

# ERRATUM

**Inspection Number – 248124 – Lincoln Manor Leas Junior School - URN: 120437**

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# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MANOR LEAS JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Lincoln

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120437

Headteacher: Mr. R. I. M. Palethorpe

Reporting inspector: Ms B Pollard  
OFSTED Inspector Number: 1838

Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> February 2003

Inspection number: 248123

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hykeham Road LINCOLN
Postcode:	LN6 8BE
Telephone number:	01522 881370
Fax number:	01522 881371
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Leila Barron
Date of previous inspection:	December 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1838	Ms. B. Pollard	Registered inspector	History	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9306	Mrs B. Moore	Lay inspector	None	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
4109	Mr J. Barley	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23740	Mrs W. Gibney	Team inspector	Educational inclusion Science Information and communication technology	How well is the school led and managed?
19916	Mrs D. Kerr	Team inspector	Special educational needs Art and design Design and technology Religious education	None
11419	Mrs J. Underwood	Team inspector	English as an additional language English Music	None

The inspection contractor was:

Lincolnshire Education Associates

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Manor Leas is a larger than average junior school in a residential area on the south side of the city of Lincoln. There are 353 children on roll aged seven to eleven years. Most transfer to this school from two local infant schools, one of which shares the site with the junior school. The school is popular with parents and some choose to send their children to Manor Leas from other parts of the city. A significant number of children travel to school by public transport. There are 31 children entitled to free meals which is nine per cent of the school's population. This figure is below the national average. Most children are white and British with 12 children (three per cent) from other ethnic groups. Only five children (one per cent) have English as an additional language and as none of these are at the early stages of learning English the school does not need to make any special provision. There are 38 children on the school's register of special educational needs (11 per cent) of whom two have statements. These figures are below the national average. As the catchment area is wide and diverse, the abilities of children vary but are average, overall. Children move to various comprehensive schools in the city at age eleven. There are close links with two secondary specialist schools for the arts and language and the school is involved in an eco-friendly initiative.

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

Manor Leas Junior is a highly successful school with many strengths. By the time they leave, children achieve very good standards in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and religious education. Standards are good in most other National Curriculum subjects because of the very good quality of teaching. Leadership is excellent and those with management roles fulfil their responsibilities very effectively. The school has high expectations and usually meets, or exceeds, the demanding targets for improvement it sets itself. It provides a very good quality education underpinned by values which are shared with parents and which permeate all aspects of the school's life. It provides very good value for money.

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

- Standards in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology are well above the national average. They are also very good in religious education and the games aspect of physical education. In art, design and technology and history standards are good.
- The quality of teaching is very good and has a very positive impact on the standards achieved and the progress made by children.
- The leadership of the headteacher, deputy and senior management team is excellent. There is a very committed staff team and an excellent governing body who provide very good support for the senior managers.
- Children have very good attitudes to work and enthusiasm for school. Their participation in the many activities available demonstrates their enthusiasm for learning. Relationships and behaviour are very good.
- The rich, balanced and relevant curriculum motivates children to reach high standards. A particular strength is the links made between a variety of subjects. It is enhanced by a very wide range of out-of-class activities and visits to places of interest.
- Children's personal development is very good. Children leave the school as mature, active learners who are very well prepared for the next stage of education. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education makes a significant contribution to children's personal development.

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

- There needs to be greater consistency in the quality of target setting and the marking of children's work to help children improve their learning even further.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in December 1997. The role of the subject leader has been strengthened and teachers are clear about their responsibilities for the development of their subject. They liaise with the curriculum co-ordinator to produce an annual action plan as a result of an evaluation of where improvements are needed. This contributes to the school's development plan where priorities are determined. The subject leaders influence other teachers by providing advice and support, monitoring the work of children, classroom observations and encouraging attendance at courses. Schemes of work for art, information technology and music have been introduced. Assessment criteria for information and

communication technology are ready to be piloted. Children, and their parents, are involved in setting targets for learning although there is still work to be done in making the usefulness of these more consistent. As part of this aspect, the school's development plan highlights the marking of children's work as an area for improvement.

In addition to addressing the key issues from the last inspection there have also been improvements in the quality of teaching and standards in some subjects. There were no lessons in this inspection where teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved and English and mathematics have been given even greater priority with the successful introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Religious education standards are very good when compared with the goals outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in design and technology, and information and communication technology have also improved as they now exceed those typically found in most schools. Standards in the games element of physical education are well above what most other school achieve as both girls and boys have considerable success in competitive sports. Links with two local secondary specialist schools mean that French has been introduced into the Year 6 curriculum and the provision for the arts has been strengthened because the school can call on a wider range of expertise. The spiritual aspect of the curriculum is now very good and matches the other aspects of moral, social and cultural development. The accommodation and facilities have been improved.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	A	B	B
mathematics	A	A	B	A
science	A	A	A	A*

**Key**

well above average      A

above average            B

average                    C

below average            D

well below average      E

*(A\* means the school is in the top five percent nationally for similar schools.)*

Children start in Year 3 with a wide range of abilities but, overall, are broadly average. Apart from a slight dip in results in National Curriculum tests in 2002, attainment at age eleven is well above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards have been maintained in all subjects since the last inspection and have improved in information and communication technology, design and technology and religious education.

In 2002, results in National Curriculum tests dipped slightly English and mathematics. This is because there were twice as many children with special educational needs in Year 6 and more exclusions than usual for aggressive behaviour. Nevertheless, last year's Year 6 made good progress during their time in the juniors and their results, overall, in English and mathematics were still above the national average. Results in science remained very good as they were well above the national average. When compared with schools with similar characteristics (based on the numbers entitled to free meals) standards were above average for English, well above average for mathematics and very high in science. The value added to children's performance while in the juniors is very good. Trends over time show this school is keeping up with the national trend for improvement.

The findings from this inspection show that standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science amongst the current Year 6 are, again, well above average. The school has set itself challenging targets for the 2003 national tests with 88 per cent of children expected to reach level 4, in English and 85 per cent in mathematics. Over a third of the year group are expected to reach the higher levels of the National Curriculum. They are on target to achieve this. Progress, overall, is very good.

Standards in the other National Curriculum subjects are also high. In information and communication technology, standards are very good; in art, design and technology and history they are good. In geography and music they are in line with standards found in most other schools. The main focus of activity in physical education during the inspection was games and attainment in this aspect is very good; the school does well in competitive sports. Standards in religious education are also very good when compared with the targets set out



in the locally agreed syllabus. Children have particularly good skills in expressing their opinions succinctly and carrying out investigations independently. They make links across broad aspects of learning which makes their learning more secure, for example, the ability to view the world from another's point of view helps them to identify bias in texts they read. They make every effort to produce work of a high quality.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children are enthusiastic about learning and establish a very good work ethic.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good. Most children can be trusted to respect the feelings of others and understand the consequences of their actions.
Personal development and relationships	Children establish very good relationships with other children and staff. They grow into mature, reliable individuals.
Attendance	Attendance is very good; it is well above the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	N/A	N/A	Very 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.*

There were no lessons where teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. In nine out of ten lessons it was good, very good or excellent; in half of these it was very good or excellent. It is a strength of the school and plays a significant part in the high standards achieved by children. Teachers' plans, organisation and classroom management are very good, overall. They know what children need to learn and use a variety of methods to guide children to the targets set for them in the National Curriculum. They are especially good at linking learning across subjects through a variety of interesting activities as part of a project and this helps to reinforce children's knowledge and understanding and make the work relevant. Assessments of what children can do and what they need to do next are carried out regularly but target setting for new learning is not always of a consistent quality. Marking is used effectively to help individual children improve their performance in some classes but not in all. Provision for children with special needs and those who learn faster than others is very good. They are taught in different groups for literacy and numeracy so that those who need it benefit from additional classroom help and smaller numbers while the higher attainers can move more quickly onto the higher levels of learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is very good. It is relevant, balanced and enriched by a very wide range of out-of-class activities. Links between subjects are particularly good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision is made for children with learning difficulties. The support assistants make a significant and positive impact on the very good progress made by these children.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Although there are a few children with English as an additional language, none of them require special help with English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision is made for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and personal development is a strength of the school. Excellent daily acts of worship contribute positively to this aspect.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are high standards in the welfare of children. They receive very good support and guidance. Although assessment is good, overall, the aspect of target setting and marking needs to be more consistent.

