

# INSPECTION REPORT

**GRANTHAM HUNTINGTOWER COMMUNITY  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

GRANTHAM

LEA area: LINCOLNSHIRE

Unique reference number: 120377

Headteacher: Mike Wentworth

Reporting inspector: Stuart Dobson  
18074

Dates of inspection: 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE – 3<sup>rd</sup> JULY 2003

Inspection number: 248118

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Huntingtower Road  
Grantham

Postcode: NG31 7AU

Telephone number: 01476 564291

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Dr T.K. Jones

Date of previous inspection: 12.1.98

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18074	Stuart Dobson	Registered inspector	English as an Additional Language Information and Communication Technology, Religious Education	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
13450	Jennifer Madden	Lay inspector	Equality Issues	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
20380	Neville Pinkney	Team inspector	History, Geography, Science, Design Technology,	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
17456	Angela Smithers	Team inspector	Mathematics, Physical Education Foundation Stage	
12900	Lea Short	Team Inspector	English, Art, Music, Special Educational Needs	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school serves an area of Grantham close to the town centre. Very few families claim free school meals but nevertheless, many of the pupils come from homes where there is a degree of social deprivation. The school is larger than average and pupils are taught in 12, mostly mixed age classes. There are 345 boys and girls attending the school. An above average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and an above average number of pupils have statements of need. Their needs range from general learning difficulties to specific and behavioural difficulties. The number of pupils with English as an additional language is low, with three pupils from European backgrounds and one Cantonese speaker. When children join the reception class, some have had pre-school experience and their attainment on entry is similar to the national average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a good school which is making steady improvement and is well placed to improve further because the school staff team is led well by the headteacher and they share a sense of responsibility for the pupils. Standards for all groups are at least as expected nationally in all subjects and are well above average in mathematics for older pupils. The fall in attainment in English in the tests in 2002 for Year 6 has been addressed and the school is now making steady improvement. The pupils are given a well-rounded education in which their personal development is given high priority and as a result they have very positive attitudes. Teaching is good overall. The school gives good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Good leadership and management have developed a strong school identity and positive ethos and there is a good capacity to improve further.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes, they are enthusiastic about the school and they behave well.
- The school offers a significantly enriched curriculum.
- Standards in mathematics are particularly high for pupils in the upper part of the school.
- The school provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral and social education.

#### **What could be improved**

- Assessment because it does not currently help the staff as much as it might to plan for and support individual pupils, nor does it support management in setting reasonable targets for the school. Assessment needs to be used more effectively to raise standards further in English in Years 3-6.
- Accommodation and resources. The classrooms for the older pupils are in need of redecoration and refurbishment, as they do not currently encourage or support pupils in aspiring to high standards. The resources for the youngest children and the book resources are in poor condition.
- More opportunities could be provided for all pupils to develop their independent learning skills

and to talk about their learning; this includes children in the reception class.

- Pupils' handwriting and the standard of the presentation of work.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Management has improved because there is a clearer focus on improvement and many of the staff are now involved in moving the school forward. The quality of teaching has improved significantly. The planning of the curriculum is now better organised and more effective and this better supports the development of skills. There is now more assessment but it is still not best used to support planning and pupil progress. There is good monitoring of the quality of the curriculum. The governing body is now considerably more closely involved with the school and are more assertive in fulfilling their roles.

## 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				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	D	B	E	E	well above average    A above average        B Average                 C below average         D well below average    E
Mathematics	C	B	A	A	
Science	D	C	C	C	

In the national tests taken by Year 6 pupils the results were well above average in mathematics, average in science and well below average in English when compared with schools nationally and when compared with similar schools. The results were low in English because too few pupils reached the nationally expected level 4 and similarly too few pupils reached the higher level 5. By sharp contrast in mathematics, an above average proportion of pupils reached the higher level 5. The results in English were a significant concern and in the last year, action has been taken to find out why the results were low and to put in place strategies to improve standards. Since September 2002, there has been a considerable effort on the part of the school to raise standards and ensure that pupils achieve the levels of which they are capable.

Inspection evidence indicates that the standard of work at the end of Year 6 is now as expected nationally in English and science and is still above average in mathematics. This marks good progress in English and indicates improvement to teaching and learning. Standards are above average in information and communication technology (ICT) and swimming and as expected nationally in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. In religious education they are as expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus.



In Year 2, standards compared with all schools and similar schools are above average in tests in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Current evidence indicates above average standards in English, ICT and history and average standards in all other subjects. At the end of the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup> most children are likely to reach Early Learning Goals<sup>2</sup> in all areas of learning<sup>3</sup>. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their academic work throughout the school.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	The pupils have very good attitudes to learning and to participating in the life of the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	With the exception of a small number of pupils who have recognised behavioural difficulties, all pupils behave well both in the school and when less closely supervised at break times.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils are helped to develop well and they have very good relationships with others. However, their ability to work independently is underdeveloped.
Attendance	The rate of attendance is above average but a tiny number of families do not observe the school requirements and unauthorised absence is above average.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils in:</b>	<b>Reception</b>	<b>Years 1 – 2</b>	<b>Years 3-6</b>
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	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.*

Over 70 percent of the teaching seen was good or better with over a quarter being very good or excellent. Most of the remainder was satisfactory and only two lessons were unsatisfactory. (See table in section C). In some classes the teaching is usually very good whilst in others it is mostly good and sometimes satisfactory. Occasionally teaching is unsatisfactory and this occurs when there are too many interruptions to the lessons, the lesson moves at a slow pace and pupils become disinterested and they fail to learn enough. Direct teaching of children in the reception class is often good but too few opportunities are provided for them to learn independently or direct their own learning and therefore teaching overall is satisfactory.

Teachers plan well and the targets for learning are clearly expressed. However, in some classes there is a very wide spread of ability and the targets for learning do not always accommodate the needs of all children. Whilst all teachers have appropriately high expectations of pupils' behaviour,

<sup>1</sup> Foundation Stage in this school is education in the reception classes.

<sup>2</sup> Nationally agreed targets for the end of the reception year.

<sup>3</sup> Language, literacy and communication, personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development, physical development.

they do not always have entirely appropriate expectations of pupils' academic development because the assessment information which they collect is not sufficiently closely targeted on individual pupils' learning. Nevertheless, most pupils learn well. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection.

English and mathematics are taught well overall and mostly learning is good but occasionally in a minority of classes, because teachers allow disruptions to occur, learning becomes fragmented. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well and this is helping the most able pupils in particular to learn well. Adults other than teachers, who support learning, make a good contribution to pupils' progress.

### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a good enriched curriculum for pupils in Years 1-6. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage has some good elements but is satisfactory overall as there are too few planned opportunities for children to direct their own learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with statements of need and those who have individual education plans are generally well provided for. Others make satisfactory progress but their curricular needs are not always best met in day-to-day planning for learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The needs of these pupils are met well and they are able to access the full curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is very good and is a strength of the school. The provision through assemblies and some lessons for pupils' spiritual development is very good as is the general provision for their moral and social development. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Care for pupils is mostly good and often very good. However, the school does not use assessment information well enough to guide curriculum planning and particularly to inform pupils of what they need to do to improve their attainment and achieve higher standards <sup>4</sup> .

The school is very well regarded by the parents and other members of the community though some parents could give more support to help with their child's learning.

### **HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
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<sup>4</sup> The school is aware of this and has planned for a review of this area in the school improvement plan.

Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads the school well and enables other staff with responsibilities to make a full contribution to school leadership. This is very effective and has put the school in a strong position to improve further.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have begun to make a good contribution to the sense of direction of the school and they fulfil their statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its own performance well and has highlighted relevant and appropriate targets for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses all available resources well.

The school is developing good strategies to gain best value for money. The staff are well qualified for their work. The accommodation is satisfactory overall though the classrooms for pupils in Years 3-6 are too small and most are in need of refurbishment. ICT resources have improved very recently and are now satisfactory but the school has many resources of unsatisfactory quality. This includes the book stock in the library and the learning equipment for the children in the Foundation Stage.

#### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
The parents are pleased with almost all aspects of the school's performance.	There were no particular areas which the parents wished to see improved.

The inspectors can confirm that this is a good school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Baseline assessment indicates that attainment on entry to school is similar to the national and local average. The vast majority of the pupils start school with average attainment in the areas of learning and only a very small proportion have skills in advance of this. Similarly, only a small proportion has fewer skills. Only a few of the pupils have good speaking skills and by the end of reception most are still not very confident or expansive speakers. In other areas of their learning, their skills on entry to the school are variable but overall are similar to those expected nationally. By the time they reach the end of the reception year, they are likely to have made satisfactory progress in almost all the areas of learning except that they do not sufficiently develop independent learning skills as a result of the organisation of the reception classroom.
2. In 2002, the pupils achieved results which were above the national average in reading and writing and average levels in mathematics at the end of Year 2. Mostly these standards have been maintained over some years in reading and writing though in mathematics, standards have been more variable. In national tests at the age of 11, standards have been more variable and in 2002 standard were well above average in mathematics and well below average in English. In science, standards were similar to the national average. This unevenness in pupil performance is a cause for concern for the school and English has been the target for considerable work in the last year. When compared with schools of a similar background, the same picture emerges.
3. The pupils' speaking skills develop satisfactorily though the school has already targeted this for considerably more work and improvement. This area of pupils' development is seen as fundamental to pupils overall development in English. Whilst some pupils in school are clear speaking and articulate, the majority offer little more than is necessary when responding to classroom questioning or open debate. Some of the teachers are working on this very well, for example giving time in the literacy lessons for pupils to discuss and report back suitable topics for persuasive writing. In other classes though, adult talk still dominates, particularly in lengthy introductions to language and mathematics lessons. Some of the youngest pupils sit quietly and make little verbal contribution, for very long periods.
4. Pupils' literacy skills develop well in Years 1 – 2 and by the time they reach the end of Year 2 many of them write well and attainment in writing is above average. Assessment results indicate that pupils have attained above average results in reading and writing for the last four years. Their skills develop satisfactorily in Year 3-6 but there are clear indications that they make good progress in Year 6 in particular. However, there is still some carelessness in many pupils' approach to writing and the handwriting and general presentation skills of a large number of pupils need improvement. Standards in English could be raised further by better use of assessment information to closely target work to meet individual needs.
5. Pupils' reading skills have been the subject of particular emphasis during this year and particular skills have been targeted. Pupils in Year 6 are now much better able to deduce the 'hidden' meanings in texts and can comment clearly on character and settings. This has improved the quality of their comprehension.
6. In mathematics, pupils make good progress overall and standards have been maintained at levels well above the national average by the end of Year 6. Pupils make particularly good progress in

Years 3-6. By the end of Year 2 they achieve average standards. There is good teaching and learning throughout the school though the quality of teaching from class to class is variable and therefore some pupils make more progress than others. There is particularly good teaching in Year 6. Numeracy skills are developing well and these skills are used well in other subjects such as design and technology.

