickly, as they grow in confidence, maturity and self-esteem.
50. The details of some areas of school management remain to be resolved. Although the quality of teaching is good overall, and often very good, there remain some inconsistencies that lesson evaluation has not yet eradicated. Some pupils get very good support through marking, others get only moderate support. Some lessons make very high demands of pupils. Others are less brisk and challenging and then not enough is expected of some higher attaining pupils. At present, the school makes insufficient use of pupils' growing skills in ICT. Although the school library has many books, some are elderly with out of date information. Restricted finances have limited the work done on developing the library to promote a love of learning and a love of literature. Some pupils arrive late for the first lesson of the day. Not only does this interrupt the flow of the lesson but also lateness has an effect on standards of attainment for those who come late. The school does not keep a close enough eye on latecomers. Although

children in the Foundation Stage get off to a good start, the school is not allowed to admit these children until the term in which they are five. This does not help the school in a declining school roll situation when other schools in the immediate locality are allowed to admit pupils earlier.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

51. The headteacher, governors and staff of the school should raise standards further by:
- (1) improving standards of attainment, in relation to the work pupils do day by day in the classroom and in relation to the school's results in National Curriculum standard tests; (*paragraphs 1, 4, 5, 7, 50, 55*).
 - (2) capitalising on the significantly improved quality of teaching by getting further consistency in:
 - the challenge to higher achieving pupils; (*paragraphs 6, 14, 19, 42, 46, 50, 52, 57*);
 - the quality of feedback to pupils through marking; (*paragraphs 14, 19, 42, 46, 78*);
 - (3) making better day-to-day use of the skills pupils are acquiring in information and communication technology to promote learning across the curriculum; (*paragraphs 1, 7, 14, 19, 46, 50, 55, 62, 79, 82*).
 - (4) improving the quality of books in the library to encourage independent learning and a love for literature; (*paragraphs 1, 42, 46*) and
 - (5) encouraging parents and pupils to ensure that pupils arrive on time for the first lesson of the day, ensuring that punctuality is improved. (*paragraphs 8, 13, 31, 33, 39, 42, 46*).

The school has identified most of these issues in its school development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	62
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	0	21	33	7	0	0	0
Percentage	0	34	54	11	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents about two percentage points. One lesson was observed for insufficient time to make a judgement about teaching.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y 6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	286
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	33

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y 6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	64

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	5.5	School data	0.4
National comparative data	5.4	National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	22	21	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	16	20
	Girls	18	15	15
	Total	36	31	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (79)	72 (92)	81 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	21	22
	Girls	18	18	20
	Total	36	39	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (85)	91 (98)	98 (98)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	30	30	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	19	25
	Girls	22	21	25
	Total	40	40	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (70)	67 (64)	83 (84)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	21	19
	Girls	24	25	26
	Total	43	46	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (67)	77 (79)	75 (71)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils***Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	253	2	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	29	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y 6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.7
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y 6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	201

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A
Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	2001 - 2002
	£
Total income	731,829
Total expenditure	732,243
Expenditure per pupil	2,274
Balance brought forward from previous year	-5,952
Balance carried forward to next year	-6,366

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 44 per cent

Number of questionnaires sent out	286
Number of questionnaires returned	126

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	30	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	37	3	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	48	1	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	46	13	1	2
The teaching is good.	62	37	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	37	9	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	21	2	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	25	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	53	37	9	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	68	27	1	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	35	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	53	29	12	0	6

Other issues raised by parents

Some parents expressed concerns about the organisation of pupils into mixed age classes in Years 3 and 4 .

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

52. The school has successfully addressed a key issue from the previous inspection by ensuring that its provision for children in the Reception class meets their needs. Children come into the Reception class with a wide range of abilities, but with levels of attainment that are generally lower than average. However, because provision for all children, including those with learning difficulties, is good, most children make good progress in all areas of learning through the 'Stepping Stones' and are on course to meet the early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage. A significant aspect of this provision is the quality of teaching, which is mostly good and often very good. The school is particularly successful in ensuring that all children, including those with learning difficulties, have equal access to its provision and opportunity to succeed.

Strengths in the Foundation Stage are:

- the wide range of well planned activities which ensure that most children are well on course to achieve or exceed the early learning goals by the time they reach the end of Reception year;
- comprehensive links with pre school settings which help to ensure that children are well prepared for learning in school;
- the quality of relationships which ensure that children feel secure and welcome;
- the early identification of children's needs and stages of development to help them to make good progress;
- the attractive and well organised Reception area which encourages children's learning;
- the very good knowledge and understanding of all staff that helps children to extend their basic skills in learning.

Areas for development are:

- the need for staff to interact more frequently with groups of children who are working independently in order to extend their learning;
- the provision of opportunities for children to develop the skills of co-ordination, physical exercise and use of space associated with steering and pedalling large wheeled vehicles.

53. In accordance with the policy of the local education authority children who reach their fifth birthday between the beginning of September and the end of February are admitted to the Reception class in September. Those who reach the age of five between the beginning of March and the end of August are admitted in January of that year. Most children have attended some form of pre school playgroup before they enter Reception. There is a high level of co-operation between the school and pre-school provision so that starting points are recognised and children are well prepared for learning. Staff of pre-school providers meet regularly with school staff to exchange information, discuss approaches to learning and meet children. Children take part in valuable induction meetings in school so that they become familiar with the school and staff and detailed records of children's progress help the school to provide suitable work for children's abilities. Children's confidence in working in school before they are admitted is further enhanced when children and staff of local play groups join with school pupils and staff to take part in a wide range of well organised joint activities in school as part of the "Teddy Bears' Picnic." Before they enter Reception parents are given a very useful

“welcome pack” which introduces them to the life of the school and provides good advice on how they might help with their children’s learning.

54. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator and Reception teacher have worked hard to plan a series of well-linked themes so that children make good connections in all areas of their learning. This helps them to see a purpose and relevance to their tasks. For example, pupils produced imaginative caves from construction kits because they were interested in the “Bear Hunt” story. The school makes good use of its baseline assessments made a few weeks after children enter Reception to ensure that work is suitably provided for children’s abilities so that they are challenged to increase their learning at the appropriate level. The reception teacher also ensures that classroom support assistants are well involved in discussions about planning and help to keep useful records of children’s progress. In addition to the work of the teacher, a particular strength in Reception is the support provided by the teaching assistants. They have a clear understanding of the needs of the children. They know the children well and work well as a team. This enhances children’s learning. The Reception classroom is attractively decorated with displays of children’s work so that they recognise that their efforts are valued. Staff provide well thought out activity areas, such as a newsagent’s shop and train to enhance children’s imaginative response and to extend skills in such areas as language and mathematics.

Personal social and emotional development

55. Personal, social and emotional development is a strength of the work in the Reception class. Most children make good progress. The warm, welcoming and secure environment provided by the teacher and support staff enhances work in this area of the curriculum. Relationships are very good. This helps children to work well together. For example, children learned to share toys in the sand tray and took turns when speaking to the teacher. The teacher has high expectations of children’s behaviour and ensures that they have a good understanding of the routines of the classroom so that time is not wasted. For example, when children went outside for games the transition was smooth because they put on their coats quickly and independently and knew where to wait until all were ready. Children are generally well behaved and are polite and courteous to others and visitors because the staff provide good role models and opportunities for children to think about such topics as friendship. They readily accept responsibility and take the initiative for looking after resources and equipment. For example, children cleared away enthusiastically at the end of activities. A child noticed a piece of used paper on the floor and placed it into the waste bin. Children become increasingly independent because they are provided with opportunities for choice between activities. They are expected to persevere with their tasks when not under the immediate supervision of an adult. Children learn that Christmas is a special time because the teacher shared an attractively made nativity scene with them they reacted with awe and wonder.

Communication, language and literacy

56. Most children make good progress, particularly in their speaking and listening skills, because staff ensure that literacy is promoted throughout their work. Because relationships are very good and because expectations are high children generally listen attentively and are confident to join in conversations with staff and with each other. They know that their efforts will be respected and valued. This encourages them to speak clearly and organise their ideas carefully. Some higher achieving children begin to use complex sentences in their speech. For example a child commented that, “The bear is sad because he wants to be friends.” Lower achieving children’s speech is generally simpler, “It is a picture.” Because adults share books with children and have a very good understanding of how to teach basic skills, most pupils enjoy books and increase their word and sound recognition skills. Higher achieving children recognise a wide range of words. They confidently talk about aspects of books such as cover, author and illustrator. They retell stories and predict words and phrases. Lower achieving

children are interested in books, recognise an increasing range of letter sounds and talk about the pictures. As they move through Reception most children make good progress in their writing skills because the teacher provides many opportunities for them to develop their skills and supports them well. For example, she provides good role models in the supportive comments she makes in their books. They begin to shape letters accurately and to write their names. They write lists and letters and complete simple sentences. The handwriting of higher achieving children is well formed although that of lower achieving children is less clear.

Mathematical development

57. The learning of children in mathematics is well planned by the teacher so that tasks are well managed by adults and staff make very good use of mathematical language to deepen children's understanding. For example, a classroom support assistant increased the counting skills of a group of children when they were counting the number of soft toys they could throw into a circle. This was enhanced when she used words such as, 'how many' and 'inside' and 'outside'. Children are presented with many practical activities to increase their understanding. For example, the teacher worked with a remote controlled robot to increase their counting skills and understanding of direction. Children increase their understanding of capacity when they use containers in the water tray. They play number games, relate numbers to objects and thread beads to explore pattern. Children began to understand the idea of the passage of time and distance when they played on the train. One child explained that it was, "100 minutes to Skegness." Staff display graphs made by the children of different forms of transport used by children on their way to school. They challenge them to use their counting skills to interpret the information. Higher achieving children count to 20 and beyond and recognise and name a wide range of shapes, although lower achieving children's counting and shape recognition are not as well developed.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

58. Most children are very interested in the world around them. Teachers provide them with many opportunities to stimulate this interest. For example, they enthusiastically investigated autumn leaves outside the classroom and produced well-finished models of creatures hibernating. Children visited a local park and discussed what they liked about it and what could be improved. Higher achieving children produced well-drawn simple maps showing their route from home to school. Although the maps of lower achieving children were not as detailed, they were clear and well finished. Most children showed developing mouse and cursor control when they used a computer program to enhance their directional and simple mapping skills. When staff move around the class and talk with groups of children who are working independently they help to enhance their learning. For example, when a teacher joined the group working on the train she challenged them to think about what they might see out of the windows. This helped them to think hard and respond imaginatively. However, sometimes staff do not intervene sufficiently in independent activities and opportunities to extend children's learning are occasionally missed. In order to widen children's experience the school ensures that they have opportunities to make visits outside school. For example, they visit places such as the Sea Life Centre, and the local park. They visit the church at Christmas and Harvest Festival. They have many interesting visitors to the Reception class such as the local policeman, clergy and RSPCA officers. Children learn about healthy lifestyles when they visit the life education bus.