Parents provide very good support for the school and the partnership is strong because of effective communication. They contribute to the high standards achieved by children through the home/school links.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent leadership ensures that there is clear direction for the school's development. Staff with management responsibilities fulfil their roles very effectively and there is a very good team spirit. The school's aims and values are reflected in all work.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are extremely successful in acting as a 'critical friend' to the school. They are not afraid to ask pertinent questions and they have excellent knowledge about the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school monitors very effectively the impact of teaching on children's learning and links this to the performance management process.
The strategic use of resources	Resource provision is very good and this enhances the curriculum and the quality of lessons. Grants are used wisely for their intended purposes and the school seeks for best value as it evaluates the effectiveness of purchases, compares its performance with other schools and constantly strives to add value to children's experiences.

The accommodation is very good and classrooms are spacious. There are several areas of school put to very good use for music, computers, special needs provision and environmental education. Space is tight when all the children are in the hall for assemblies and at lunchtimes but the organisation is very efficient. Teachers and support staff are matched well to the demands of the curriculum and resource provision is generous and of a high quality.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school has high expectations</li> <li>• Children make good progress</li> <li>• The school is led and managed well</li> <li>• Behaviour is good</li> <li>• Children become mature and responsible</li> <li>• Teaching is good</li> <li>• Children enjoy school</li> <li>• Parents are comfortable approaching the school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were no statistically significant issues raised by parents</li> </ul>

Inspectors endorse the positive comments made by parents. The school enjoys mutually supportive relationships with most parents. The inspection findings do not support the view of a small minority of parents that the school concentrates too much on literacy and numeracy at the expense of other subjects.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children enter the school with a wide range of abilities but, overall, are broadly average as shown by the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum results from the two infant schools from which most of them transfer. Apart from a slight dip in results in National Curriculum tests in 2002, attainment at age eleven is well above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards have been at least been maintained since the last inspection in all subjects. They have improved in English, mathematics and science, information and communication technology, design and technology and religious education.
2. In 2002, results in National Curriculum tests were slightly lower than in the previous two years in English and mathematics. There is evidence to show that there were more children in this year group who joined the school in Year 3 with lower ability. There were twice as many children with special educational needs and, and in 2002, more exclusions than usual for aggressive behaviour, all of them boys in Year 6. Nevertheless, last year's Year 6 made good progress during their time in the juniors and their results, overall, in English and mathematics were still above the national average. Results in science remained high and were well above the national average. When compared with schools with similar characteristics (based on the numbers entitled to free meals) standards were above average for English, well above average for mathematics and very high in science. The value added to children's performance while in the juniors is very good. Trends over time show this school is keeping up with the national trend for improvement.
3. The findings from this inspection show that standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science among the current Year 6 are, again, well above average. The school has set itself challenging targets for the 2003 national tests with 88 per cent of children expected to reach level 4, in English and 85 per cent in mathematics. Over a third of the year group are expected to reach the higher levels of the National Curriculum. They are on target to achieve this.
4. The school has many successful strategies to improve standards. Children are divided into ability groups across each year group (sets) for daily literacy and numeracy lessons. Additional teachers have been employed in Years 4, 5 and 6 to create four ability sets and the Year 3 teachers have classroom assistants to provide extra support. This support benefits the slower learners as they are taught in smaller groups and it also helps to extend the faster learners as the pace and challenge of their work is increased.
5. Standards in the other National Curriculum subjects are also high. In information and communication technology, standards are very good; in art, design and technology and history they are good. In geography and music they are in line with standards found in most other schools. The main focus of activity in physical education during the inspection was games and attainment in this aspect is very good. This is borne out by the success the school enjoys in competitive sports where both girls' and boys' teams do well. Standards in religious education are also very good when compared with the targets set out in the locally agreed syllabus.
6. A particular strength is the links made across the curriculum so that children consolidate their basic skills learning in a relevant way. Children use their very good literacy, numeracy and

information and communication technology skills in other subjects. The high standards of speaking and listening enable children to engage in thoughtful discussions in religious education and personal, social and health education lessons where they show the ability to make points sensitively and coherently. Science, history and geography are enhanced by the way children carry out research, surveys and investigations using computers to produce pamphlets, reports, graphs and illustrations. The project books produced at the end of a programme of study provide an extremely attractive record of the work done and children are, rightly, proud of their efforts.

7. Overall, children make very good progress. The very good quality of teaching and support from classroom assistants make a very positive impact on the rates of progress made by various groups of children. All children are included in all aspects of learning and their needs are met through effective classroom organisation and management that allows the high attaining children to participate in more demanding, independent work while the lower attainers are provided with smaller steps to take to reach goals, and coaching in smaller groups. The school has plans to improve the setting of targets that help children move through the levels of the National Curriculum. Targets for sets and year groups are well established but the quality of targets set for individuals varies and some are better than others because they are more specific and reviewed more regularly.
8. Children with special educational needs are fully included in all the school's activities and make very good progress towards the targets set for them. Their progress is particularly evident in literacy and numeracy lessons where they are taught in smaller sets with children of similar attainment. In these and in many other lessons they receive additional support from classroom assistants. Very good support is provided for children with physical and medical disabilities, enabling them to achieve well and take full part in school life.

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

9. At the time of the last inspection children's attitudes to their school were judged to be very good. This high standard has been maintained. Children are very enthusiastic about their school. They are keen to be involved and to participate in the many activities and opportunities available to them. This enthusiasm is a strength of the school. The very good relationships established between children and adults and the way children relate to one another is encouraged through the excellent lessons in personal, social and health education, which are another strength of the school.
10. Staff are very good role models. Their relationships with one another set a very good example and reflect well the aims of the school. Generally, children behave very well showing consideration for others. During the inspection, staff dealt with one incident of unacceptable behaviour very effectively with a minimum of disruption. Children respond very well to one another, both at play and in the classroom. They collaborate well, as seen in a science lesson, where they worked together to predict the outcomes of their fair testing. Social inclusion is given a high priority in the school. Every effort is made to ensure all children are given equal opportunities to do their best through groupings by ability for learning, extra-curricular activities and provision for disabilities.
11. The personal development of children is very good. They undertake various tasks which help in the day-to-day life of the school. They have a strong awareness of the needs of others and because of this have raised funds for Macmillan Nurses and several other charities.

12. Through lessons in citizenship they already have a strong understanding of laws and, in a lesson seen, were able to discuss in a very mature manner whether children should be indoors by a certain time and whether they must eat fruit. They had the confidence to make amendments to the laws and then to vote on them. They are very courteous to visitors and happy to talk about their life in school. This high standard of personal development ensures that children develop respect for the feelings of others and this reflects the very good ethos of the school.
13. Children are happy to come to school and this is reflected in the attendance, which is well above the national average. The school does all it can to maintain this good level of attendance. Children arrive at school punctually and the school day starts very promptly.