7. In science, there has been improvement in the last year with closer targeting of pupils' skills in experimental and investigative science. However, the quality of recording of pupils' ideas, thoughts and findings in science still needs further development and standards for all pupils remain at about the average when compared with results nationally. Currently pupils' recording of science is tightly prescribed through the use of worksheets and pupils therefore have only limited opportunities to show what they have learnt or how well they understand and can organise their findings.
8. Recent test results show that the performance of boys and girls is similar in English, mathematics and science and the inspectors found no significant differences in the performance or participation of boys and girls.
9. The pupils are currently achieving at least satisfactory standards in all other subjects by the ages of seven and eleven. In art and design, standards are above average by the age of seven because the pupils have developed some very good observation and representation skills. They reach good levels in ICT throughout the school because the staff have made very good use of the new resources pupils are making good progress. The swimming element of physical education is particularly strong.
10. Pupils with special educational needs who have learning difficulties make satisfactory progress in line with their peers. They get good support and most are fully able to access the curriculum.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

11. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good as they were at the time of the last inspection. The majority arrives promptly and settles happily to the school day. Registration is efficient and pupils usually greet their teachers in one of a number of languages known to them. The majority of pupils are keen to begin lessons and soon become fully involved in the learning. Pupils take pride in their work and are interested, responding to clear positive direction provided by teachers. This helps to ensure they produce good work with a sustained focus. Where lessons fail to provide pace and challenge pupils' work rate and response is not as good. In excellent lessons pupils are fully engaged as shown in a Year 6 ICT session where pupils were learning through discovery. In interviews, the majority of pupils said that they enjoyed learning and liked their teachers. Sport was especially popular, in particular swimming, and they all felt the out of school visits were useful and fun. They remembered what they had learned on these occasions.
12. Behaviour in the school is good overall and there have been no exclusions. In lessons, the majority of behaviour is good and pupils respond to the calm working atmosphere found in classrooms. There is however a minority of pupils in some classrooms who display difficult behaviour by being silly and choosing to ignore the class rules such as putting up their hands to answer questions. This inevitably affects their ability to learn. In the playground, at lunchtimes and around the school pupils are well behaved. They respect the equipment and resources provided by the school and take good care of the numerous artefacts. This was demonstrated in Year 3 when pupils were handling Hindu religious materials with great care. In the playground, despite the lack of games and equipment, pupils are boisterous but generally well behaved. There was no evidence of

bullying during the inspection and pupils interviewed were insistent that there is little in the school. One pupil however did site an example which was dealt with in an exemplary manner so that the pupils concerned are now the best of friends.

13. Pupils' personal development and relationships are good, and they support learning. All pupils say that this is a very friendly school and they are well supported in the classroom by their teachers who are happy to explain if they do not understand the work. When working in groups and pairs, pupils share their ideas freely and have good co-operation skills. They value the opinion of others as shown in a Year3/4 music lesson. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for the smooth running of the school. This includes assemblies, running the school bank, deciding on which charities should benefit from fundraising and helping to organise the Harvest Fair. The result is that by Year 6, pupils are confident and happy to talk about the school, what they like, dislike and what they think can be improved. However, pupils have little opportunity to develop independence in their learning as there is little provision for individual research during lessons and few opportunities for them to plan their own work. There is currently no school council.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

14. The overall quality of teaching is good and this is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. This improvement has occurred due to a number of identifiable reasons. In the period since the last inspection, the school has adopted the national literacy and numeracy strategies and this has given structure and progression to the teaching of skills in these two important areas as well as helping teachers to develop a rigorous approach to lesson planning. In the most successful classes, the teachers have the confidence now to adapt the strategies to the needs of the class, for example in a year 4/5 class where the teacher focused on one element for the first half of the lesson and incorporated considerable pupil discussion into the work on persuasive writing.
15. The teaching staff have had access to considerable training and this has been most useful in improving their skills and knowledge. When the school considered its results in English in 2002 as unacceptable, considerable training was accessed, in particular work on 'Grammar for Writing' as this was an identified weakness. Similarly the teaching staff have made great strides with the use of ICT and have undertaken training and other personal development opportunities and all teachers now appear confident and competent with new technology.
16. Throughout the school, teachers are aware of the standard of behaviour, relationships and attitudes which the school expects of pupils and all apply the same or similar rewards and sanctions. Inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated anywhere and because of this, standards of behaviour are good. All the teachers know their pupils well personally and this is clearly evident when observing lessons where there are pupils with backgrounds other than 'white English' including pupils with English as an additional language. Like other potentially vulnerable pupils, these pupils are given full access to everything which the school provides.
17. In the very best of lessons, the pace of learning is rapid but it takes account of pupils' learning needs and the teachers have confidence in their pupils to work hard. This was seen particularly clearly in both Year 6 classes when working in the computer suite. The teachers instructed the pupils clearly so that they knew exactly what to do when undertaking new work on building and modifying control programs. Sensibly and effectively the teachers gave the pupils time to find out what the program could do by allowing planned time for the pupils to 'play' with existing programs to see how they could be changed. After a relatively short time, most of the pupils had deduced how to make a difference and this knowledge was then shared and tested. By the end of the lessons all pupils had made great gains in skills, knowledge and understanding.

18. Most pupils act responsibly because the teachers have high expectations of behaviour. Where teaching and learning are less strong, this is because the teachers allow the pupils too little autonomy and they cease to think for themselves. There are some instances of this in a lot of classes. For example, children in the reception class, supported by a number of adults, get into a line in order to move from one part of their classroom to another. This is a waste of time and effort but more importantly takes away from children the chance to organise themselves.
19. The school does not yet make best use of opportunities for the pupils to work independently. A general weakness in teaching is that there is too much use of worksheets. Although most teachers plan in core subjects<sup>5</sup> for different levels of ability, in the other foundation subject pupils more often than not are given the same worksheet on which to record their ideas, findings, opinions and suggestions. This is not always appropriate and does not give pupils, particularly the higher attaining ones, the opportunity to think for themselves or indeed to show the teachers the extent of their capabilities. The teachers, particularly in Years 3-6 are hampered by lack of appropriate space but nevertheless, they do not encourage the pupils to make independent use of the library or ICT facilities sufficiently often. Similarly in the Reception to Y2 areas, which are much more spacious, pupils are seldom seen working outside the classroom, finding resources for themselves or, in the case of the children in reception, choosing activities for themselves.
20. Most teachers have a good knowledge of their pupils and they understand individual differences of character and know what the pupils can and cannot do. However, the current whole school practices for assessment do not require the teacher to have precise enough information on which to help the pupils to establish individual targets for improvement. There is use of group targets but in most classes the spread of ability is so wide that these targets are often too easy for some and impossible for others. The school is aware of this and has planned to address the issue of making the use of assessment more precise. Currently some of the whole class teaching sessions are very long and are only satisfactory rather than good because some pupils struggle to keep up with the number of items addressed, whilst others find the sessions somewhat tedious. Usually this is associated with too much teacher explanation which causes the pace of the lessons to slow too much.

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

21. The school offers a good curriculum to its pupils throughout the school. The curriculum contains all the subjects of the National Curriculum plus religious education, and each subject is allocated an appropriate amount of time on the school's timetable. Curriculum planning is good. The proposals of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority form the basis of the schemes of work in subject areas. In order to meet the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes, the curriculum planning is based on a two-year cycle of topics in science, geography, design and technology and religious education; history operates a four-year cycle. Other subjects have a yearly planning schedule. Medium and short-term planning now have a common format, which takes full account of the age of the pupils, and also ensures there is satisfactory progression in the development of pupils' knowledge and subject skills. The curriculum in information and communications technology shows good progression. The new computer suite is used to very good effect and has resulted in an accelerated pace in delivery of the prescribed programme of study. The teaching of swimming in physical education benefits greatly from the school having its own pool, and the vast majority of pupils are competent swimmers. All subject areas now have designated co-

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<sup>5</sup> English, mathematics and science.

ordinators who have carried out full subject audits and regularly monitor planning, and pupils' work.