Physical development

59. Most children make good progress overall and are well on the way to achieving standards typical for children at the end of the reception year in most areas of physical development. Teachers provide a wide range of opportunities for children to develop their finer skills of co-ordination between hand and eye. For example, they carefully cut and stuck materials for their

nativity scene and fitted construction kits together with precision when they made rockets. They carefully manipulated play dough to print letters. Because staff have high expectations and encourage independence, most children take their straws out of their wrapping and insert them carefully into their milk cartons and put on and fasten their coats before they go out. Although the school does not have continuous access to larger out door apparatus close to the classroom, the school ensures that children extend their experiences of height and balance by the use of a nearby play area and by regular use of climbing apparatus in the school hall. However, the school does not possess large wheeled vehicles so that opportunities for children to develop skills of co-ordination and control associated with this equipment are limited. Because staff provide children of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties, with good opportunities to develop games skills, most children make good progress in this area. They understand that there is a need to warm up and that games have rules. They run, skip and jump with good co-ordination and show secure passing skills. Most children make good progress. This is because the school provides good equipment such as Velcro gloves and large sponge balls to help them improve their throwing and receiving skills and because the teacher has a very good understanding of how to develop these skills.

Creative development

60. Most children, including those with learning difficulties, make good progress in creative development because the teacher provides a good range of opportunities for them to explore colour, line, texture, sound and music. Children listened carefully to taped music and showed imaginative interpretation of the story and music. Most children enjoy singing. They sang Christmas carols tunefully and enthusiastically. They use paint carefully. For example, they painted well-finished pictures of autumn. They selected from a suitable range of materials to make peg dolls because the classroom support assistant worked closely with them, offering advice and guidance. Most pupils show increasing control of line and tone when they use pencils, felt tips and crayons in their drawings. They made careful pencil drawings of hibernating animals, for example, and produced imaginative models as part of three-dimensional representations of hibernation. Some lower ability children show increasing understanding of proportion and detail in their careful drawings of human figures. Children are provided with opportunities to use computer programs in their art. For example, they drew self-portraits and a child produced a computer picture of a bear's cave from the story they were sharing. Children are encouraged to develop their skills in creative development because their work is carefully displayed. For example, pictures are presented in their own art gallery.

ENGLISH

61. At the end of Year 2, standards are average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Standards at the end of Year 6 are average in reading and writing and above average in speaking and listening. Given attainment on entry to the school, pupils achieve well and make good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties learn well and make good progress. Teaching is good overall throughout the school. The school has made satisfactory progress in standards of attainment, teaching and learning since the previous inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- teachers' knowledge of the subject and of their pupils' needs;
- teaching styles, including the use of challenging questions and giving praise and support to encourage the pupils;
- the inclusion of extra English lessons, for example on extended writing techniques, in addition to the daily Literacy lesson;
- pupils' use of skills learned in English lessons in other subjects of the curriculum.

Areas for development are:

- providing work which will stretch the higher-attaining pupils;
 - making more opportunities for pupils to work independently;
 - improving the quality and quantity of books in the library;
 - making better use of computers in English lessons.
62. Attainment in speaking and listening is satisfactory at the end of Year 2 and good at the end of Year 6. As pupils move through school, they begin to develop skills in expressing their opinions and feelings and they also become better at listening to others and responding accordingly. These skills are evident in many lessons, where pupils make good use of interesting words and technical vocabulary, showing that they have listened and learned well. When asked to write an interesting and detailed story about when Rudolph's nose stopped glowing red, lower-attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 are allowed to develop their ideas verbally, with an adult acting as "scribe" and show that they can use their imagination well and include interesting words and phrases. Speaking and listening skills are used well in other subjects, for example, pupils constructively criticise each others' performances in music, giving valid reasons for their comments and, when being criticised, they accept other pupils' views in a mature manner, using some suggestions as a way of improving their performances.
63. Attainment in reading is average throughout the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 recognise familiar words and most have strategies for working out words they do not know, although a few lower attaining pupils rely too much on picture clues or help from others. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 develop ways of attempting unknown words and many can read with intonation and attach different voices to characters in the story. They can retell the story, passing comments about various characters, and often offer a sensible suggestion for how the story might continue. Many older pupils have favourite authors and enjoy reading, although very few prefer information books to fiction. Most pupils can point out the author, title, contents page and other main features of a book and are aware of what a library is, although few explain how to find particular types of books or have used libraries for research purposes.
64. Attainment in writing is average throughout the school. Pupils develop a clear style, moving from a printed script in Years 1 and 2 to a fluent joined style in Year 3 upwards and show by the presentation of their work that they take pride in what they are doing. The quality and content of their work is variable, showing a wide range of ability in all classes. Where teachers provide a specific lesson to concentrate on writing, the standards are usually higher than those within a Literacy lesson. Pupils often make good use of word banks or other information and ideas that are displayed on classroom walls.
65. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and of their pupils' needs. They use appropriate teaching styles, including the use of challenging questions and giving praise and support to encourage their pupils. Many teachers include extra English lessons in their timetables, for example on extended writing techniques, in addition to the daily literacy lesson. This provides a longer time for pupils to plan out and develop a piece of writing in more detail than is possible within the literacy lesson Areas for development are in providing work which will give more challenge to the higher-attaining pupils, finding more opportunities for pupils to work independently and making better use of computers in English lessons.
66. Teachers help their pupils understand how well they are learning. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have individual targets written inside the cover of their books that help them focus on particular points for improvement. Pupils' work is clearly marked, with teachers providing useful

comments that tell the pupils how well they have worked and also often offer suggestions for improvement. This is an important part of the teaching and learning process and is effective across the school.