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

14. The quality of teaching was a strength of the school at the last inspection and it is even better now as in this inspection no lessons were judged unsatisfactory. In nine out of ten lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good or better; in half of these it was very good or excellent. It is very good, overall, and is one of the reasons why standards at the school are so high. The overwhelming majority of parents showed in the survey carried out prior to the inspection, that they are happy with the standard of teaching.
15. The strengths of teaching are in the detailed lesson plans that outline clearly what the class, or set, is expected to learn from the lesson. These learning objectives are shared with children at the start of a session and referred to again at the end so that children can judge how well they have achieved. Instructions and explanations are outlined with care so children know how to go about their tasks. Teachers are very skilful at questioning children to guide their thinking and assess their understanding. They help children to express their thoughts and feelings articulately and give time for children to respond. Activities are organised very efficiently and children understand the weekly and daily routines such as the 'carousel' in literacy that ensures all children experience all elements of literacy during the week. This helps to make children independent and means lessons are, generally, conducted at a brisk pace so that no time is wasted. Resources are attractive and visits to places of interest help to motivate children so they are keen to learn. Classrooms are orderly and displays are of a very high quality. They are used to celebrate children's achievements and support learning as many are reference points for work in literacy and numeracy. The environment for learning throughout the school sends a clear message about expectations for standards of presentation and children respond positively as shown by the excellent quality of their project work folders for subjects such as geography and history.
16. Teachers are confident and have a very good knowledge of most of the subjects they teach. Basic skills teaching in literacy and numeracy is very good as shown by the high standards reached by children. Teachers are especially good at making links between subjects to reinforce learning and provide opportunities to apply skills in various situations. This makes learning relevant as, for example, children studying the Romans will tour Lincoln to view Roman remains, write from the point of view of a Roman soldier awaiting battle, draw and make Roman artefacts, compare their childhood with that of a Roman child and use their research skills to find out information from a variety of sources, including the internet. The effectiveness of these methods of teaching helps children to practise their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills across a broad range of activities and they benefit from the opportunities as learning becomes more secure.

17. Management of children is usually good although there were one or two occasions when children showed signs of restlessness. This was when tasks were too easy for some of them and they needed more demanding work. The need for a teacher in such instances to keep stopping the class to call individuals to order slows the pace. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to make relevant teaching points such as correcting spellings in literacy sessions. Assessments of what children can do and what they need to do next are good, overall, but could be improved if the quality of target setting and marking was consistent in every class. Some children, most notably in Year 3, have very specific targets for learning, based on their individual needs, that are reviewed regularly and updated. In some other classes or sets, every child has the same targets and there were examples seen where children had already achieved them. The quality of marking can vary. In some children's books, comments are general and children are not always responding to requests to improve punctuation or handwriting. A very good example of the positive impact of good marking and target setting was seen with a Year 5 child who had responded to teacher's requests for more examples of adverbs, who could explain what her targets were and was proud to display her improvement. Homework is given which relates to the work done in classrooms and therefore helps to extend the work in school. Parents provide very good support for the school and most children do their homework.
18. The teaching of children with special educational needs is very good. In literacy and numeracy they are taught in small sets so that teachers and the very effective teaching assistants can give them more individual attention. Each child has an individual education plan drawn up by the special educational needs co-ordinator and the class teacher. The targets set are precise and help teachers identify the next small step in learning, particularly in literacy. Once or twice a week, small groups of children are withdrawn from class lessons for specialist teaching. These lessons are brisk and purposeful and help children catch up with their reading and writing. As a result of the extra help they receive, children achieve very well. The higher attaining children are also catered for very successfully as they are put into sets for literacy and numeracy where more demands are made of them and they are expected to work hard, fast and independently. In other subjects, the faster learners are given extended activities that provide more challenge. The care taken to ensure that all children, whatever their needs, are provided with the same quality of experience shows serious attention is paid to equality of opportunity and all children are included in all school activities wherever possible. There are no significant differences in learning between girls and boys or ethnic minorities and they all make very good progress.

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

19. The school provides a rich, balanced and relevant curriculum, which promotes high standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and meets statutory requirements. It is enhanced by a very wide range of extra-curricular activities; these include a very good range of sporting activities but also include a book club, an art club, a mathematics club for high achievers and provision for music. Large numbers of children attend the clubs and there is a waiting list for some. Very good links between subjects ensure that learning is relevant in a realistic context so that children are able to see a purpose for what they are learning. For instance, when doing a topic on climate and weather the children design, make and evaluate a land yacht for design technology. The school has looked at all the national schemes of work for different subjects and has adapted them to make the subjects more relevant to the children and their experiences.
20. The basic skills of literacy and mathematics are taught very effectively because of the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Children are

placed into ability groups for English and mathematics throughout the school and within these groups different work is provided for different abilities. The makeup of the groups is reviewed each half-term so children can change groups, if necessary. This ensures that all children are able to access the learning at an appropriate level and challenge. Children with special educational needs are given full access to the curriculum. In some cases they work on special programmes, for example in literacy, and teachers provide special equipment for children with disabilities so they are included in all activities. In many lessons, children are supported well by classroom assistants who adapt the task for their needs. The school is aware that taking children out of lessons for specialist teaching means they may miss important work in other subjects, and teachers plan the timetables carefully to ensure that this does not happen.

21. The programme for personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good and most of the teaching sessions seen in classes were excellent. Children in Year 4 were seen discussing laws and why they are needed; in Year 5 they were seen empathising with characters in stories in role-play and in Year 6 they debated the role of pressure groups and how people can influence decision-making. Sex education is provided and the children consider problems such as drug awareness through the very full personal, social and health education programme.
22. The school enjoys mutually supportive links with the local community. Liaison with partner infant schools helps children make the transition from infant to juniors. Links with other schools in the area, are very effective, in particular with the two specialist secondary schools who provide teachers for French and instrumental tuition. The school was involved in a joint production of *Bugsy Malone* with one of them. Good curriculum links are made with other local schools, for instance in mathematics, where all the local co-ordinators meet regularly to discuss common issues. Educational visits and visitors to the school enhance provision even further. Children are regular visitors at the local churches and at the cathedral and the vicar regularly leads acts of worship in school. Visits to local museums and old halls; visitors to school and a residential visit to North Yorkshire help to give meaning to the learning. The children are often involved in raising money for local charities such as a local children's respite centre or a local homeless charity.
23. Provision for children's personal development including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and these are strengths of the school.
24. Children's spiritual development is very good. Assemblies and collective acts of worship make an excellent contribution to this area. Children enter the hall quietly, they listen to the music that is playing and they are given time for thinking and reflection. The music and hymns are chosen with care to create the right mood and the children's singing reflects the mood of the assembly.
25. The programme for personal, social and health education also helps promote spirituality. Children are encouraged, through the varied programme provided, to think about their own values and beliefs and to reflect on their experiences. In religious education children are given an insight into other beliefs and values and are taught to respect what others think and believe.
26. The school also provides children with the chance to experience art appreciation and music in many forms including string quartets and orchestras.
27. Moral development is very good. The school teaches children right from wrong and encourages them to consider the consequences of their actions. Discussions in lessons show that children have a mature understanding of justice and that trying to act responsibly sometimes presents a

dilemma. The school's rules, which are consistently applied, encourage children to think about their behaviour in the context of the school as a community. Relationships throughout the school are very good and the adults in the school provide very good role models for the children.

28. Social development is also very good. Children are given lots of opportunities to work together, to share experiences and to work co-operatively. They understand and accept the school rules thus ensuring that the school operates as a cohesive unit with everyone working to the same ends. Children are given increasing responsibility as they move through the school beginning with simple tasks such as taking the registers to the office and eventually taking responsibility for such activities as operating the overhead projector in assemblies or being part of the eco-club with responsibilities for recycling.
29. Children's cultural development is also very good. The children are given a very good insight into the values and faiths of other people through the religious education programme and develop an awareness of other countries and times through their studies in geography and history. Due consideration is given to the pluralist nature of society when purchasing new books and the displays around the school are carefully planned to ensure that they reflect the many cultures of the world. Children learn all about their local culture by visiting Lincoln for various educational visits. The cathedral is used as an inspiration for art and history and the city provides a very good source for both history and geography. Children are given many opportunities to listen to, and appreciate, music and the arts, through the very good use of music in assemblies to the visiting musicians artists and theatre groups.