22. The curriculum is enriched by a range of planned visits and activities. Year 2 pupils experience at first hand much about school life in earlier times through a visit to the Regency schoolroom at Belvoir Castle. A visit to Sherwood Pines is used well to develop fieldwork activities in geography, science and art. Year 6 pupils are offered a residential visit to Derbyshire. Harvest and carol services are held in St John's church each year, and termly visits are planned to the theatre. Book Week saw pupils and teachers dressed as favourite fictional characters during a visit to the town library. A very successful Science Week offered pupils an opportunity to experience a mobile planetarium, and School and Class challenges offered pupils, and parents, the opportunity to be creative in producing artefacts to meet given criteria in the design of futuristic buildings.
23. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities, many of which take place in the lunch break. Sport and music are particularly strong. Teams are organised in football, tag rugby, cross-country, Kwik cricket and netball, and inter-school competitions are organised. Both boys and girls have full access to all sports. Representatives from Nottingham Forest Football Club and Grantham Rugby Club provide some expert coaching. There is a high level of participation in musical activities. The choir takes part in the town music festival and entertains residents of old people's homes. Many pupils learn the recorder, older pupils may learn the guitar and promising musicians learn the violin from Year 2. The school organises musical productions each year that involve all pupils.
24. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good; this is an improvement since the last inspection. Positive values are clearly emphasised by the series of posters displayed in the hall, which give clear guidance and positive examples to pupils about their spiritual, moral and social development. Provision for pupils' cultural development is less strong, but nevertheless, the school clearly respect the background of its few pupils from heritage backgrounds other than English.
25. There is very good provision for pupils in spiritual development particularly through assemblies, religious education and personal and social education. In a Year 3 lesson on 'What is Worship', pupils discussed the similarities and differences between Hindu and Christian worship and what it meant to the believer in a serious and informed way. Similarly in whole school assemblies, pupils are given good opportunities for reflection and this was further developed for junior pupils by the consideration of people's lives and deaths. In classrooms, pupils are encouraged to question and develop their ideas through confidence-building discussion and question and answer sessions. In Year 5 pupils were asked to bring to school something which made them go 'WOW' and talk to the class about it. These were displayed in the classroom showing a wide variety of individual experiences. Beautiful clay work designed to exemplify relationships between people clearly shows that the pupils in Year 4 have good insight into human emotions.
26. Moral development is very good. There is a very clear code of behaviour in the school, which pupils respect and clearly understand. They are also provided with opportunities to discuss the ambiguities of moral behaviour. This was clearly demonstrated by a pupil challenging the statement that we should never tell lies when he could clearly see the virtue in white lies to prevent hurt to others. Equality of opportunity for pupils is securely in place and all pupils have full access to the curriculum and the life of the school. This includes pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Pupils are given the opportunity to develop their values and to make difficult judgements when they are asked to decide which charities should receive funding from the school.



27. The social development of pupils is similarly very good; this is a school community in which pupils feel comfortable and supported. Pupils value the friendliness of the school very highly. The school provides ample opportunities for pupils to participate in communal activities such as assemblies, school productions and residential visits. As individuals, pupils support and value each other as was shown in Year 2 when a pupil immediately volunteered to support an upset pupil by taking them by the hand and sitting them next to the classroom assistant.
28. Cultural development is satisfactory overall though the pupils learn a limited amount about other cultures. The school provides some opportunities to develop a wider understanding of cultural life through the visits of storytellers and artists and taking a full part in such activities as book week. In addition some of the displays around the school develop the theme of similarities and differences in such areas as weddings and clothing and the use of religious artefacts. There was very limited evidence of the celebration of local culture within the school and a lack of opportunity for children to develop a wider interest in the arts through, for example, visits to galleries or working with musicians from non-European cultures. Opportunities for pupils to know and understand the multicultural nature of British society are limited.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

29. The school takes good care of its pupils, as it did at the time of the last inspection. All are well known to their teachers and other adults. Their individual needs are met well and they are supported well in the classroom by teachers and learning assistants. Each teacher has an informative database for pupils in their class with special needs, including individual education plans, which they use to inform teaching. The school makes good use of outside agencies, particularly speech therapy, which is particularly needed in the school.
30. The care and safety of pupils is good. The site manager checks the school daily for any problems, which are dealt with immediately. The head teacher and the safety representative from the staff also undertake regular checks termly. Within lessons, teachers are conscious of safety aspects especially in physical education, clearly shown in a Year 5/6 lesson when pupils' attention was drawn to how and when they should take care. Procedures are in place to undertake risk assessments on visits outside the school although no member of staff has yet received training. The school has recently re-launched its healthy living programme with such initiatives as fruit at break times. More playground equipment especially for years 3 to 6 has provided stimulation and interest so that pupils return to the classrooms calm and ready to learn. Child protection procedures are fully in place.
31. Procedures for the promotion and monitoring of attendance are good. Daily registration is quick and efficient with the computerised monitoring system producing in-depth data on individual pupils and cohorts. The head teacher regularly monitors these figures with the education welfare officer, investigating and taking action in the most serious cases. The school however does not contact all parents of pupils who fail to arrive at school without notification. Attendance is in line with national averages but a hard core of parents are pushing up the figures for unauthorised absence to above the national average by their failure to report the reasons for their child's absence.
32. The school has very good procedures in place to manage pupils' behaviour both in the classroom and around the school. The behaviour policy is well written, clear and simple, based on a code of conduct with a separate code for pupils with special needs. There is constructive guidance for teachers to support pupils. Each class negotiates rules at the beginning of the academic year and these are used as the basis for discipline within each class. In classrooms, the majority of

teachers have high expectations of behaviour based on good classroom management and using positive reinforcement. In a very good Year4/5 lesson the use of humour by the teacher quietened children's exuberance and restored calm. In a minority of lessons where pupils are reluctant to settle to effective work, teachers work hard to maintain good order by using good behaviour management techniques, which however necessary, detract from the time available for teaching. In the playground pupils are active, boisterous but mostly well controlled in the spacious areas. At lunchtimes pupils are well supervised with one midday assistant for every class. Bullying is kept to a minimum by the vigilance of the staff and the awareness of pupils of the effects of bullying and how it should be dealt with in the school.

33. The school has good procedures in place to promote pupils' personal development. In the classroom pupils are encouraged to work in groups and pairs using dialogue to develop their ideas and work. The good working atmosphere in the majority of classrooms encourages a successful ethos where pupils apply themselves. Pupils respond well when challenged and maintain focus during lessons, demonstrated during a Year 2 art lesson where pupils were enthusiastic and concentrated well producing some good work when extending a picture.
34. Since the last inspection, there has been improvement in the procedures for assessment and the staff are now able to judge whether or not pupils are making progress. There is assessment of pupils' work in most subjects. However, currently the assessment information does not support staff in setting targets for individual pupils and therefore pupils often work to general targets which are appropriate for only some of them. This was seen often in school where work given was clearly too hard for some pupils and not sufficiently challenging for others. Also, the quality of marking is not always satisfactory and there are examples of poor work being praised. Often teachers' comments are of a general nature and do not help the pupils to improve.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

35. The parents of pupils attending the school say that this is a very good school; an opinion they held at the time of the last inspection. Most parents who responded to the questionnaire agree that their children are happy and making good progress in a well-led and managed school where teaching is good. Further, as a result of high expectations, they feel that behaviour is good and their children are becoming mature and responsible. As parents they agree that the school works closely with them, provides the right amount of homework, keeps them well informed and happy with their relationship with the school. They are less happy with the range of activities outside the classroom though the school is judged to offer a good range.
36. The school has good links with parents, which begin with home visits, which take place before children start at the school, followed by preliminary visits to the school by parents. This has been further boosted for some parents by the Family-Learning programme, which has been organised with the involvement of the class teacher and a trainer. The regular monthly newsletter and letters to parents keep them fully up to date with all that is happening in the school whilst the termly curriculum information leaflets ensure that they are well aware of what their children will be learning during the term. The majority of information provided for parents on their child's progress is good. The termly consultation meetings with parents are mostly well attended as a result of the school's driven to involve parents. A number of parents interviewed found it very difficult to attend these meetings because they work shifts or there are problems with baby-sitting for younger children despite the school providing child supervision and offering four different occasions. Annual reports to parents have recently changed format and as a result are in some cases unsatisfactory, a situation that the school needs to address. Parents of pupils with special need are consulted termly on the child's progress and future targets. The head teacher and class

teachers are available for informal discussion after school ends and many parents said they found it very easy to talk to the staff who listened and took action where necessary.

37. The school tries very hard to consult parents on every aspect of school life and certainly about new initiatives but with very limited success. Parents for example, were asked to comment on the school's Improvement Plan but only 13 responses were received all of which were very supportive of the school and the ideas put forward.
38. Help from parents is satisfactory but decreasing as few parents are prepared to go through screening now necessary for volunteers, but some parents are willing to lend their expertise to support various areas of the curriculum. The Parents, Friends and Teachers Association is very good in helping the school, with a small, dedicated and active group raising funds for such initiatives as improving the ITC provision.
39. Parents of many pupils provide little home support for their children's homework and feel that they should do it on their own without parental help. As a result homework is not as effective as it could be in improving pupils' progress. A minority of parents let their children miss school for trivial reasons and this is having a negative impact on their learning.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

40. The headteacher gives consistently good leadership to the school; he is respected and liked by the whole school community. He offers good leadership to the staff and the pupils by knowing everyone well and supporting and encouraging them all. He is able to lead the school spiritually and morally and show sensitivity and empathy as well as a great sense of fun, for example during school assemblies. Almost all of the pupils respond to this and therefore respond to his requests for hard work and good behaviour.
41. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in the leadership and management of the school because the headteacher has spread the leadership roles and has successfully empowered the subject leaders to have a real function in the shaping the direction of the school. This has been very helpful to the school and the management team has continued to function well during the absence of the deputy headteacher during the last year. The roles of the subject leaders are clear and they make a good contribution to school development planning. The staff team is very committed to the school and they work hard to ensure its success.
42. The headteacher has given good guidance to the governors and they perform their duties well. Some of the changes to the ways in which the governing body works are very recent and have not yet fully impacted on practice but nevertheless the structures are in place for informed and helpful governance. The governors are all 'linked' to areas of the school's work or to the subjects of the curriculum and they have begun to gather information for themselves about the quality of education. They are aware of the school test results and have studied the meaning of these but they are not yet full participants in the target setting process.
43. There is a clear sense of direction and staff strive for school improvement. This is shown in the manner in which all of the staff have contributed to the drive to improve standards in English. Staff are willing contributors to extra-curricular activities.
44. The teaching staff are developing well in their roles as curriculum co-ordinators. However, they do not yet access sufficient, precise data to help them to advise other teachers as fully as they might. However, the school has planned for improvements to assessment in the next year.