67. The curriculum is good overall. It is well structured around the National Literacy Strategy and daily literacy lessons are supplemented by additional time spent on spelling, handwriting, extended writing, reading and speaking and listening. The teachers take special care in planning lessons for pupils in mixed-age classes and ensure that there is satisfactory provision for these pupils that takes account of their age and ability. The school has a good structure in place for assessing pupils' attainment and measuring their progress. This system highlights any pupils who may need support with a particular aspect of English and also shows teachers the progress which pupils are expected to make as they move through school. Almost all teachers are now using this information when planning their lessons, in order to make sure that they meet the different needs of their pupils. At present, there is not a consistent approach to providing more challenging work for higher-attaining pupils. BB
68. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic and hard-working co-ordinator. She has developed a clear picture of standards across the school and provides very good support for colleagues in order to help them improve the teaching of English. The commitment of the co-ordinator and school staff has the potential for a positive impact on standards across the school.

MATHEMATICS

69. Standards are average in Year 2 and by the end of Year 6. The pupils make good progress through the school due to the good teaching that they are receiving. Progress since the last inspection has been good as standards were below average by the end of Year 6 then. Current work indicates standards are rising.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the quality of teaching and learning;
- the standards being attained in the number aspects of mathematics;
- the management of pupils and class relationships;
- the progress that the pupils are making.

Areas for development are:

- skills in questioning to enrich the experience of higher achievers;
- use of homework links.

70. The quality of teaching is good and in some cases very good. For example, in a very good lesson in Years 3 and 4 in which the focus was data handling, the teacher was expecting pupils to verbalise their thinking in answering questions and explaining in some detail why they have used a particular strategy. Some of the oral sessions at the start of lessons encourage these thinking processes with the use of skilful questioning. This ability enables pupils to apply the knowledge that they have to new problems. Good teaching raises attainment as pupils move through the school and by Year 5 this is having a significant effect. Year 6 pupils are beginning to understand rotation and translation of a shape on a graph, by orienting the vertex. Some of these higher attaining Year 6 pupils had a very quick grasp of work that was new to them. They understood the concept of plotting co-ordinates very well. The highest attaining pupils in Year 6 are working at a good level, although this is not consistent in lower year groups. Some other eleven-year-old pupils, however, experienced difficulties in simple adding up and taking away. Numeracy skills are used satisfactorily across the curriculum in science and ICT, but room remains for further development in other subjects. Year 3 pupils have used

computers for constructing patterns using lines of symmetry. The work of lower attaining pupils especially has clearly benefited from the use of computers.

71. Pupils enjoy their work in mathematics. In Year 3, pupils enjoyed the quite formal work with numbers, a forest of hands shooting up at the first question. In almost all lessons seen, pupils settled to work quickly and worked hard. Year 3 and 4 pupils, for example, co-operate well in group work. Pupils set out their work carefully, particularly in Years 5 and 6. They enjoy the challenge of mathematics and respond well to the need to think quickly. Lower attaining pupils in Year 6 also learned well through good concentration. Pupils' good behaviour means that they can concentrate and learn.
72. There are very good relationships in lessons, so creating a purposeful working atmosphere where a lively pace was maintained. As part of the very good teaching in a Year 6 class, the teacher uses humour and challenging questions to encourage pupils to apply considerable intellectual effort in their work. However, this level of challenge for higher attaining pupils is not consistent in all lessons. The teaching assistants are used well in most lessons to support the learning of individuals and small groups of pupils. For example, in a lesson in Years 1 and 2, the support assistant worked with a group of pupils estimating and checking numbers. The teacher was then able to focus her attention on a group of Year 2 pupils who were counting sequential number patterns. The learning of all pupils was thus enhanced as they were working at appropriate levels with good levels of support. Another effective feature of this lesson, commonly found throughout the school, was the independence that pupils were given for their own work
73. The subject is efficiently managed. The work of the co-ordinator is a significant factor in the improvement being made in mathematics standards.

SCIENCE

74. Standards are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The pupils make satisfactory step-by-step progress and the pupils with learning difficulties make similar progress. The school ensures the provision for these pupils is good and their needs are specifically included in the plans for all lessons. The quality of teaching in science is good. Good improvement has been made since the previous inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the thorough planning of lessons and the use of the good resources to ensure lessons are practical and clearly focused;
- the sustained progress from year group to year group that culminates in good achievement overall;
- the teachers' use of very good and challenging questioning techniques;
- the pupils' use of literacy and numeracy skills to report on and to record their investigations;
- the good use made of teachers' subject knowledge.

An area for development is:

- to maintain a watchful eye on the provision for pupils in mixed year group classes.

75. Science gains in impact from the secure nature of school plans, stemming from the policy that points the overall direction of the subject, through long term and medium term plans, down to teachers detailed plans for individual lessons. This is good practice and ensures that all staff

are secure in what they need to do. The thoroughness of planning gives good support to the step-by-step progress that pupils make and helps them to continuously widen the range of scientific skills they acquire. Because progress is sustained in systematic and regular steps, pupils achieve well over time having started on entry to school from a below average base. All the work seen was based in practical experience. Pupils have a growing understanding of the nature of scientific investigation. Teachers have good strategies for the design of tasks to ensure that pupils know how to plan an investigation. Teachers and pupils talk confidently about the difference between prediction and scientific hypothesis. In their written work, pupils use a specific scientific methodology to report and record findings and this is because teachers use writing prompts that are individually designed for the age group, the ability range and the type of investigation. Because the work is not constrained by the use of worksheets, pupils are enabled to fully reflect their understanding of the topics they have covered.