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

30. At the time of the last inspection, the care of children was judged to be good. This has improved as it is now very good. Staff know, and understand, the children very well. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring children's welfare are very good. Effective procedures are in place to ensure that all the related matters of health, safety, security and first aid are dealt with to a high standard.
31. There are good procedures in place for the monitoring of children's academic performance although the school has plans to improve this aspect. Assessments of what children can do and what they need to do next in literacy and numeracy are identified in curriculum plans. Tests, given at regular intervals in the school year, help teachers to plot the progress of groups of children and ensure they are proceeding through the National Curriculum levels at an appropriate rate. There is some inconsistency in the quality of marking of children's work and the setting of targets for individuals. At its best, marking identifies weaknesses in children's performance and provides good guidance on how to improve it. Where it is less successful, comments are too general and children do not follow-up suggestions so they do not improve, for example, their writing or spelling. Target setting, which helps children to take the small steps necessary to achieve the various levels of the National Curriculum, also varies in quality. In some classes, all children have the same targets regardless of whether they have reached them; in other classes, most notably in Year 3, targets are specific to the needs of individuals and they are regularly reviewed with new ones set once the previous ones have been attained. Where marking and targets are very clear, children are much more enthusiastic about improving their work as a discussion in Year 5 demonstrated.
32. Through the school's excellent programme for personal, social and health education children receive very effective personal support and guidance. The strong moral ethos, which is part of



the daily life of the school, ensures good and caring behaviour, which is carefully monitored. The very effective support provided by staff makes a positive contribution to children's well being, and enables them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered. Procedures for supporting children's personal development are very good. Teaching staff know the children well and very good support is given to enhance children's overall development.

33. Children with special educational needs are identified quickly. Teachers monitor their progress carefully and give additional support tailored to meet their needs. They review their progress regularly with parents and adapt individual education plans to show what they need to learn next.

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

34. Since the last inspection the good relationship with parents has strengthened and it is now very good. Parents spoken to during the inspection gave a very positive picture of the school. Of the returned questionnaires in the parental survey carried out prior to the inspection, the vast majority of parents said the school has high expectations and that the teaching is good. Parents are also happy that their children like school and they feel the school is well led and managed. Overall, the parents have very positive views of the school.
35. The school has very good links with parents to consolidate and improve children's learning. The majority of parents approve of the many extra-curricular activities that are available for their children. The school appreciates the very good involvement it has with parents; it values highly the contribution parents make to their children's learning both at home and through their help in classrooms.
36. Parents of all children with special educational needs receive good information about their child's progress. The school offers regular opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress and, if necessary, to meet with outside specialists involved with their child's learning.
37. The quality of information for parents is good. Reports keep parents well informed about their child's progress. As well as highlighting a child's strengths, they also give an indication of what he or she should do next to improve. The school prospectus is a very well presented document that gives parents a clear picture of the day-to-day life of the school. Newsletters are clear and helpful. They keep parents well informed and give them many opportunities to share in the life their children enjoy in school.
38. The Friends of the School Association are very supportive. The funds they have raised have produced many extras to enrich the children's education, including the development of the music room. The events sponsored by the association combine both fund-raising and social events. The work of this very active group enhances the facilities and resources available to children in the school.

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

39. The headteacher, supported by the deputy, senior managers and governors, provides the school with excellent leadership. He has a strong and clear vision, and commands the respect and trust of staff, governors and parents. He is determined to ensure that the school not only achieves high standards in statutory tests but is also committed to maintaining a broad and balanced

curriculum where subjects such as art and music are given due prominence. This is reflected in the school aims, which place great emphasis on the values that underpin the work of the school. The headteacher is supported effectively by a highly competent deputy, who volunteers with enthusiasm to take on a range of important responsibilities. Together, they are a strong partnership and have a very good understanding of the school's standards and the quality of provision.

40. Since the last inspection, the role of the subject co-ordinators has developed well. All staff make a positive contribution to the school's very effective management. Subject co-ordinators have been involved in monitoring standards in their subjects, through scrutiny of work, monitoring of planning and the observation of lessons. Out of necessity, the high priority given to implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has meant that the focus has been on these areas of the curriculum, but other subjects are now being monitored on a rolling programme.
41. The school's values are clear, with great emphasis on the personal and social development of all children. Equality of opportunity is taken very seriously and children are encouraged to respect, value and support each other. There is a strong emphasis on team spirit that is reflected in the commitment to sporting events, where the school achieves particular success. Staff actively promote a wide range of extra-curricular activities to ensure that all children have the opportunity to be involved. Care is taken to ensure that all children have access to provision; for example, a child with her arm in plaster was using the computer to word-process her writing and the organisation of classes in Year 4 has been adapted to accommodate a child who cannot climb stairs.
42. Governors provide an excellent strategic overview of the work of the school and fulfil their statutory responsibilities very well. The headteacher values the way in which governors act as the school's 'critical friend'; for example, when the statutory test results dipped in 2002, he had to explain the reasons for this to the governing body. Various committees meet regularly and governors confirm that they are encouraged to visit the school at any time. The curriculum committee is particularly active in monitoring the quality of education provided. Governors are committed and hardworking. They are knowledgeable about the school and fully involved in securing improvement.
43. The school development plan identifies priorities over at least a two-year period and provides a comprehensive framework for improvement. The school's financial planning is very good. The headteacher is extremely resourceful and creative in the way he manages the accommodation to make the best use of the learning environment. Spending is linked to educational priorities and governors are fully aware of the principles of best value, which have been recorded in a policy statement and are used effectively in making decisions. Financial control and administration are also very good. The school is currently implementing new software to support the administration. Resources are very well deployed, and where specific grants have been used for particular initiatives, the funding has been spent wisely.
44. The match of teachers and support staff to ensure the effective delivery of the curriculum is good. Teachers are well deployed and teaching assistants ensure that children with special educational needs have the necessary support to access the curriculum. There are excellent induction arrangements for newly qualified teachers, which include mentoring, observation of other teachers, visits to other schools and local authority support from advanced skills teachers.
45. The provision for children with special educational needs is managed efficiently. Government recommendations for children with special educational needs are fully implemented and all the

necessary paperwork is in place. Statutory requirements with regard to statements of special educational needs are fully met. The co-ordinator provides valuable support to teachers and manages effectively the liaison with specialist teachers, support assistants and outside agencies. Some teachers are better than others at liaising with their classroom support assistants over children's progress in lessons. There are examples of very good practice in Year 3, where teachers and assistants keep detailed notes of progress and keep each other fully informed of how well these children are doing and what they need to learn next. Funding for special needs is used well to give children good quality support.

46. Although the adequacy of the accommodation is very good, the design of the building has posed particular challenges for the organisation of the school. The school has procured a mobile classroom to provide additional teaching space for groups of children and classrooms are large and airy. Teachers make excellent use of the space, and although the hall is rather small to accommodate the whole school and has to be used to circulate from one area of the building to the other, this does not cause particular difficulties because of efficient organisation. There are plans to develop the accommodation further to resolve this problem if funding can be secured. The school's learning resources are very good. Curriculum co-ordinators consider the school to be very well resourced and there has been a firm commitment to maintaining momentum for the development of information and communication technology. To this end, it is intended to have an additional computer network in the school when the old computers are replaced.