45. There is a shortage of good quality resources in many parts of the school. The reception class areas have many items of poor quality; 'home corner' furnishings need renovating, as they are not particularly stimulating for young children. Similarly the 'vegetable shop' has a very limited range of playthings and some, for example the hard hats in the vegetable shop, defy all but the most creative imaginations. However, the worst resourcing is in the area for pupils in Years 3-6. Classroom furniture is clumsy and of poor quality and exacerbates the problems caused by classrooms which are too small. There are too few good books in the school generally and in the library in particular. Resources for ICT have improved recently and are now satisfactory in quality and quantity.
46. Although the accommodation is kept clean and orderly, much of the Year 3-6 accommodation is in need of redecoration. The classrooms for the older pupils are very small and this restricts the range of teaching styles which can be adopted.
47. The resources are mostly used well and financial management is good. There is clear management of the school budget to gain good value for money and best value is sought effectively. This is a very necessary skill on the part of the school as the school budget per pupil is well below the national average and therefore money has to be used very prudently. This is one of the reasons why the school is short of learning resources. Modern technology is used well for the management of the school finances, curriculum planning and preparation of work for the pupils. The school makes very good use of specific grants especially in the areas of continuing professional development of staff.
48. School development planning is good, being based on the collective staff knowledge of the school. However, because assessment is not as precise as it could be, the knowledge of how to improve in some subjects is not sufficiently precise.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

The school gives a good quality of education. In order to improve further the headteacher and governors should ensure that:

\* Assessment procedures (including marking) and the use of the outcomes of assessment are improved so that:

Accurate individual targets for improvement can be set  
 Teacher can plan effectively for pupils of all abilities  
 Subject coordinators can better review and improve their subjects across the school  
 Standards in English at Years 3-6 are improved further.

(Paragraphs 19, 20, 34, 73, 83, 88)

The quality of the learning environment improves so that;

Pupils have a good quality environment in which to work  
 Pupils have good books and equipment with which to learn  
 The learning environment celebrates the achievements of the pupils.

(Paragraphs 19, 46, 47, 64, 68, 75)

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\* Already mentioned in the school development plan.

Teachers plan more effectively for the development of pupils' independent learning skills so that all pupils experience a high degree of challenge and :

In the reception classes more opportunities are provided for children to work independently and to talk about and decide upon their own learning.

In older classes, pupils have more opportunities to decide upon the methods and ways of recording the outcomes of their work

More pupils use the library and other resources independently.

(Paragraphs 13, 18, 19, 70, 81, 86, 87)

All pupils are taught to write and present work to the best possible standard.

(Paragraphs 4, 66, 74)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	69
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	19	28	17	2	0	0
Percentage	4	28	40	25	3	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	344
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	12
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	55
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.4

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.7
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	33	17	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	31	31
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	47	48	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (86)	96 (89)	96 (91)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	32	31
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	47	49	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (91)	98 (89)	96 (91)
	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	25	22	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	20	21
	Girls	17	19	20
	Total	32	39	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (85)	83 (80)	87 (95)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	20	21
	Girls	20	19	20
	Total	38	39	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (73)	83 (71)	87 (76)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82(82)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	337
Any other minority ethnic group	6

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Average class size	29

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	176

#### **Education Support Staff - Nursery**

Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2002-2003
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	£
Total income	721887
Total expenditure	692998
Expenditure per pupil	1969
Balance brought forward from previous year	
Balance carried forward to next year	28889

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	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.*



**Results of the survey of parents and carers**

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	344
Number of questionnaires returned	95

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	34	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69	29	0	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	65	34	0	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	51	6	2	1
The teaching is good.	64	32	3	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	39	4	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	23	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	34	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	54	41	4	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	66	28	5	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	37	1	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	34	14	1	14

## **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**

49. When children enter school at the beginning of the year in which they are five years old their attainment is as expected nationally for their age. They make satisfactory progress in the Reception year and by the time they move to Year 1 the majority will have achieved the levels expected, the Early Learning Goals. A small minority will be working at the level expected for Year 1 pupils. The provision has been maintained since the last inspection.
50. The curriculum is planned to take account of all the areas of learning. The national guidance for teaching literacy and numeracy is followed. Direct teaching of the knowledge children need to acquire in order to read and write is taught well. However the provision to support children independence is less effective, mainly because there are too few opportunities for children to work in areas in which they are particularly interested. Even when children are allowed in the role play areas, their activities are tightly prescribed and restricted by the time, space and resources which are available. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Assessment is undertaken but is not well developed. There is insufficient recording of continuous achievement so that children's progress can be tracked through the year. Assessment information is not used effectively to plan tasks, which closely match the needs of all the children.
51. Children enjoy coming to school and are very receptive to learning. The classroom is spacious and there is a designated outdoor area, but it does not present as a stimulating and aesthetically pleasing environment for learning. Many of the resources are in poor condition and are not very well organised. The provision for children with special educational needs is good. All support staff have good relationships with these and other children and their contribution to learning is good.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

52. Children achieve the Early learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development. Relationships are good and children play and work well together. Children know right from wrong behaviour. They are keen to please and do as they are asked. Most children follow the school routines well; they put up their hand before answering questions and line up quietly. Due to the lack of opportunity children do not take sufficient responsibility within the classroom. They rarely take charge of their own equipment, partly because it too limited and seldom choose their own working implements.
53. The quality of teaching is sound. All the adults are caring and look after the children's personal needs and welfare well and relationships are good. Classroom rules are evident. Children are encouraged to work together, share and take turns. Nevertheless there is not enough attention given to planning activities which help to develop pupils' autonomy. For example, there is too much direction as to exactly where children should sit. They do not have sufficient opportunity to choose and pursue activities, which are of specific interest to them.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

54. In communication, language and literacy, children attain the Early Learning Goals and a small minority reach the early stages of the National Curriculum. They make satisfactory progress. The majority of children speak in short phrases or sentences using an appropriate range of vocabulary. Higher ability children are able to describe events in detail following through a sequence of

events. For example, a boy talks about his holiday describing the things he has seen. They all listen well although the listening sometimes becomes passive when they are expected to maintain their concentration for too long or the content is beyond their experience. More able children can write a simple sentence, and are aware of the need to space words so they can be read. Many children know common phonemes and higher attaining pupils are writing using some phonological spelling. The majority of children read simple words, phrases and sentences and enjoy books. Higher attaining children read simple books well.

55. The quality of the direct teaching is good. Children are taught phonics; for example, they can suggest an initial letter to make words ending in '-ip' and '-ack'. Emphasis is placed on the showing children the structure of a story and higher attaining pupils can identify it as needing a 'how, where and when'. Children are provided with good opportunities to read in school and encouraged to read at home and this is having an impact on learning. Regular assessment is undertaken though it is not analytical and does not identify which aspect children are not able to do; for example, whether children respond to questions with single words or longer phrases. As a consequence adults do not have information that can be used to target specific activities so that children achieve more in subsequent sessions. Too little emphasis is placed on developing speaking skills particularly in imaginative and creative settings which are often provided in role play areas and through outdoor play. The role-play area is uninteresting and its resources are poor.

### **Mathematical development.**

56. By the end of the Reception class children have a sound knowledge of number, shape and space. They attain the Early Learning Goals and make satisfactory progress.
57. They are able to count forwards and backwards to 20. They can add small numbers but are not yet secure when asked to take away. They enjoy making ladybirds with spots that add up to ten. They know the basic shapes and can identify a piece of paper as a rectangle. They understand full and empty while using containers in the water area. They are beginning to realise that you need money to purchase goods from the shop and recognise some coins. They know positional language such as 'on', 'behind', and 'next to'.
58. The quality of direct teaching is sound. Teaching takes account of national guidance and there are opportunities for children to engage in simple calculations orally as well as to record their work. Sometimes however children are given worksheets, which they find difficult to read and this does not support learning as they fill in numbers without understanding the operation they are doing. By contrast, they very much enjoy the practical tasks and the song 'Five Little Speckled Frogs'. Although children are provided with a greengrocer's shop within which to undertake money transactions this resource is unsatisfactory, it is insufficiently clean and bright and does not have a good range of interesting objects to stimulate creative talk and play.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

59. The majority of children enter school with sound general knowledge and attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. They know the position of parts of a plant and can name the leaf, petal and roots. They are able to use a published programme on the computer to reproduce a picture of a plant. They design and make monsters and vehicles, which will carry 10 plastic teddy bears down a ramp. They learn about the life cycle of a butterfly and about the different weathers. They use their five senses in a variety of ways including tasting fruit.

60. The quality of teaching is sound. An appropriate range of tasks is provided and children enjoy the practical aspects of their learning. For example, when children are given the opportunity to taste a range of fruit the resources are very good and a wide range of interesting fruits from all over the world is provided. However, there are missed opportunities when children are offered the fruit mixed together and so they cannot identify the specific tastes of each fruit and comment on the differences. Overall children do not have enough opportunities to initiate activities they would like to investigate. Children for example do not have ready access to hand lenses, or other investigative equipment, a range of materials through which to compare and contrast or indeed toys which help them to learn about other people and cultures. Assessment is not used effectively to plan how the skills children will need for the next stage of their education, will gradually be acquired. For example there is no systematic planning to develop children's enquiry skills. This is because the emphasis is placed on children acquiring factual knowledge.

### **Physical development**

61. Almost all children have good manipulative skills; they build with construction kits. They cut with scissors; they spoon out melon seeds and cut up strawberries and apricots safely with knives. They run while out in the playground. They have enormous fun while in the swimming pool and are all very confident in the water; moving through it using their arms and putting their faces into it. Overall standards are as would be expected nationally except in swimming where they are higher.
62. The teaching of swimming is good. Good attention is given to teaching children how to enter and leave the water safely. Good links with other learning is used when children move their arms and bodies to undertake the actions of the song 'The Wheels on the Bus'. Other rhymes, such as 'Ring a Ring of Roses' are used effectively to encourage children to go under the water. There is good provision for children to cut with scissors where they cut out marbled paper and use sticky tape to make crowns and wrap presents.