76. The teaching of science is good. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and this gives pupils the confidence to be good learners. The subject benefits from the consistent common strengths of teaching throughout the school, including very good management of pupils. This is particularly important given the practical nature of the work. Although science lessons are rarely quiet, they are busy and active events with the steady buzz of pupils' discussions and sharing of responsibilities. The volume of work produced indicates that learning is good overall, not only in its quantity but also in the quality of thinking that pupils have put into their tasks. Within lessons, teachers use very good strategies for questioning pupils. This is evident at the start of lessons where brisk question and answer sessions make good use of teachers' assessment of prior attainment and further clarify what individual pupils have remembered. It is evident while pupils are working in groups as teachers circulate, intervening and questioning to move pupils on in their thinking. It is at this stage that teaching assistants, when available, use their well-developed skills particularly effectively. Questioning is well used to stretch the thinking of higher attaining pupils. It is used patiently and effectively to support those who find learning difficult.
77. Among the strengths of teaching and learning is the good use of technical vocabulary that supports pupils' understanding of new ideas. Teachers are not afraid to challenge pupils with new words and to explain their meaning, then to check on pupils' understanding with quick fire mental challenges. Through this pupils in Year 2 begin to use the scientific language of chemical and physical changes in their study of reversible and irreversible changes. They also enjoyed eating the fruits of their investigation into the irreversibility of popping corn. Similarly, pupils in Year 6 had good command of the technical terms and their symbols for the items they used in a range of electrical circuits. This enabled a good level of meaningful discussion with the teacher and among the pupils.
78. Teachers encourage pupils to make good use of literacy and numeracy skills in recording the results of investigations. Tasks are full of opportunities for pupils of different ability ranges. Higher attaining pupils record their findings freely in their own words. They get every opportunity to reflect the fullness of their understanding. Some of the marking of the work of higher attaining pupils is very effective in asking follow-up questions that challenge pupils to extend their learning. The tasks for pupils who find learning difficult are well linked to the targets they have to support literacy and numeracy skills. Whilst many of these pupils find it difficult to express their learning in their own words, they get good opportunities to discuss what they know and understanding and get good support to help them get their investigations recorded. Pupils get through a good volume of work. Occasionally, for example, in Year 5, there is less recorded work than in other year groups. However, it is clear that pupils in Year 5 get very extensive practical and oral opportunities and the work they record is of a good standard. Within investigations there are well taken opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills to measure, collect, tabulate and graph the results of their investigations. There is less obvious evidence of pupils using ICT as a tool for learning, although there was good

exemplification of pupils using sensing devices to measure the temperature of water as it came to the boil. BB

79. Recently the school has found it necessary to organise some pupils in classes in mixed year groups. A two-year programme of study has been devised. Over time this will ensure that pupils cover all the science curriculum and that no pupils will repeat work unnecessarily. However, in the first year of this type of organisation, the school is aware that some pupils will have gaps in their programme of study and others will have some repetition. The school is prepared for this contingency and has planned effectively to minimise the impact of gaps and repetitions. This is a new situation for the school and the subject leader is aware of potential difficulties. There are effective school strategies to deal with developments.

ART AND DESIGN

80. During the inspection it was not possible to see any lessons in art and design, as teaching was not planned in the subject. Evidence from the analysis of pupils' previous work, teachers' planning, displays of pupils' work around school, and discussions with teachers and pupils indicates that standards are in line with what would be expected for pupils in Years 2 and 6. As they move through the school most pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress. The school has maintained its improving standards since the previous inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the attractive display of pupils' work around school and the display of work by established artists;
- the development of pupils' detailed drawing skills;
- the wide range of techniques pupils use in their work with paint;
- the use of art and design in other subjects of the curriculum.

An area for development is:

- increase the opportunities throughout the school for pupils to experience three-dimensional work and work with textiles.
81. As they move through Years 1 and 2, pupils increase their skills in the use of such elements as line, shape and tone. In Year 1, for example, in their sketchbooks, pupils produced closely observed coloured pencil self-portraits and used pastels effectively to draw and shade human figures. Their work was enhanced by the helpful comments of the teacher: "This is super. Was it easier to use pastels or pencil crayons?" By Year 2 most pupils show well-developed observational skills. For example, they produced pleasing pastel pictures of fruits and vegetables. Most children understand how to mix paint and explain how this can be used to good effect in their pictures. They know that different sized brushes are appropriate for different aspects of their work. Teachers present pupils with a range of materials so that they extend their imaginative response. For example, in Year 1, pupils produce pleasing collages showing growing skills in cutting, tearing, folding and curling.
82. These close observational skills are carefully built upon as children move through the school. For example, in Year 5, pupils produced sketches of fruit showing an eye for detail and clear understanding of tone and depth. The work of lower achieving pupils was detailed but shading was less carefully finished and the representation of depth less well developed. Higher achieving pupils produce work of a high standard. For example, their work on fruit showed a good understanding of proportion and depth. In some work, such as close observational

coloured pencil drawing of flowers, they achieve very pleasing results. Teachers ensure that most pupils make effective use of their sketchbooks to try out their ideas so that they begin to understand how artists approach their work. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 produced interesting drawings, developing their skills in line and tone to illustrate the idea of relationships between colours.