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

47. The school needs to:
- Ensure greater consistency in the quality of the setting of targets for individuals to bring all classes up to the standards of the highest level in school. In order to achieve this there is need to:
    - a. review the way targets are set for individuals in the context of the school's assessment policy;
    - b. ensure that targets set for individuals are specific to their needs and reviewed regularly;
    - c. improve the marking of children's work so that it provides effective guidance to help children make progress.

*(Paragraphs: 7, 17, 31, 54, 60, 62)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	59
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

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

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	24	25	6	0	0	0
Percentage	7	41	42	10	0	0	0

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

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

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	355
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	31

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	Y3– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	38

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

<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	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

### *Attendance*

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%
School data	4.2
National comparative data	5.4

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	0.1
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 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	54	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	39	44	52
	Girls	36	32	40
	Total	75	76	92
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (90)	79 (91)	96 (99)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	42	41	47
	Girls	33	29	34
	Total	75	70	81
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (90)	73 (92)	84 (96)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

### Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
345	6	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0

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

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

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y3– Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25:1
Average class size	31

#### **Education support staff: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	82

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.2

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2002
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	£
Total income	652420
Total expenditure	664150
Expenditure per pupil	1743
Balance brought forward from previous year	72000
Balance carried forward to next year	60270

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	357
Number of questionnaires returned	195

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	39	4	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	51	46	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	49	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	54	9	1	0
The teaching is good.	52	46	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	49	14	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	38	4	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	35	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	30	54	12	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	57	40	1	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	47	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	46	10	3	8



## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **ENGLISH**

48. The previous inspection judged standards in English at age eleven to be above average. They have improved as they are now well above average and children achieve very well. Most children are on course to reach level 4 in the National Curriculum with a third likely to reach the higher levels. Very good progress is made in all aspects of English, reading writing, speaking and listening. This includes children with educational needs who also make very good progress, because tasks are appropriately matched to their needs and learning assistants provide positive support and guidance. There are no children who need extra help with English as an additional language.
49. Standards in speaking and listening are well above average. Children listen attentively in assemblies and discussions, not only to their teachers but also to their peers. Throughout the school, the emphasis is on encouraging children to think about their work, and to express themselves well, using interesting, and grammatically accurate, language. In lessons they have many opportunities to express and develop their ideas and opinions, confident that they will be listened to and their contribution valued. By the time children reach Year 6 they have become confident, articulate speakers. Younger children enjoy using interesting adjectives to describe some of the animals in 'James and the Giant Peach'. Children in Year 4 confidently make suggestions for the continuation of a story about a cat. Those in Year 5 discuss a poem 'Excuses, Excuses' by Gareth Owen, exploring the effective use of language, in particular, opposites. Year 6 children offer well thought-out reasons why children should walk to school. In another lesson children analyse a leaflet titled 'Cycle Trouble' one child suggests the author is "exaggerating the dangers...people always falling off"; another points out the alliteration in some sentences. They are very perceptive about what makes a persuasive argument and highlight many examples. Throughout the curriculum, good examples of discussions of pertinent issues were seen in subjects such as religious education and during circle time, when children sit round in a circle and take turns to speak.
50. Standards reached in reading by the end of Year 6 are well above average. Children are encouraged to read challenging text of different genre. In Year 6 children understand plot, settings, and characterisation. They talk with enthusiasm about different writers and their style and explain their preferences: favourite authors are Roald Dahl, J. K. Rowling and others. The children read confidently, accurately and with expression, holding the listener's interest. They retell the story and predict what might happen. All are avid readers and regularly enjoy a good book. Research skills are well developed as many opportunities arise for finding out information across the curriculum. Children take books home and parents, particularly those of younger ones, are encouraged to write comments in a reading record book. The skills of lower attaining Year 3 children are less secure as they still read from a published reading scheme but, because of effective teaching and support, when they see an unfamiliar word they can break it down and sound it out correctly and so make very good progress and become more fluent.
51. The standards in writing by children in Year 6 are well above average. Opportunities are provided for children to write for different purposes, such as autobiographies, newspaper reports, instructions, imaginative stories, poems, letters and persuasive arguments. Their writing contains extended complex sentences, accurate spelling, appropriate use of punctuation and imaginative use of descriptive vocabulary; for example, in a poem entitled 'Night' phrases such

as “vampire cloak of pitch black”... “harmoniously lulling the illuminating twinkling through the night sky” were used and these examples show the rich quality of the language. Children also produce some mature views when writing persuasive arguments about children using mobile phones, or walking to school. All children take a pride in their work and presentation is consistently neat and attractive. Teachers’ expectations are high and children respond positively. They have many opportunities to use their literacy skills in other subjects of the curriculum such as history, science, design and technology. This helps to ensure consistently high standards across a range of subjects. Younger children also demonstrate a good use of vocabulary although they are still developing skills of spelling and punctuation. Each year builds on the skills acquired in the previous year so that learning is systematic and cumulative.

52. Across the school all aspects of English are enjoyed. Children read with interest and enthusiasm, gaining pleasure from a wide variety of material both fiction and non-fiction. They are confident articulate speakers and willingly express their views about their favourite stories and authors. They enjoy the challenge of producing in-depth arguments about a range of topics. They listen and participate in discussion especially respecting the views of their peers. A book fair is organised on a regular basis. Visiting authors, poets, illustrators and theatre groups all enhance the children’s English curriculum. Information and communication technology skills are used widely for word processing, illustrating work and carrying out research on the Internet. They contribute to the high standards of presentation of work across a range of subjects.
53. The quality of teaching is very good and is a strength. This is an improvement since the last inspection when a small portion of the teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and this motivates the children to succeed. They have very good relationships with the children and this gives the children confidence to respond even if they are unsure their answers are correct. Questions are used very effectively to extend children’s knowledge and to encourage them to share their thoughts and opinions. The plenary at the end of each session is also used very effectively to recap the lesson and check the children’s understanding. Lessons are planned to ensure appropriate challenge that meet the needs of the children in each set. The learning support assistants are used very effectively to provide good support for the children.
54. An area for development is the consistency in marking. When it is good, children are given comments to help them improve; when it is weaker, there are no comments, only the odd tick. Analysis of reading tests and analysis of both the optional and National Curriculum test data is good and is used to highlight weaknesses. However, individual targets for children are a new innovation and is an area for further development. At present, some of the targets are too general and not sufficiently specific to provide the children with an understanding of what they need to do to reach the next level of improvement.
55. The subject leader is a member of the senior management team. She is also the special educational needs and curriculum co-ordinator and so English is given a high status. The organisation of the daily literacy hour, where children are arranged in sets according to their abilities, helps to ensure that children work at appropriate rates. Those needing more support work in smaller groups and their special needs are taken into account. The faster learners increase their work rate as more demands are made of them. The management of the subject is excellent. Standards are monitored and evaluated with rigour.