### **Creative development**

63. Children's creative development is broadly satisfactory. They explore colour, shape and texture in two and three dimensions. For example, they design and make three-dimensional imaginative monsters out of card. They paint pictures of themselves and use wet paint and a folding technique to make symmetrical butterflies.
64. The provision for children's creative development is satisfactory. There is good teaching of specific skills; for example, to use oil pastels and colour in carefully. Prior to painting a still life of fruit, direct teaching of mixing paint to achieve the relevant colours provides children with good techniques. The provision for children to use their imagination is less well developed through lack of stimulating resources for role-play and small world play.

## **ENGLISH**

65. Standards in English are above average at the end of Year 2 and are average at the end of Year 6. Pupils' results have shown an improvement since the last inspection in Years 1-2 and in Years 3-6 standards have been maintained. There have been improvements in the quality of teaching and the National Literacy Strategy now provides a framework for planning the curriculum. A whole school approach to the recording and assessment of pupils' work has been introduced. There are still some weaknesses in marking pupils' work and the use of assessment information to plan for the next stage of each pupil's learning. Despite the appearance of less progress in

Years 3-6, these older pupils are responding well to recent improvements in teaching, brought about mainly through better organisation of lessons based on good literacy plans.

66. Throughout the school, the literacy lessons are purposeful and thoroughly planned though there is no consistency in providing planned opportunities for promoting pupils' speaking skills, independent work or sustained independent writing. There is also no consistent approach to teaching handwriting and few comments in marking referring to presentation of work, with the result that the standard in handwriting of a significant number of pupils is unsatisfactory. Procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment are satisfactory although the recording system does not help teachers to identify pupils' attainment easily and clearly in relation to National Curriculum levels. Teachers can however, identify whether individual pupils are making progress. Most pupils have the same learning objectives regardless of their prior attainment with the result that some teachers have inaccurate expectations and often the higher attaining pupils are left unchallenged.
67. Pupils enter Year 1 with average levels of skills in language and literacy. By the age of seven, pupils have made satisfactory progress in speaking and listening skills and standards are average. Pupils with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress. There are opportunities both within the literacy lessons and in other lessons for pupils to listen and speak. Pupils listen to their teachers' explanations and directions and most have a clear understanding of what they are to do. Pupils answer questions willingly, and talk readily to one another. Pupils' contributions are sought for example when Year 6 pupils discussed the opening paragraphs in two books by Lemony Snicket. They evaluated and described the writer's style and said how the description gave them clues that these were not 'happy' stories and that 'the characters might be involved in lots of action'. The school is targeting the improvement of pupils' listening skills and spoken language as an area for development. Some lessons include a planned focus on speaking and listening and teachers have expressed a desire to include more drama in lessons in order to promote these skills. By the age of 11 the standards achieved in speaking and listening is average.
68. Standards in reading are above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and average at the end of Key Stage 2. Lower attaining pupils receive additional literacy support and make satisfactory progress. Reading is taught in a systematic manner through an agreed, whole-school approach. From the early part of Year 1, pupils are confident to use their knowledge of letter sounds and know how to blend sounds in order to build and read words accurately. Higher attaining pupils read accurately and their reading is lively with good intonation and expression. By the age of 11, the higher attaining pupils' reading is accurate, fluent and expressive. They refer to the texts to exemplify their opinions. Lower attaining pupils know how to use appropriate strategies for reading unfamiliar words. The pupils enjoy reading and have favourite authors, such as J.K. Rowling and Lemony Snicket. An area for development identified by the school is the need to develop pupils' understanding of inference and deduction in texts. Some literacy lessons include this as a focus. However there are too few good quality fiction books in the library for pupils to read to support and extend these skills or to promote pupils' independent reading. Also, although pupils have few opportunities to make use of the library for independent research, they have a good understanding of how to use reference books and are able to use CD-ROMs and the Internet to access information.
69. Pupils who are lower attaining in reading are given additional literacy support. Those pupils who have special educational needs are supported either in lessons by the class teacher or support assistants, as well as in withdrawal sessions, ensuring that they are able to access the curriculum and make progress against the literacy targets in their individual educational plans.

70. Standards in writing are above average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. Year 2 pupils, as part of work on turning statements into questions, recognised suitable first words in forming questions, such as 'when', 'what', 'where' and 'how'. Lower attaining pupils were able to write in simple sentences with support, while higher attaining pupils used more complex sentences in framing questions. They use punctuation accurately including the use of question marks. Spelling is generally accurate. Although the range of writing is satisfactory across Years 3-6 and pupils are able to word-process work on the computer, they have too few opportunities to write independently or to consolidate and develop their writing skills in other subjects in order to raise standards in English. By Year 6 the pupils' work includes examples of short stories, plays, newspaper reports, biography and autobiography. The standard of presentation across the school is variable though and work is sometimes untidy, poorly written and badly organised and shows limited evidence of pupils' self esteem, pride in their work or desire to do their best.
71. The quality of teaching and learning in English is good in both Key Stages but across the school it ranges from unsatisfactory to very good. Overall the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection.
72. Teachers inform pupils what they will be learning in the lesson and how to go about their tasks. In the best lessons teachers question pupils about previous work so they can recall earlier learning. This also helps the teachers to assess how well pupils have understood and retained what has been taught. Teachers have good subject knowledge about speaking and listening in developing literacy skills and this is evident in discussions about vocabulary and language structure, particularly in Year 6. As a result pupils listen intently, following the discussion closely and are eager to contribute. In the best lessons, the teachers' knowledge and the strategies used motivate pupils so that they acquire knowledge and skills. In very good lessons teachers provide challenging work for all groups of pupils in the class who all work hard and achieve well. This was not the case in a lesson where there were a very high number of pupils with special educational needs. It was not possible for the teacher to provide adequate support, and as a result inadequate pupil management resulted in unsatisfactory learning and behaviour.
73. Marking is very variable across the school. Where it is good it contains evaluative comments so pupils know what they have done well and what they need to do in order to improve. However, marking in many classes does not support pupils well enough. Too frequently it is superficial, at times including inappropriate praise, with too few comments referring to how to improve standards or presentation of work. Assessment information is used effectively by some teacher but not by others, to plan work appropriate to the different ability groups. Too often, all pupils are given the same task regardless of previous attainment. This limits the achievements in the lesson for those pupils who find the work too hard or not challenging enough.
74. The leadership of the subject is good and the co-ordinator has identified areas for development. The school's strengths and weaknesses have been analysed and strategies put in place to ensure improvements in standards in spelling, but not yet in handwriting and presentation. Assessment arrangements and the use of assessment to track pupils' progress are satisfactory and the head teacher evaluates strengths and weaknesses in different year groups. However, the subject leader does not have an overview of this tracking so cannot monitor individual pupils or the progress of cohorts as they move through the school. The use of assessment information does not guide curriculum planning sufficiently.
75. The library is inadequate and is not used effectively to enhance pupils' love of books and reading or for independent work. The quality and quantity of fiction books is unsatisfactory and pupils in discussion requested a greater range of good quality fiction in the library. The school's implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has made a positive impact on standards and

many younger pupils are achieving above what is expected for their age which will should raise standards even further as they move up the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

76. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards which are average for their age. By Year 6, pupils attain standards above those expected for their ages in numeracy and all areas of mathematics; number, algebra, space, shape and measures, and data handling. They can solve relevant problems using and applying their knowledge. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and good progress between Years 3 and 6. National tests and inspection findings show a similar picture. There are no marked differences in the performance of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.
77. There has been good improvement since the last inspection as standards by the end of Year 6 continue to rise. There is regular monitoring of teaching and learning and there are some examples of very good and excellent teaching.
78. By the age of seven, pupils have an appropriate knowledge of place value; the majority is able to manipulate two and three digit numbers. They know the properties of 2D and 3D shapes, they can tell the time using analogue and digital clocks, they understand the specific vocabulary relating to weight, volume, money and length and use measuring instruments accurately. Pupils have a range of strategies for undertaking mental calculations and higher attaining pupils are confident in describing their methods.
79. Skills in Years 3-6 build rapidly. Pupils in Year 6 multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals by 10, 100, and 1,000. They can reduce a fraction to its simplest form by cancelling common factors and can calculate decimal and fraction equivalents. They draw angles to the nearest degree and use the correct language associated with angles. They can calculate the perimeter and area of shapes and plot co-ordinates in all four quadrants. Higher attaining pupils check to see that their results are sensible, draw conclusions of their own and give explanations of their reasoning.
80. The quality of teaching is very variable and ranges from unsatisfactory to excellent. It is good overall. Where teaching is good or better the teaching of skills and subject matter is knowledgeable. In very good lessons, teachers make intellectual and creative demands on pupils to extend their learning. For example older pupils use prime factors of 3 and 4 digit numbers to make words using an alphabet code. Excellent teaching challenges pupils and tasks are imaginative and require the utmost concentration and effort from pupils. For example pupils are asked to investigate whether you can buy goods of any price, including those of more than 5 digits using only imaginary 3 pence and 5 pence coins. Questions are used to consolidate, extend and verify what pupils know and understand. The methods chosen are geared well to the particular focus and demands of the lesson. For example a 'mystery bag' containing 3D shapes enables good discussion about their properties and illicit pupils understand edges, faces and vertices. Very good teaching provides pupils with a good working ethos with clear explanations; so they can for example, develop strategies for subtracting using different methods. In very good sessions pupils complete self-assessment sheets, which inform both teachers and pupils of individual strengths and areas for development. Where teaching is less effective the teacher's knowledge and understanding of the concepts is less clear, the pace of the lessons is too slow and pupils do not have long enough to practise and consolidate their learning.
81. There are some examples of marking whereby teachers make constructive comments on the work pupils have undertaken but these do not identify what the pupils must do to improve and

they are not consistent across the school. The expectation that the only record that younger pupils have of their work is on photocopied worksheets, which are kept as loose leaves in folders, does not always support learning effectively. It does not encourage pupils to be independent, or learn the importance of recording techniques to support accuracy in their responses. Another disadvantage is that pupils are not able to access previous learning to help them with current examples, with the result that they do not benefit from constructive comments and so gain a better understanding of their own learning.