83. Because teachers ensure that pupils experience a wide range of techniques in their painting most pupils learn to bring variety and imagination to their work. For example, pupils in Year 3 and 4 used such techniques as 'pointillism', stippling, water and wax resist in their developing skills with paint. Similarly, pupils in Year 4 produce pleasing collage work using a range of shapes and materials.
84. Pupils' aesthetic awareness is deepened because the school ensures that paintings, pictures and sculptures from a wide range of established artists are carefully displayed throughout the school. This is further extended in the pleasing work children produce after the styles of famous artists. For example, in Year 1, pupils produced clear crayon pencil pictures after the style of Monet. This was developed in Year 4 in attractively coloured pastel crayon pictures of Monet's garden and bridge. Year 6 pupils confidently described Picasso's style of painting and compared this with the approach of other artists.
85. Teachers ensure that pupils link their artistic skills with other subjects of the curriculum. This helps to extend their skills in art and their understanding of other subjects. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 combined their poems about winter with paint blowing techniques. They also produced well-finished Celtic goblets made from paper mache as part of their historical work on the Celts. In Year 5, pupils made well-finished pictures using fabric and paint and designed attractive pectoral ornaments depicting aspects of life in Aztec times. The same theme was continued in Year 6 where pupils made well-constructed collages with a range of fabrics making effective use of their sewing skills. Older pupils were challenged to design an Islamic rug using computers and used digital cameras to create a mosaic of photographs of locations around the school. In Year 6, pupils produced some carefully finished, large-scale, detailed pencil sketches from their work in literature and history about the First World War. Throughout the school children use a variety of skills to interpret the Christmas story. These come together in a pleasing way in work tastefully displayed in the hall.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

86. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are in line with what would be expected for pupils aged seven and eleven. As they move through the school most pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress. The school has maintained its improving standards since the last inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- pupils develop a thorough understanding of the designing and making process;
- the quality of teaching which is good overall and sometimes very good and leads to correspondingly good learning,
- pupils produce some carefully finished models and artefacts;;
- the effective use of the school's good resources.

Areas for development in the subject are:

- the use of information and communication technology and electrical components in the production of models and artefacts.

87. Most pupils develop a clear understanding of the designing, planning and evaluating process. This is because teachers have good subject knowledge and teach the basic skills well. In Year 2 for example, they produced clear, labelled diagrams of the moving vehicles they were making. They referred to these during the making process and amended them where necessary. They knew about prototypes and how to make a strong chassis with rotating or fixed axles. Because teachers set tasks that are suitable to pupils' abilities they are challenged to make progress at their own level. In the very good teaching, in Year 1, work involved higher achieving pupils using treasury tags and hole punches to design and make different hinges. Pupils of average ability, supported by a volunteer helper, used folded card that they stuck onto the building and the door. Lower achieving pupils, supported by the class teacher used sticky tape to attach the door to the building.
88. As they move through the school most pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of the designing and making process because teachers have high expectations of their involvement in the work. In Year 5 work on food technology, for example, pupils investigated the qualities of a range of biscuits, then designed, planned and made their own. This was followed by a careful evaluation of the finished products. Pupils in Year 4 produced carefully finished photo frames and made useful observations on the strengths and weaknesses of their finished models. Higher achieving pupils showed useful insights into how their work might be improved, although the observations of lower achieving pupils were less clear.
89. In the very good teaching in Year 6, the teacher used questions very effectively in order to challenge pupils to extend their understanding of design specification in the slippers they were making. She engaged them in an ongoing discussion so that they were all involved and their understanding was deepened. This enabled them to bring a clarity and purpose to their work. Because teachers have a good understanding of the mechanisms involved in making working artefacts most pupils incorporate these effectively in their finished models. In Year 5, for example, the teacher's clear explanation of the function of cams and her use of a model to demonstrate, enabled pupils to improve their work on moving toys. Year 3 pupils extended their understanding of pneumatics in designing and making moving monsters because the teacher ensured that they understood how the use of balloons and syringes could enhance their work. However, throughout the school opportunities to use motors and computers to power and control models are limited.
90. Pupils generally take a pride in their work. They produce attractively decorated and finished models and co-operate well in the use of tools and materials. This is helped by the very good relationships throughout the school. Pupils know that their efforts will be respected and valued. For example, pupils in Year 2 produced carefully painted wells with winding mechanisms. Pupils in Year 3 produced attractive packaging for chocolates. Pupils in Year 4 co-operated well and made freestanding picture frames. This was enhanced by the teacher's good knowledge of making skills and her clear explanations. For example, in making the frames pupils made sound use of some of the school's good range of well-organised and accessible resources, such as hacksaws, jigs and bench hooks. Pupils knew how to use strengthened corners to increase the rigidity of their frames so that they were strong and stable. Because teachers make their work lively and interesting most pupils enjoy their tasks and participate enthusiastically. For example, pupils in Year 4 responded positively to the teacher's challenge to produce a freestanding structure using only paper and paper clips. Year 2 pupils were eager to decorate their moving vehicles and describe to visitors how they worked.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

91. Standards are average in both geography and history by the time pupils are seven and eleven. Given that they enter school with a below average knowledge and understanding of the world, they sustain the progress made in the Foundation Stage and achieve well overall. This quality of learning is well supported by good teaching. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

Strengths in the subjects are:

- pupils' understanding and use of the skills of geographical and historical enquiry;
- their enthusiasm for learning;
- the way they use literacy skills to express their knowledge and understanding;
- well-organised and well-informed teaching.