## **MATHEMATICS**

56. Standards in mathematics are well above the national average and this is an improvement since the last inspection. By the time they leave the school, the children have become very competent and confident mathematicians in all areas of the subject and they make very good progress.
57. In Year 6, children are able to use their considerable knowledge of number to solve a range of problems. They work out the areas of complicated shapes using the formulae for the areas of rectangles and triangles often breaking down the problem into smaller and more manageable pieces. They display a very good knowledge and understanding of negative numbers and use this knowledge to draw shapes involving negative coordinates. They understand about probability and are able to use the probability scale of 0 to 1. There is clear evidence that this high standard of work occurs early in the school with the younger children displaying a confident approach to very challenging work and even children of lower ability are working competently at levels that are at the national average.
58. The quality of teaching is never less than good and is overall very good with one lesson judged excellent. All lessons seen were very well planned and organized. The learning objectives are very precise and shared with the children so that they have a clear idea of what is expected of them. Great emphasis is given to the mental and oral sessions and this provides children with a range of skills that can be used in other areas of the subject. These sessions are taken at a good pace and involve a high degree of mental challenge to which children respond very positively. Children are divided into ability sets for mathematics and in most of the lessons seen different work was also planned for the varying ability groups within the set. Children with special education needs are supported well and they make very good progress. The classroom assistants keep notes on the progress of their groups and these are passed on to the class teachers for the purpose of assessment. An example of this was seen in a Year 6 class; most of the group were working out the area of rectangular shapes using formulae but the higher attainers in the group were having to solve similar problems with much more complicated shapes which involved triangles. In this lesson, as in many others, good emphasis was given to the element of mathematics involving using and applying number. Teachers are very skilled at teaching the basic skills of mathematics and ensuring that new learning builds securely on that which is already known or understood.
59. In the best lessons, teachers take every opportunity to make teaching points thus consolidating learning at every opportunity. Teachers ask very pertinent questions, which draw out children's previous knowledge or challenge them to think about a new problem. Teachers give children every opportunity to use their own methods of solving problems and also make good use of children's mistakes to make valid teaching points and to clear up any confusion. Time is left at the end of lessons to check on what has been learned and very often links the learning to future lessons. Teachers have a very high expectation of both behaviour and work output and the children respond very positively to both. Attitudes and behaviour throughout are very good. Children are keen to answer, show very good concentration and work very well together to solve problems. The teachers give the children clear time parameters to work in and remind them constantly of the time left to ensure that maximum effort is applied all the time. Some marking of books is very good and helps children to improve next time. However, this is not consistent across the school.
60. Targets are set for children and these are attached to the front of their books, which does help children to improve in some areas. However, sometimes, these targets are rather general in nature and need to be more specific. Effective use is made of information and communication technology, for example, when using spreadsheets, and the school is keen to develop a greater use of information technology in the area of mathematics. Mathematics is used well in other subjects such as science and geography.

61. The excellent coordinator, who is very knowledgeable about the subject and has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school's mathematics, accounts for much of the success of mathematics in the school. She has monitored the teaching of every teacher in school and has given feedback to enable teachers to improve. Test results have been analysed and the teaching programme adjusted as a result. There is a constant desire to strive for further improvement. Resources for mathematics are very good. Every child has access to a mathematical pack, which includes a white board and pen, a number square and a number fan among other things. This ensures that no time is lost giving out basic resources and learning time is used efficiently.

## **SCIENCE**

62. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained its high standards in the provision of science and has improved its performance. By the end of Year 6, attainment is well above the national average. Assessment of the work in lessons by the most skilful class teachers ensures that progress within year groups is very good, but this is an area that needs further development to ensure individual children's progress is tracked consistently.
63. Science is delivered through a two-year cycle of topics, for example 'Life Processes and Living Things', and 'Materials'. There is a strong emphasis on scientific enquiry, rather than only the acquisition of knowledge and as children move through the school, they develop their skills and build on previous experiences. The scheme of work is structured to ensure progression. By Year 6, children are confident and independent at posing their own questions and in following scientific lines of enquiry. A very good lesson was observed where a Year 6 class had posed their own questions in relation to the growth of micro-organisms. One group posed the question, "Will temperature affect the growth of bacteria?", while another group asked, "Will adding salt affect the growth of bacteria?". Children were able to use scientific language to describe how they had set up an investigation, and were confidently using vocabulary such as 'variables', 'constants' and 'fair tests'. They were conversant with the health and safety issues around working with micro-organisms and able to use their knowledge to discuss how their findings related to real-life situations. They were able to record their findings, evaluate the results of their experiments, draw sensible conclusions, and also consider how their methodology could be improved.
64. The teaching and learning of science is very good throughout the school. Lessons are well planned with focussed learning objectives. Teachers use skilful questioning to establish previous knowledge and are conscious of ensuring that scientific vocabulary is introduced and reinforced. The teacher of a Year 3 class, discussing an investigation to determine the conditions that plants need to grow, deliberately introduced the words 'variable' and 'control' before the children planned their own experiments. They were asked to predict the outcomes of their experiments and were able to explain their reasons for their predictions to the rest of the class. Teachers ensure that children with special educational needs are well supported in practical activities, often by their peers, while faster learners are able to carry out further research.
65. The scheme of work for science is comprehensive and covers National Curriculum requirements. There are very good examples of cross-curricular links, for example, in Year 4, when children visit Lincoln Cathedral as part of their 'Materials' topic. Information and communication technology skills are also developed through science, for example, a group of Year 4 children were interrogating a database to find out about the properties of materials while

the remainder of the class were using drawing tools to design houses, concentrating on the selection of materials and textures. Children make use of skills acquired in numeracy lessons in their science, for example, a Year 5 class carrying out an investigation into the effect of exercise on pulse rate, had to be able to use a stopwatch, record results, make calculations, draw and interpret graphs, before drawing logical conclusions and making generalisations. The emphasis on scientific enquiry ensures that there are opportunities for co-operative group work and children have very positive attitudes to the subject.

66. Management of science is very good. The policy and scheme of work provide clear direction for the work for each year group. Weekly plans are taken directly from the medium term plans and children's work reflects the fact that these are used consistently across the school. Monitoring of standards takes place by the headteacher and subject co-ordinator, who review the work of each year group and discuss this with colleagues. There have been some observations of teaching of the subject and although the school achieves very high standards in science, there is no overall assessment at the end of a unit of work or a year. Each teacher uses his or her own procedures for recording children's progress. The science co-ordinator is aware of this and intends to address the issue in the near future.

#### **ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

67. It was only possible to see one art lesson during the inspection and because of the way the curriculum is organised there was no design and technology being taught. Nevertheless, the good quality work on display in classrooms and around the school indicates that both subjects are taught well. Teachers and children take great pride in the high standards attained and all children, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Since the previous inspection the good standards in art have been maintained and standards in design and technology have risen and are now good.
68. The schemes of work in place for these subjects ensure that all aspects of the subject are covered systematically. Skills and techniques are taught carefully using a range of media, tools and materials so that children achieve success when they apply them to their own work. In art this is particularly evident in the quality of children's observational drawings and in the development of their colour mixing skills; for example, in Year 3 children have studied colourful autumn leaves and worked hard to reproduce the colours by using several different shades of pastels. Similar work in Year 5, based on Van Gogh's sunflowers, was of very high quality, demonstrating children's confidence to experiment with shade and tone based on careful observation of the original. By Year 6, children can work in fine detail. They have a good understanding of how to use a range of pencil grades and techniques of shading to show tonal changes and textures. Higher attaining children copying black and white pictures of exotic animals could replicate fine differences in line and tone and their finished work was very similar to the original.
69. Similar good progress is made in design and technology. Children have regular opportunities to design and construct a range of products, usually linked to work on other subjects, so that their work in the subject is interesting and relevant to them. By Year 6, children give careful thought to their designs. They draw detailed plans, measure, construct, test and evaluate their product carefully and finish work to a high standard. This was particularly evident with the Year 6 robots. Children have constructed three-dimensional mathematical shapes from card nets and used them as a basis for imaginatively designed robots that they have painted and decorated. Some have moving parts and others contain battery-operated circuits with lights and buzzers.

Of particular note is the quality of the finished product. All children take great care to finish work to a high standard and this reinforces the pride and satisfaction that they feel about their work.