82. Relationships in most classrooms provide a confident and positive atmosphere in which achievement is supported and encouraged. Most pupils are keen to learn, rise to challenges in creative ways and think further. They enjoy being successful in their work. In the majority of classes teachers encourage pupils to discuss any difficulties they are having with the work and encourage them to persevere until they understand the concept. In a minority of instances pupils are fidgety or do not behave as well as they should and this impacts on their learning.
83. Good use is made of national guidance, the three-part lesson structure is well established and there is a balance between direct teaching and pupils undertaking oral and written tasks. In the good or better lessons tasks are challenging and meet the needs of the pupils well. Most teachers use the final part of the session effectively to check present learning and prepare children for forthcoming sessions. Use is made of numeracy across the curriculum, for example collecting and recording data in science lessons. Assessment procedures are in place and results are analysed. Teaching and learning take account of the findings of this analysis. Pupils complete 'I can do' sheets which act as targets for learning. The co-ordinator manages the subject effectively, monitoring the teaching and learning. Whilst the co-ordinator can feedback to teachers on how to improve teaching and learning, this monitoring is not always able to point to significant development points for some teachers. She has a general overview of standards.

## **SCIENCE**

84. Attainment is close to that expected nationally at the ends of Years 2 and 6. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
85. However, there has been considerable improvement in the last year since the coordinator has taken a strong lead in encouraging all staff to develop pupils' investigative skills. Mostly the pupils now gain knowledge through investigation, experiment and practical work. This has raised the levels of pupils' interest and motivation and currently, pupils near the end of Year 2 have sound knowledge of the topics studied. They recognise how electricity is used to power a range of household appliances and some toys. They understand that some use battery power and others need mains electricity, and they recognise the potential dangers of mains power. They understand what an electrical circuit is and are able to construct simple circuits to light up bulbs and operate buzzers.
86. When working on materials, pupils recognise that different materials have characteristic properties and begin to understand that materials are selected for specific use as a result of these properties. They recognise the characteristics of living things and can explain in simple terms the life cycles of plants and animals such as frogs. They are introduced to carrying out simple investigations, such as germinating cress seeds and observing the seedlings as they grow. They record their activities using a simply structured worksheet under the headings "What I used", "What I did" and "What happened" but although these offers useful structure to many of the pupils they somewhat restrict the most capable. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are sometimes supplied with suitably modified tasks and worksheets, and given



good support to achieve standards in line with their potential. Pupils overall achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2.

87. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6. They broaden and deepen their understanding of science and have a wide knowledge by the time they reach the end of Year 6. Pupils in year 6 have good understanding of their own bodies, the function of the skeleton, the major organs and how the blood circulates through the body. They understand how photosynthesis works and their knowledge of plant cycles is extended to recognising how seeds are adapted to assist their dispersal. Pupils in Year 4 measure the forces needed to pull bricks over different surfaces and discuss the concept of friction. Pupils particularly enjoy learning about the solar system, use the Internet efficiently to access information, and produced good written work on the planets. However, written work in general is often rather immature in structure, with pupils writing as they speak and not fully incorporating appropriate vocabulary into their writing. Pupils gain sound experience in carrying out investigations. They know how to design a fair test, recognise variables and how to control them, and draw simple conclusions from results. However, data handling skills are under-developed generally. Pupils do not systematically develop skills in taking a range of measurements and presenting their results in tabular and graphical forms. Higher attaining pupils in particular do not achieve as well as they could in this area of their work.
88. The overall quality of teaching is good and often very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, plan lessons well with clear learning objectives identified and shared with pupils. Lessons generally have a variety of activities designed to stimulate pupils and to create good learning. Teachers use questions well to link the lesson with previous work and to assess understanding. However, pupils' answers are often rather brief and involve limited use of scientific vocabulary. Set tasks are planned well and modified where necessary to meet the needs of the full age and ability range in the classes. Pupils are managed well and supported during the tasks. For example, pupils in the mixed Year 3/4 class discussed their ideas on different habitats in the school grounds. They were then supplied with a number of live mini beasts from the grounds and were challenged to draw pictures of them and to identify similarities and differences. The pupils responded enthusiastically to the tasks, co-operated very well in their groups, and this made a significant contribution to the good learning. They displayed respect for the creatures, made careful observations and then drew up a simple branched database to identify each of the species. Pupils are generally well challenged. For example Year 2 pupils constructed electrical circuits with one or two bulbs or buzzers, and to explain how the electricity travelled around the circuit. Occasionally the level of challenge does not fully meet the needs of the pupils and this reduces their response and the rate of learning. The range of fruits provided for a Year 6 lesson on seed dispersal lacked sufficient variety for the higher attaining pupils to extend their thinking on methods of seed dispersal. Pupils' literacy skills are developed through the identification of key words in each topic, but opportunities are limited for pupils to develop verbal and extended writing skills. Written work is regularly marked but spelling or grammatical errors are not systematically corrected. Teacher comments are supportive but do not often give clear guidance on how the work can be improved.
89. The subject is led well. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, has received regular training to develop the role and gives good support to the teaching staff. The curriculum is well planned and operates a two-year cycle of topics to cater for the needs of the mixed-age classes. The scheme of work produces a good balance of topics in both key stages. Recent emphasis has been on the development of pupils' investigative skills, and this has been successful in raising pupils' interest and motivation. However, although pupils' skills in designing and carrying out investigations are good they are not being regularly challenged to collect and process their own data, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress are satisfactory, although the data gathered does not currently fully cover all areas of the curriculum, so that its use to set

effective targets and inform curriculum planning is limited. A Science Week served very well to enrich pupils' curriculum experiences, such as a mobile planetarium and work on famous scientists. The School Science Challenge presented each class with specific tasks, such as designing a paper aeroplane to travel across the classroom, and the Home Challenge involved parents working with children in designing futuristic buildings. The current resources are unsatisfactory. More basic equipment is needed to assist the development of practical work and a more stimulating range of quality books is needed to serve as a reference source and to encourage pupils' independent learning.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

90. Standards of attainment in art are above those expected at Year 2 and are average for Year 6. The pupils make good progress in learning skills and techniques in Years 1-2 as well as knowledge of artists and their work. Those pupils who have special educational needs make good progress. Standards have improved since the last inspection because the teaching of art has improved and art skills and techniques are taught progressively. The teaching of key art skills in Years 3-6 lacks continuity and there is inconsistent use of sketchbooks to promote pupils' designing and experimenting with different techniques and media. However in Years 3-4, the standard of three-dimensional work is very good and pupils overall make satisfactory progress.
91. By the end of Year 2 pupils have worked with a variety of media, including collage, pastels, charcoal and paint. Year 1 pupils look at the portraits by different artists. They draw portraits using charcoal and pencil techniques to show shading and then progress to investigate the use of colour to produce colour portraits. Pupils spontaneously share their ideas when experimenting with blending colours and one pupil was thrilled and exclaimed 'Oh! Look at mine!' Year 2 pupils complete observational drawings of household utensils and this links to history work. They have learned weaving and paper sculpture techniques. Year 3 and 4 pupils depict relationships in paintings as part of the personal, social and health education topic. The three-dimensional models depicting love between man and woman, or love between mother and child, or friendship, are of high standard and showed very good understanding of the emotion they are portraying. Year 5 pupils produce textile collages, still life drawings and design and make headgear. By the end of Year 6 pupils study the life and work of Lowry. They made an enlarged sketch of a section of 'Matchstick Men', then painted this in Lowry's style and use of colour, learning to use lighter colours before dark.
92. Teaching is good with some very good teaching in Years 1-2. Only one lesson was observed in Years 3-6 so judgements are based on pupils' art on display and in sketchbooks. The best teaching is where pupils are taught skills and techniques and then given opportunities to use these. The teacher's ongoing assessment is very good as she assesses pupils' work and questions them which encourages pupils to think carefully and evaluate their work, leading to improvement. For example, Year 2 pupils are asked to use the visual clues in a cropped picture to imagine what the extended picture might look like so they can complete the image by using detail already given. Also, the feedback given to pupils gives them confidence and enthusiasm so they work with very good concentration and make improvements. Teachers keep records of pupils' attainment but all pupils have the same learning objectives. This makes it difficult to identify precisely what individual pupils know, understand and can do, what the art and designing skills progression is, or what pupils need to do next in order to improve.
93. The accommodation in Years 3-6 is cramped with small classrooms for the age and number of pupils which restricts opportunities to work on more large scale, collaborative art projects. Many displays in classrooms support curriculum work but they are mainly teachers' displays and in some classes pupils' work is displayed at a height where it cannot be easily seen or used by

pupils. Pupils' art is not always displayed to best advantage to value pupils' effort, to celebrate achievement or create an inspiring environment, particularly in Years 3-6.