Areas for development are:

- the increased use of pupils' information and communication technology skills;
- the establishment of easily manageable whole school strategies for recording progress.

92. Pupils have a good understanding of how a historian and a geographer work. They are very quick to discuss a very wide range of primary and secondary sources that they can. Although older pupils do not use the school library frequently to research, they have a good understanding of the different features of non-fiction books so that they can find the information they need. As they move from year to year, pupils are taught how to find the information they need so that by the time they are about to leave the school in Year 6, they know about using artefacts and buildings for research. They understand how the Internet can be used efficiently for research. They understand that old records, such as census returns, can give an accurate picture of life in past times. Younger pupils are introduced to historical objects from Victorian times and compare these with contemporary life to get a good understanding of what life was like for children of their age more than a hundred years ago. This helps even Year 1 pupils to be very accurate in their sense of historical events when placing them on a time line. Year 6 pupils working on the geography of the mountain environment do powerful research in groups and share their research discussing confidently aspects such as animal and plant life 'above the tree line' or 'below the snow line'. Some of their perception and understanding is profound.
93. Because lessons are made interesting and challenging, pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. They are eager to answer questions. They are skilful at reflecting what they know and understand. They work well together and listen respectfully when other pupils in the class are presenting their findings. This provides a stimulating learning environment. Because they listen, both to the teacher and each other, pupils acquire a good understanding of the content of their lessons and their tasks. Tasks are well designed to give pupils good opportunities to use the range of basic skills they acquire. For example, tasks are always specific to the area of study, the needs of different groups of pupils and are well adapted to build on prior learning. This gives all pupils the chance to write about what they know in their own words. This both gives an accurate picture of what they know and understand, and also gives the teacher good information to help pupils make even more progress.
94. The teaching has many strengths. Many teachers are enthusiasts about these subjects. They have deep insights into the subjects. This helps them to encourage pupils to be learners and investigators, not just to repeat facts. As a result, pupils are well engaged and active in lessons. Many teachers are enthusiastic about history and geography themselves and pupils are then enthused to learning in these subjects. There is a good general sense in the school that tasks should be 'open-ended', that is that tasks common to all pupils should give them opportunity to

express their own understanding using their own words. The school is determined that pupils will not be restricted in their tasks through worksheets that do not allow for individuality and different levels of prior attainment. Because this is a whole school aspect of teaching, pupils get consistency of approach and it gives security to their continued progress. In addition to this, teachers manage pupils well. Therefore no time is wasted and pupils complete a good volume of written work. Most teachers make good use of day-to-day strategies for keeping a close eye on the progress pupils make. For example, there is good questioning that clarifies what has already been learned. Often at the start of a series of lessons, pupils are encouraged to identify what they already know and what they need to find out. This process ends with an assessment of what has been learned. There is some very good marking that helps pupils understand what they have done well and what else needs to be done. However, not all pupils get this level of support through marking.

95. Whilst pupils get through a good volume of work, there is limited evidence of the use of ICT skills. Older pupils do understand how ICT can be used to support their learning. For example, some use computers for research and print out their findings. Others use word processing skills to present their work. However, there is no current consistent thrust throughout the school to use ICT on a regular and persistent basis to support learning. There are examples of strategies for watching the progress pupils make. Day-to-day assessment is well used to support the needs of individual lessons. However, there is no simple and effective whole school way in which teachers can assess and record this progress that gives a rapid and useful overview to help future planning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

96. Standards in ICT are average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress. Teaching, although variable, is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. This is a similar picture to that observed in the previous inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the ICT suite, which has the potential to help standards improve;
- the improvement in resource provision in the last two years.

Areas for development are:

- better use of the ICT suite;
- the use of ICT to support more subjects across the curriculum;
- teachers' knowledge and confidence in developing pupils' learning;
- ensuring appropriate resources are available to support teaching and learning in all year groups, particularly in Year 6.

97. Pupils in Year 2 use "Logo" commands to move a robot around a floor plan and send it to different destinations. In Year 6, pupils use their knowledge of word processing and desktop publishing to prepare a newspaper report for publishing. In other classes, pupils access the Internet to send letters to their pen pals or use a painting program to design and colour a rug with symmetrical patterns. Pupils are confident when using computers. They open and control programs and save their work to their own user file. Attainment in the after-school computer club is slightly above average. Year 6 pupils who attend the club are using the Internet to research topics linked with their geography work about mountains. They use appropriate keywords to search for useful information and have good understanding of the use of 'favourites', search engines; saving onto notepads and many quickly discriminate between a

website that is useful and one that is not.

98. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the lesson content, although in some cases there is a need for additional skills to be taught to pupils, or for the teacher to suggest ways of improving the pupils' work and some teachers lack these skills. Teachers provide a good range of activities and usually provide an additional activity to challenge those pupils who finish early. Good use is made of additional adult support, with many of the class assistants being very competent in helping the pupils with their work. Teachers do not include information and communication technology sufficiently in lessons in other curriculum subjects to enhance standards.
99. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, although activities are limited for pupils in the Reception class and Year 6 because of lack of resources. The present method of assessing pupils' attainment and progress is cumbersome and unhelpful and the school is moving towards a simpler method, where the pupils will be more involved.
100. Accommodation and resource provision have improved in the short time since the co-ordinator was appointed and her clear action plan shows that further improvements are shortly to be addressed, in order to improve standards.