70. Teachers plan work in both subjects with care so that it links with other areas of the curriculum; for example, Year 4 children had visited Lincoln cathedral in connection with work on materials in science. The visit was used well in both subjects as a stimulus for creative work. In one class children were using photographs of gargoyles and carved details found in the cathedral as a stimulus for their own carefully drawn charcoal pictures; in another, children had used a computer program to design colourful stained glass windows based on symmetrical patterns. Teachers make very good use of the work of other artists and craftsmen to demonstrate skills and techniques and to set high standards to which children can aspire. In the one art lesson observed in Year 4, the teacher had a good understanding of how to use charcoal well and what its limitations as a drawing medium were and her explanations gave children confidence to experiment for themselves. She took time to help and support those experiencing difficulties to ensure they were fully included in the activity and could achieve success, and used good examples of children's and adults' work to demonstrate to the class what she wanted them to learn. These children had very positive attitudes to their work. They took care and pride in it, evaluated it thoughtfully when asked and concentrated on the task for a considerable period of time. Information and communication technology skills are used appropriately in the subjects to enhance project books through computer generated illustrations and plans.
71. The school is well placed to raise standards further. The subjects are extremely well managed and there is a shared enthusiasm to develop them. Subject co-ordinators recognise that there is scope to improve the balance between teaching and learning the subject skills, which is very well covered at present, and increasing opportunities for children to work imaginatively with a wider choice of media and materials and approaches. Children report that they do not do much painting and in design and technology older children do not have enough opportunities to produce a range of design ideas or find ways of solving design problems for themselves. Children's sketchbooks provide a useful record of progress from year to year but some teachers make better use of them than others as a means of assessing children's work. The subjects make a strong contribution towards children's personal development. Teachers often use the natural world, the work of famous artists and art from other cultures as a stimulus for children's work. The school is very well resourced with basic materials, tools and equipment that are well stored and accessible.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

72. It was only possible to see two lessons of geography because of the organisation of the curriculum and timetable. However, evidence from these lessons and from children's work indicates that standards are similar to those of most eleven year olds and this maintains the standards seen at the previous inspection.
73. By the time they leave the school, children have a good understanding of world climate including how weather varies from country to country and how aspects of weather are measured. They have a very good understanding of environmental issues such as pollution and recycling. They know how to use maps of different scales and can identify the key features, such as rivers and cities, of maps of the British Isles and Europe. They use information and technology skills to carry out research into aspects such as climate and features and their work is enhanced by computer-generated illustrations.

74. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching as too few lessons were observed. However, in the two lessons that were seen the teaching was good. The lessons were well planned and prepared and offered the children challenging and interesting activities concerned with environmental issues. Teachers were skilled in asking leading question and demanding reasons for the children's opinions. Children, in return, gave very thoughtful answers and were able to justify their answers well, displaying good knowledge of matters concerning recycling. The teachers possess good knowledge of the subject and use it well to offer challenging activities. In the two lessons seen most of the work was discussion and children with special educational needs were able to participate as well as the other children.
75. Geography is taught through a series of topics and while the discrete skills of geography are taught the strength of the subject is in the good links made with other areas of the curriculum such as mathematics for tables, information technology and design technology. There are also good links with literacy with children writing poetry about weather.
76. The headteacher has temporary responsibility for geography until a newly qualified teacher is able to take it on so the subject is not a priority for development at present.

## **HISTORY**

77. History is taught in topics, depending on the time of year. As it was not a focus in the curriculum during the time of the inspection it was not possible to observe any lessons and so a judgement cannot be made on the quality of teaching. However, there was sufficient evidence from teachers' planning, samples of work, displays and discussions with children to make a judgement on standards. The previous inspection judged attainment in history as higher than that typically found in most schools. Standards have been maintained as, by the age of eleven, children's achievements and progress are good.
78. The Year 6 children are knowledgeable about significant events in the past that have influenced the present such as the creation of the Church of England by Henry VIII. They understand the motives behind these events and can discuss the advantages and disadvantages coherently. They remember significant dates and can put periods of history into the correct chronological order. They identify changes over time and can compare aspects such as homes and childhood and contrast them with their own experiences. This is because the programme for the teaching of history systematically develops the important skills of research and interpretation of evidence. Children are especially good at considering pieces of evidence, such as reports of battles, from different viewpoints depending on whether the writer was on the winning or losing side. They understand that bias is a significant factor in sources of evidence and their very good literacy skills help them to 'read between the lines'. Children enjoy the subject and are keen to display their knowledge. They particularly enjoy visits to places of interest for example, a museum where they experienced role-play as pupils in a Victorian classroom. They know how to obtain information from a range of sources such as books, museums, the Internet and old people.
79. A particular strength of the provision for history is the way in which teachers take every opportunity to reinforce learning across other curriculum subjects, especially in English as they write accounts from different perspectives, for example, a roman soldier in training, retelling stories of myths and legends and reports of events such as invasions. Children produce high quality project books at the end of one of the their units of study which are enhanced by the use of artwork for illustrations, information and communication technology for presentation and

mathematics for graphs and charts. The work is made relevant, where possible, by visits to Lincoln for the study of Romans and Victorians, an old hall for the study of the Tudors and a museum devoted to the second world war for a study of Britain since the 1930s.

80. The co-ordinator is new but is keen and confident. She uses non-contact time to examine teachers' planning, sample children's work and has made plans to develop assessment in history skills to further improve teachers' knowledge of the rate of progress made by children. She has clearly defined plans for the development of the subject that will include attendance on courses and observing history lessons.

#### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

81. Since the last inspection, the school has improved even further, the good standards achieved in information and communication technology (ICT) and the management of the subject has also improved. There is now a detailed scheme of work that ensures continuity and progression through the National Curriculum Programmes of Study.
82. Standards achieved in ICT are well above those typically found in other schools by the time children reach Year 6. They are not only competent in a wide range of skills, but are also extremely confident and enthusiastic about the subject. There has been continued investment in ICT, both in resources and training, which has ensured that teachers have developed their own subject knowledge. This is not only reflected in the quality of provision, but also in the way in which teachers use ICT to enhance the school environment through their classroom displays.
83. Progress is very good across the school. By the end of Year 6, children are extremely proficient at using a range of skills. They are quick and accurate at using a keyboard and are able to use the advanced features of a multi-media presentation package. They were observed refining their presentations, inserting moving images, changing font styles and backgrounds, as well as setting up animated links. Children in Year 5 were observed using a modelling program to design a kitchen and were able to expertly move between two programs, inserting files, images, and adding text. They were able use editing features of the program, and then view their designs in different ways, moving between their plans and three-dimensional views to evaluate how their designs would work practically.
84. A strength in the subject is the way in which it is used to support other areas of the curriculum. Children in Year 5 had used a desktop publishing package to produce a brochure about their visit to the Lincolnshire Life Museum. This involved developing their literacy skills as well as extending their previously acquired skills in ICT. Children in Year 3 were observed using a music package to select different phrases and compose a piece of music. ICT is used effectively in science, where children were observed interrogating databases to learn about the properties of materials and were also using the features of drawing tools to look at pattern and texture as part of their work on materials.
85. The teaching and learning in ICT is generally very good across the school. Lessons are well planned and teachers have high expectations. Because teachers have very good subject knowledge, they are confident in their approach to the subject, and are able to maximise learning opportunities. This was illustrated extremely well in Year 3, when teachers experienced technical difficulties. The lessons continued successfully with no detrimental effect on the children's learning. Teachers share their objectives with the children and give clear and precise instructions. Opportunities are taken to reinforce and extend vocabulary, for example, in Year 6, the teacher referred to "slide transition", "blank presentation", and "effects", while in Year 5, the teacher referred to "a bitmap image" and instructed children to save their work in this



format. Teachers ensure that children with special educational needs have full access to the ICT curriculum. This is done by careful consideration of how children are grouped with tasks differentiated according to ability. Higher attaining children work at their own level and are given opportunities to extend their abilities more independently.

86. This is a subject where assessment is used extremely well by teachers in lessons. Interactions with individual children are very good and teachers are skilful at asking questions and evaluating progress. The highly competent co-ordinator has prepared targets for children's progress in an effort to improve consistency among all teachers so that assessments no longer rely on individual teachers maintaining their own system of records.