94. The subject leader has identified the strengths and areas for development and has the potential to impact on standards and the quality of teaching in the subject.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

95. It was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection. Judgements on standards are based on these lessons and also on scrutiny of pupils' design files, displays and photographs of pupils' work and discussions with pupils. Standards achieved by pupils are broadly in line with the expected levels at the end Years 2 and 6.
96. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 acquire sound skills in measuring, cutting and joining a variety of materials such as paper, card and fabric using staples, sellotape and glue. They also show sound skills in designing. Year 1 pupils colour a dress for Cinderella and select a suitable fabric for it that will be seen in the dark by motorists at night. They learn much about the construction of puppets by dismantling them to investigate the materials used for the different parts and how they are put together. Pupils in Year 2 design and make a simple wheeled vehicle, learning about axles and how to strengthen corners of their models. Their designs are detailed and clearly labelled, showing the various parts and the materials to be used.
97. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6 with the development of their designing and making skills. Their designs become progressively more sophisticated with clear emphasis on selecting appropriate materials and strengthening techniques. Pupils in the mixed Year 4/5 class experimented with various methods of joining milk straws to produce straight and angled joints in their preliminary work on making a model shelter. Pupils successfully use tools such as saws and drills, and also incorporate electric circuits and motors in their work. For example, pupils in Year 5 designed and made imaginative motor powered fairground models and vehicles. Pupils in Year 6 displayed sound skills in food technology when making biscuits. Their initial analysis of a range of commercial biscuits indicated a keen analytical eye for appearance, texture and taste. Pupils' evaluation of their finished work however is varied in its analysis and is sometimes rather superficial. Skills acquired by pupils in the subject were put into good practice during the School Challenge and Home Challenge exercises when pupils were presented with a variety of design and make tasks, such as designing futuristic vehicles and making a chair out of newspaper.
98. In the two lessons observed, the quality of teaching was very good. Lesson planning was very effective in engaging the pupils in productive activities designing a model shelter. The lessons had clear objectives, activities were well planned and time targets were clearly set, challenging pupils of all abilities to focus clearly on achieving set targets. The pupils responded very positively. In one lesson the focus was on the design process, with pupils making suggestions about the nature of their proposed shelters, the materials to be used and key design features, such as waterproofing and strength in withstanding the wind. The teacher used the discussion session very well to use appropriate vocabulary and encouraged pupils to extend their answers to provide more detail of their ideas. In the other lesson pupils were given the opportunity to test out various ways of joining milk straws to form line and angle joints and test their strength. This was aimed to help the pupils in their construction of their designs, using modelling materials. In both lessons group activities were well organised and managed. Teachers gave very good support and encouragement to individuals and groups. Within the groups there was much productive discussion about the tasks, and this contributed significantly to the very good learning in the lessons.

99. The subject is very well led. As a result of an audit of the subject, a very good scheme of work has been put in place that displays clear development of appropriate skills across the curriculum. The co-ordinator has identified key areas for development that will further improve standards. A closer integration is planned with the use of computer skills in the subject that will aid pupils' design skills. Procedures for assessing pupils' skills are generally satisfactory and enable teachers to track pupils' progress. Marking of pupils' work is generally good with useful comments made on their designs that aid development. Resources for the subject are satisfactory with every class having its own toolbox and there is a good stock of centralised materials. The school has a good range of specialist model kits for pupils to learn about the more complex concepts of gears, etc. A need has been identified for some specialised equipment to enable pupils with motor skill problems to more fully access the curriculum.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

100. Pupils attain standards expected for their age at the ends of Years 2 and 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily in acquiring basic geographical skills. They develop knowledge of map work through studying the position of the school in the locality and by using large-scale maps to plot their route to and from school. They draw their own maps of a Treasure Island and are able to use simple symbols and co-ordinates to locate features on the island. Pupils enjoy learning about the story of Katie Morag's life on the fictitious island of Struay. They write interesting letters to Katie Morag describing how their life in Grantham is different in many ways from an island life.
101. Pupils' geographical skills develop satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 carry out some simple weather recording, though the data collected is limited and is not used to show weather variations time. In Year 5 pupils collect their own road traffic census data and draw useful conclusions from the raw data, but numeracy skills are not used as well as they might be to present this data in graphical form. Mapping skills do not develop progressively due to the lack of a range of suitable maps of different scales. As a result, pupils in Year 6 encountered some difficulty in seeking basic information about major rivers of the world due to their lack of experience in using atlases. However, pupils have good knowledge and understanding of the geographical features of rivers. They understand how erosion and deposition produce features such as meanders and ox-bow lakes. They are aware of the multitude of uses and activities to which rivers are put, and of the problems and benefits these pose to the river environment. Pupils benefit greatly from visits in developing their knowledge and awareness of the environment. Visits to Skegness to study a contrasting community, and to Sherwood Pines to learn about woodland geography and to practice orienteering skills, are well embedded in pupils' minds as very positive learning experiences.
102. The quality of teaching is good. All lessons are planned with clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils. Teachers plan a good variety of activities and make good use of time, setting quite tight time limits for the set tasks. Year 1 pupils were praised for their work finding out what jobs their parents did, and they were able to use this to compare the types of jobs carried out by people on Struay. Pupils' learning is particularly good where there are high expectations and challenge. The curriculum was linked well to literacy when Year 6 pupils were asked to draw on their experiences of visit to Cardington reservoir and of watching a video of the River Usk to develop feelings and emotions about rivers. They were then challenged to use the descriptive words to write poems about rivers. In the time available, the pupils produced varied and evocative poems, often using very expressive language. Teachers use questions well to develop pupils' thinking. For example, pupils in the mixed Year 5/6 class were asked "What is it about water treatment that is valuable to rivers?" to make them focus more clearly on processes. The

quality of pupils' written work is satisfactory although there are few occasions when pupils are required to produce extended pieces of writing.

103. Leadership of the subject is good. Although only in post for one year, the co-ordinator has carried out a full curriculum audit and identified clear priorities for future development. The curriculum is planned on a two-year cycle of topics to take account of the mixed-age classes in the school. Medium and short term planning is carefully monitored to ensure that it meets the age and ability needs of all the pupils, but no monitoring of teaching has yet been undertaken by the co-ordinator. The curriculum is very well enriched through the planned visits to Skegness and Sherwood Pines, and the Year 6 residential trip to Derbyshire is also well used to broaden pupils' experiences of using their map skills and learning about aspects of river geography. Sound arrangements are in place for the assessment of pupils' geographical skills but the information obtained is not yet effectively used to set targets for pupils. Resources are rather limited. Although some use is currently made of computers in obtaining information from Internet sites, they are not yet effectively used in processing data, such as climate statistics and traffic surveys.

## **HISTORY**

104. It was only possible to observe two history lessons during the inspection. Judgements on standards are made on the basis of these lessons, scrutiny of pupils' books, displays of work around the school and discussions with pupils. Attainment by pupils meets national expectations throughout the school.
105. Pupils in Year 2 have a sound appreciation of chronology though comparing "Then and Now." They make good use of pictures of Victorian kitchens and living rooms to identify how furniture and appliances have changed in the present day. They look at an old mangle and wash tub, learn about how they were used and compare them with a modern washing machine. They begin to appreciate how the materials used in making appliances have changed, and can apply this knowledge in attempting to date artefacts. For example they recognise that irons made with cast iron are old whereas modern ones use lighter metals and plastics. Pupils also learn about celebrities and events from former times, such as Guy Fawkes. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs manage the work well because they are provided with modified tasks, such as writing frames, to assist them with recording their work and achieve in line with their potential.
106. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve satisfactorily in developing their historical skills. They enjoy learning about ancient civilisations, how people lived in those times and the legacies left behind. The curriculum operates on a four-year cycle, and the focus of the study varies in different year groups. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have sound understand of the basic social structure of life in Ancient Egypt, and of some of the myths and legends of Ancient Greece. They draw good pictures of farming life in Egypt and write about life in Athens and Sparta. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 take a more investigative approach to their work. They use the Internet to search for information on Egypt and Greece and use maps to locate important centres of these civilisations. They use written sources well to compare school life in Greece with their own school life. Pictures of objects from Egypt are used to obtain clues about aspects of life in those times, such as figures of gods and funeral articles. Pupils' written work is, however, very limited in its scope and free writing is often very short in length.
107. In the two lessons observed the teaching was good. Year 2 pupils were presented with the interesting challenge of identifying the use of a variety of household objects from Victorian times, such as irons, matches, clothes pegs, candle snuffers, etc. The lesson was well planned and the task clearly set for the pupils. Each group had a different set of objects and these generated

much interest. The pupils handled the objects with great care and respect and there was much productive discussion within the groups about what they might be. A very good plenary session brought together the pupils' ideas and again much useful discussion took place. The pupils were given plenty of opportunity to put forward their ideas and to develop their vocabulary. The pupils were managed very well, good use was made of time and good learning resulted. Pupils in Y3 were challenged to find out information about Greek gods. The teacher invented a "Stars in your Eyes" type of game for the activity. A range of secondary sources was provided, including a computer, and the activity produced much interest and research. Two pupils successfully used a search engine to find out about Hermes. In the final plenary pupils presented their findings with enthusiasm and the activity generated good learning.

108. Leadership of the subject is good. The planning is based on a four-year cycle of topics and this presents a challenge in planning the topic for different age ranges and in tracking pupils' progress in acquiring historical skills. Current planning is satisfactory for the majority of pupils but is not challenging enough for higher attaining pupils, as the use of computers is not yet well developed and the range of available written sources is very limited. Very good use is made of artefacts, supplied by the museum service or brought in by teachers and pupils, in both teaching and informative displays. Visits are very well used to extend pupils' experiences and understanding of life in former times. A visit to a Regency schoolroom at Belvoir Castle was particularly enjoyable and memorable and aided learning. Year 6 pupils learned much about life in Stuart times from a visit to the plague village of Eyam during their residential trip to Derbyshire. Assessment of pupils' skills is satisfactory, although the data gathered is limited and is not used to set clear targets for pupils.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

109. In the last two years the school has up-graded the provision for ICT through the provision of a suite of computers which is available to pupils of all ages. The suite is used well and the school's own analysis of pupils' work indicates that standards have risen particularly in the last year. Pupils at the ends of Years 2 and 6 are working at above average levels.
110. This is clearly evident in the work which the pupils produce. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are mostly working at levels which are above average for their age. They use the ICT suite regularly and are both comfortable and confident in working with the computers. For example, following the teacher's guidance, a Year 1 group of pupils logged on to the computers using both an identification code and a password. They were able to select the required program from the programs menu and load it using the mouse to manipulate 'Windows'. Once loaded, they were able to change the level of the program and enter instructions to manipulate the movements of a turtle. This showed a very good level of skill for such young pupils and many were able to complete the task of 'drawing a square' by moving the turtle. They were enabled in this lesson by very good, thoughtful teaching. The pupils had been prepared well for the task having seen programmed movement in a floor robot and having practiced movement and turns during a recent physical education lesson. The teacher was able to instruct the pupils clearly.
111. Pupils in Years 3-6 are making good progress but like the younger pupils, they too have only had access to the current good resources in the suite for less than two years and standards have only just surpassed the nationally expected levels. They have caught up with the standards they should be achieving and are likely to extend further beyond this in the coming year. In a Year 6 lesson seen the pupils were making excellent progress in learning about the setting up of control programmes to create different connections and different effects. The pupils learnt rapidly because during the lesson the teacher very wisely gave the pupils time to experiment with the

program to find out what it could do. Many of the pupils had sufficient background knowledge to make adjustments to the program knowing that, for instance, changing instructions is often only possible when the text has been highlighted.