MUSIC

101. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are average and pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress. Teaching is good throughout the school.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the music studio, which has the potential to help standards improve;
- the gradual improvement in resource provision.

Areas for development are:

- teachers' knowledge and confidence in developing pupils' learning;
 - development of music studio, including repairing broken instruments and access to an overhead projector;
 - assessment of pupils' learning.
102. Pupils in Year 2 can make short and long sounds using untuned percussion instruments. They hold the instruments correctly and know some of their correct names. Pupils in Year 6 sing familiar songs tunefully. They are keen to learn new songs, listening carefully to recorded words and accompaniment and do their best to follow it accurately. In assemblies, pupils of all ages sing clearly. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy music and behave well in lessons.
 103. In the lessons seen, teaching and learning are good. Teachers who do not have specific expertise in music use a commercial scheme well to ensure pupils reach the expected standards at the end of Years 2 and 6. Although many teachers are not very confident in the subject, they prepare well and are enthusiastic. This enthusiasm is transferred to their pupils, who consequently learn well. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to extend learning or follow up a comment because the teacher does not have the breadth of knowledge to attempt this.. Teachers prepare the pupils well for concerts and performances at various times of the year.
 104. The curriculum is satisfactory and is supported appropriately by the use of a published scheme in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum is enhanced through links with local schools where they have

performances together. A few pupils have instrumental music lessons. No formal assessment takes place to measure pupils' attainment and progress; nor do the teachers keep recordings of pupils' work as examples of standards to be expected. These are areas still to be addressed by the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards of achievement match those expected nationally. The curriculum provides a wide range of physical activities, especially in the aspects of games, swimming and extra curriculum activities. The pupils with learning difficulties enjoy these tasks and this enhances the progress they make. Progress is satisfactory and standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- teachers' good subject knowledge;
- the school's provision for swimming
- the way sequences of lessons are planned.

Areas for development are:

- better use of resources and accommodation;
- more appropriate timing of lessons.

106. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some good lessons. Good subject knowledge and detailed planning combine to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding progressively. Activities are well supervised and teachers pay attention to safety issues. All lessons begin with well-structured warm-up sessions: the pupils are actively involved in demonstrating stretches for each muscle group and can explain the benefits of performing them well and the dangers of doing them badly.
107. Discussions with Year 6 pupils reveal that they enjoy physical education. Pupils have a very secure understanding of important features of this curriculum area, such as health, safety and the significance of warm up and cool down within lessons. They are very precise in their knowledge of how to move large equipment safely. Resources for physical were not used extensively during the inspection. Pupils are aware of the equal part boys and girls can play in a range of physical activities, including hockey, tag rugby and soccer. The pupils work well individually, in pairs and in small teams.
108. Not all elements of the National Curriculum for physical education were seen during the inspection. All elements are planned for over the school year. In the lessons seen, there were explicit links with other curriculum areas such as personal, social and health education and science. In the lessons seen, the pupils demonstrated the expected levels of agility, strength and mobility. In a Year 2 dance lesson, they created and developed good sequences of movements.. They interpreted the mood of the music sensitively. The strength of their achievements is the way they , used their imagination to develop a creative dance. Teachers give clear instructions so that the pupils know the lesson objectives and thus make good use of the time available to them.
109. One lesson in Year 4 was quite inspirational in the way it moved pupils to a state of high physical activity ready for the next aspect of the lesson. All teachers demonstrate activities well or use examples of good practice by pupils to reinforce learning, to enhance attainment

and to motivate and involve the pupils. Pupils with disabilities are fully involved in lessons and pupils offer help and assistance as appropriate. Occasionally, some pupils are too enthusiastic and do not listen well enough to the instructions so they do not make the progress they should. For example, in one Year 6 lesson the teacher was explaining the best use of space, pointing out that it is not best practice to move in a continuous circle. In their enthusiasm, they soon forgot the points made by their teachers.

110. The subject leader is knowledgeable of strengths and weaknesses in the subject and draws on the expertise of many staff to give pupils good experience and to raise standards. The school follows the national guidance for the physical education programmes of work. The school adds to this an activity session for 6 weeks to provide extended activities for pupils making good use of staff expertise.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

111. Standards in religious education are in line with those required by the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils, including those with learning difficulties, are making satisfactory progress. Teaching is good throughout the school.

Strengths in the subject are:

- very good relationships which encourage openness during discussions
- links with pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Areas for development are:

- the timetabling of some lessons;
- assessment of pupils' learning.

112. Pupils in Year 2 retell the Christmas story accurately and discuss the real meaning of Christmas with interest. In Year 6, pupils know that art can convey religious messages. They explore the symbolism, colours, shapes and materials used in art from around the world that depict Christmas. Pupils in all year groups show sensitivity towards belief and value the opinions of others. Many younger pupils have not yet developed an understanding of the similarities between different religions. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject. Very good relationships with the pupils support openness during discussions.

113. These can be quite deep and philosophical. Teachers use good quality resources wherever possible and sometimes bring their own personal items, for example a treasured Bible, to make the lesson more interesting.

The curriculum is satisfactory although at present the school attempts to include too many different religions in their planning and this is confusing for the pupils. The school has not yet developed a structure for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. This is an area for development. The co-ordinator, although very recently-appointed, has drawn up a clear development plan for the subject in order to raise standards and improve resources. Some lessons take place at the beginning of the school day and are very short, reducing opportunities to get the most out of what is planned.