## **MUSIC**

87. Standards in music by the end of Year 6 are in line with those typically found in most schools and have been maintained since the last inspection.
88. The younger children enjoy clapping a rhythm pattern following a simple graphic score (pictures used to show what to play) and then combining them to make their own composition. The majority of children are successful. The idea of rhythm is extended into Year 4 where children experience the New Zealand stick dance, which is quite a challenge. Some classes are more successful than others and are able to develop additional rhythms. In Year 5, children are experimenting with three-part singing which is demanding, as it is not easy to sustain the parts. The oldest children also explore rhythm through listening to a medley of songs to which they add the 'hand jive'. The children can recall a range of different types of music from America and also explain the terms opera and ballet. The standard of singing, heard only in assembly, is in line with expectations. Words are clear, usually in tune but with higher notes not so well pitched. Children sing with some enthusiasm particularly when the song is well-known and liked.
89. The progress of children across the school is sound. Children develop an appreciation for music and relevant skills to enable them to enjoy and understand music. They use computers to compose. They are enthusiastic and co-operate with each other when asked to work together. The children are confident enough to perform their rhythms or 'hand jive' in front of their peers. Children listen carefully and respond appropriately to teachers' questions.
90. The quality of teaching is good, overall. Teachers' knowledge and enthusiasm motivate children to give of their best. Lessons provide a good challenge and children respond positively. Questions are used effectively to extend or reinforce children's knowledge. Relationships are very good and children are confident when performing their music. Planning for music includes relevant cross-curricular links, particularly with history; for example, children listen to Tudor music when studying Henry VIII, and songs from the music halls for Britain since the 1930's. Occasionally, opportunities are missed in lessons to develop children's singing techniques or to ensure all parts are sung in tune. Children use a computer to compose pieces.
91. The music co-ordinator has recently introduced a new scheme to provide more help and guidance for those teachers who are less secure teaching this subject. This will be evaluated to check it fulfils the needs of the children and the school. As yet, there is no formal way of checking what children know and understand. The school has long term plans to develop music further.
92. There are opportunities for children to learn a variety of instruments and participation is good. Extra-curricular activities such as recorder and choir are offered across the school. A number

of visitors have been welcome; an Indian lady who talks about Indian music, an American folk singer, and a secondary school band or orchestra. Children have opportunities to perform for parents in school productions (including a joint one with their partner specialist secondary school), in the local church and they perform to others in class assemblies. All these help to enhance the children's music curriculum.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

93. It was not possible to see all the elements of physical education during the inspection as lessons seen focussed on games skills. In this aspect, the attainment of most children is well above the standards typically found in most other schools and their progress is good. The school's achievements in sports show that it enjoys a great measure of success. Standards since the previous inspection in games have improved. It is not possible to comment on standards in the other aspects of dance and gymnastics as too few lessons were seen.
94. By the time they leave the school, most children have achieved the national standards in swimming and water safety with some achieving greater success in various local swimming competitions. A large number of children participate very successfully in various team competitions, which include netball, football for both boys and girls and cross country running. The children participate in outdoor and adventurous activities during a residential week in North Yorkshire. Children are developing good control of a ball using various bats and racquets and are able to create sequences of balances and movements working in groups. They are able to practise their skills and improve them.
95. Teaching is good. Lessons are prepared and organized well and objectives are clear and explained to children so that they have a good understanding of what is expected of them. Children are kept active throughout the lessons. This is particularly important during outside games lessons when it is very cold. All lessons begin with a suitable warm-up, often led by one of the children, who understand the need for stretching muscles prior to their activities. Teachers have good subject knowledge that they use to plan interesting and challenging lessons to which the children respond very positively. The children listen to instructions well and participate in the activities with enthusiasm. The teachers give children time to practise their skills and then they are asked to evaluate each other's efforts. They offer suitable praise and make valid comments about the performance of others. More encouragement needs to be given to them to be more critical rather than just reporting on what they thought was good. All lessons finish with an appropriate cool down. Behaviour throughout the lessons is very good and children are interested in the activities and display good physical and, sometimes, creative effort. Teachers make every effort to provide suitable activities that all children can participate in at their own level.
96. The co-ordinator has only recently been given responsibility for the subject and has not yet had sufficient time to make an impact upon it. The provision for physical education is greatly enhanced by a very wide range of sporting activities outside of school hours, in which between 50 and 60 per cent of children of both sexes participate.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

97. There has been good improvement in religious education since the previous inspection. Teachers follow carefully the guidelines for study laid down by the locally agreed syllabus. Standards for many of the 11-year-olds exceed the targets outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. The quality of learning is very good overall and children, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well.
98. There are several reasons for the school's success in this subject. There is a very good scheme of work in place that ensures that there is a balance between factual teaching about religion and opportunities for children to make a personal response to what they have learned. A sufficient amount of time is given to the subject each week so that children have the time to study each topic in depth and detail. By the time they are eleven, children understand the key features of Christianity and at least two other major world faiths. They can compare and contrast ways in which people of different faiths worship, and understand why symbols, sacred writings, artefacts and buildings are special to the adherents of these faiths. More importantly, they show a good understanding of the need to respect the views and beliefs of others and they demonstrate this maturity and understanding in their writing and discussion. Many examples of this were seen in children's writing. Children in Year 6, who had studied Buddhism, have a good understanding of the importance of worship to a practising Buddhist. One child expressed their views eloquently: "I think Buddhists must feel very wise, calm and reflective when they visit their temple". In discussion, Year 6 pupils were able to explain why they thought it was important to learn about other faiths – "so that you can understand other people and don't offend and hurt them". These opportunities for reflecting on their learning in lessons both through their writing and through class discussions make a significant contribution to children's personal development and help them understand their place in the world.
99. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers use a wide range of teaching methods to make lessons interesting and relevant. Questions and answers are used well to encourage children to think for themselves. Teachers often use pictures, artefacts, visits and visitors as teaching aids, and high quality classroom displays provide resource banks of ideas and vocabulary. For example, children in Year 4 were able to make valuable contributions to a class discussion on special places because they had paid a recent visit to the cathedral and had lasting impressions of the grandeur of the building. Pictures of special places formed an attractive display that the teacher used well to focus the discussion. In an excellent lesson in Year 6, the teacher used role-play to help children reflect on how a strong religious faith helps people in times of crisis. Children took on the roles of journalists and their questions to the people of faith acted out by the teacher were thoughtful and perceptive. Teachers often link work in religious education to work in other subjects such as art or history. The visit to the cathedral, for example, was in connection with a science topic on materials. These cross-curricular links enrich children's learning and ensure that the subject is used well to support the development of basic skills in speaking and listening, reading, writing and information technology.
100. Children enjoy their work in religious education. They take full part in discussions and are confident to offer ideas and opinions because they know their contributions are valued. Children with special educational needs are given the help they require to enable them to take full part in the lesson. Children take pride in their work and great care over its presentation. Their books are neat and legible and provide a good record of their learning over time.
101. Teachers take opportunities in assemblies and in personal, social and health education lessons to develop aspects of religious education and these experiences enrich children's learning. The way the subject is taught, with its opportunities for reflection and response, and its emphasis on

respect for other views, makes a positive contribution to the caring ethos that the school promotes.

102. The subject has been managed excellently in the past and this has contributed significantly to the improved standards. The current subject co-ordinator has only recently taken over but has expertise in the subject and there are good plans in place to develop it further. The subject is very well resourced and teachers make good use of visits to local churches. There are plans in place to widen the range of visits to include places of worship for other faiths. The school recognises the need to develop a consistent approach to marking and assessing children's work.