112. In the last two years the quality of teaching has improved dramatically and all the staff have made a real effort to make themselves competent in the use of ICT. They use the support of the coordinator but now many are in a position to develop independently. Many have accessed ICT training and they use computers well in their professional lives, to support both planning and record keeping. This increased staff confidence along with a well-structured curriculum has supported a rise in standards. Teachers are beginning to keep worthwhile records of pupils' achievements in ICT but these are not yet informative enough to assist teacher in planning accurately for the curriculum.
113. The ICT curriculum is covered well. Throughout the school pupils learn to word process, to express their ideas in written form and to edit and make changes in order to improve their work. There are examples of pupils having illustrated their work using both clip art and imported graphics. They use the computer to help them to search for information which will support their learning in other subjects. In a very good, Year 3 history lesson, the teacher allowed the pupils to use the Internet to search for information on the Greek God Hermes. One pupil was able to log on rapidly and to use a search engine to gain access to information sites. When one pupil encountered a site selling a famous brand of scarves, he quickly backtracked and was able to find a more suitable site. The pupil demonstrated a very good level of skill in transferring information from the Internet site to a word document.
114. Although some aspects of measurement through the use of sensors are not covered, mostly the ICT curriculum meets all the current needs of the staff, the subject and the pupils. Pupils greatly enjoy the subject and when required to do so, share amicably. Some of the programs used are there for pupils with special educational needs to give additional reinforcement.
115. The subject is very well led. Whilst the coordinator does not have all the expertise she would like, she is knowledgeable enough and has planned well for the development of the subject. She is well supported by the senior managers and is very positive about developments in the subject.

## MUSIC

116. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are average for the pupils' ages. Pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Activities outside of lessons, such as recorder and guitar groups and for some pupils, violin tuition by a peripatetic teacher, means that a significant minority of pupils achieve good standards in playing instruments and in reading standard notation. The pupils also sing in the school choir and have the opportunity to perform in local music festivals and in the community. Five teachers are involved in running extra curricular classes in music for pupils.
117. In Year 1, pupils learn a variety of songs and hymns that they sing from memory. They use a variety of percussion instruments in their lessons. They learn to name different percussion instruments and develop awareness of different instruments and their sounds. The pupils talk about how they make sounds softly and get louder. In small groups they are able to make a simple sequence of sounds to depict a storm with one child conducting the group. By the end of Year 2 pupils memorise words quickly when learning new songs. In a guessing game they are able to clap the rhythm so others can guess the nursery rhyme. They sing enthusiastically and are beginning to sing in rounds. Pupils are pleased with their achievement and are eager to participate in musical activities.

118. Pupils in Key Stage 2 sing tunefully with clear diction and sustain melodies well. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well into class music lessons so that they make satisfactory progress. In a mixed Year 3 and 4 lesson the pupils are learning to understand how music can create a sound picture. They are aware that the pitch and tempo in the 'Carnival of the Animals' creates images for example slow and low for an elephant or quick and light for birds. Year 5 pupils are able to evaluate their singing of 'The Banks of the Ohio' and suggest improvements by singing in a louder more lively manner, also suggesting it would be more effective sung in rounds with another class. By the end of Year 6 pupils are able to sing in rounds, singing clearly. They perform well in assemblies and understand about presenting performances to different audiences. The development of pupils' composition skills progresses but there are too few opportunities for them to keep a record of their compositions in written form or to record their learning about different musicians.
119. The quality of teaching in the few lessons observed was good overall. Teachers plan their lessons carefully. Very good teaching was observed in Year 1 when the lesson structure was good. There was very good intervention by the teacher to move learning on so the pupils made very good progress. The teacher gave pupils the opportunity to work in small groups and then to demonstrate their compositions of a storm to the rest of the class. Another good strategy seen in Year 5 was when the teacher provided a good role model by singing and playing his guitar. He then used the pupils who are learning guitar to accompany the others who were learning a new song. This helped the performance of the class. One pupil has been identified as gifted in music and extra curricular music lessons provide additional learning opportunities to support this talent.
120. Management of the subject is good. The school has completed a scheme of work and the subject leader who has very good subject knowledge. She is highly motivated and enthusiastic, gives support to teachers and is having a positive impact on their confidence to teach music. She has taught some staff to play the guitar. Teachers keep records to assess against music objectives for each year but all pupils have the same learning objectives regardless of attainment. The subject leader has identified that teachers need something more precise so they know what level individual pupils are working at. Resources for music are adequate but well used. The classrooms, particularly for Years 3-6 are small for the numbers and size of the pupils. This creates difficulties when pupils are practising performances in the cramped classroom space.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

121. Pupils' confidence in the water and their ability to swim are very positive outcomes from the provision of the school. Standards in swimming are above average. No judgement can be made about the other aspects of physical education as no lessons other than swimming were observed.
122. The school has its own outdoor heated pool, which is used only during the second half of the summer term. Therefore there is a heavy emphasis on its use during this time. Although the resource is old and the facilities are not modern, the pool is well maintained and the water is warm so it can be used in all weathers. The provision is supplemented by visits to a local full size pool to encourage pupils to achieve distance swimming.
123. All pupils from Reception to Year 6 are confident in the water. The majority of pupils in Years 3 and above can swim 10 metres and all pupils swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6. They swim on both their back and their front. They can push and glide, and happily put their face under the water and learn to breathe correctly while swimming. All pupils including those with special educational needs make good progress



124. Specialist teaching instructors are employed and the quality of teaching is good. There is a clear progression of skills as pupils move through the school and individual records are kept so that future sessions build on previous achievements. A good range of varied activities relevant to the age of the pupils encourages pupils to try different techniques and stay on task throughout the session. Good attention is given to safety aspects.
125. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their learning; they are eager to enter the pool and work hard throughout. They find it fun to swim in the rain. Behaviour is very good.
126. The curriculum is planned effectively so that all aspects of the subject are given appropriate time throughout the year. A good range of extra curricular activities, which are very well attended, enhances it. Both boys and girls participate fully in clubs such as football, rounders and gymnastics. There are some opportunities to play competitive sport in local tournaments. There is good community support by professional players for both soccer and tag rugby. In discussion a high proportion of boys and girls indicated that they like this subject.
127. Teacher expertise is enhanced through the involvement of a specialist dance teacher and an advanced skills teacher. Very good teaching enables older pupils to use physical tasks to develop their problem solving and co-operative skills very well and this makes a very good contribution to their social development. Teachers make some assessments but these are generic and do not easily guide teachers to plan for a progression of skills within each aspect. The co-ordinator manages the subject effectively.
128. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Curriculum planning is in place and some assessment criteria are beginning to guide the provision.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

129. During the inspection, four lessons were observed. However, from a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, and by talking to teachers and pupils, there is evidence that standards in religious education are similar to the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by Years 2 and 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning about the beliefs and practices of the Christian faith and have developed some limited knowledge of the major world religions.
130. In Year 2, pupils understand the main celebrations of the Christian calendar, such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest. They have a secure knowledge of the many of the most significant events in the life of Jesus and can understand the meaning of the story of the loaves and fishes. In Year 2, pupils have good opportunities to reflect upon the importance of friends, family and the community in their lives and they are encouraged to discuss the rules and choices which they meet in their everyday experience. They have a secure sense of the need for friendship and of making amends after disagreements; they recognise that sharing and caring for others are important. They have been introduced to the idea of different religions but have not at this point gained much knowledge.
131. By Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the main teachings of Christianity and Islam. They are aware of the major symbols of these religions and know about the religious texts associated with them. They have some minor knowledge of the other religions and the fact that they have different teaching but have no clear view of their particular ideas and

tenets of faith. They have opportunities to reflect upon and to discuss the mysteries and questions thrown up by their own experiences and those of others and they recognise the barriers that are sometimes erected by differences in belief and practice. However, a lot of this learning comes during assemblies rather than in specific lessons. In this school, school assemblies make a significant contribution to pupils' learning in the subject.

132. Pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education but this is because in some classes they make good or very good progress whilst in others their progress is limited. Links with subjects such as English are sometimes very good as in a lesson which involved the use of a storyboard to retell a story from the Bible.
133. The quality of teaching in religious education is a mixture of good and satisfactory. However, many pupils say that they do not like the subject because even the discussions are boring. Often this is because the themes chosen are not linked closely to their personal experience. Teachers subject knowledge is variable and teachers certainly give different emphasis to the subject in different classes. In some there is very little recorded work and the pupils cannot clearly recount what work they have covered. However, where teachers teach the subject well, they high expectations of their pupils and seek to encourage them to relate moral and spiritual messages to their own lives. They provide pupils with appropriate challenges and listen to pupils' views with respect.
134. Resources for religious education are satisfactory but there are too few opportunities for pupils to visit places of worship other than churches.
135. The religious education co-ordinator has developed a satisfactory policy and scheme of work to meet the needs of the locally agreed syllabus and to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' learning. Assessment in religious education is conducted informally at present and the co-ordinator has limited opportunities to monitor progress in the subject across the school. There is no levelled and annotated portfolio of pupils' work to ensure that all teachers are aware of common expectations and therefore, progress is uneven.