

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LESLIE MANSER PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Doddington Park, Lincoln

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120509

Headteacher: Mr Ken Frape

Reporting inspector: John Eadie  
20191

Dates of inspection: 24 - 27 March 2003

Inspection number: 248138

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Kingsdown Road  
Doddington Park  
Lincoln

Postcode: LN6 0FB

Telephone number: 01522 688328

Fax number: 01522 501363

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Jo Leeder

Date of previous inspection: 19 January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20191	John Eadie	Registered inspector	Educational inclusion Mathematics Art and design Design and technology	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19374	Wendy Sheehan	Lay inspector		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?
30853	Sue Betts	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music	
8316	Jo O'Hare	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography History	
8839	Mike Egerton	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Physical education Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

HeadStart & Associates

Higherland Bridge  
49 West Street  
Gargrave  
Skipton  
North Yorkshire  
BD23 3RJ

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33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Number on roll aged four to eleven: 290 (bigger than average)  
Of these 27 are in the reception class, all attending full time  
Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals: 23.1% (average)  
Percentage of pupils whose mother tongue is not English : 0%  
Percentage of pupils identified as having special needs: 21.0% (average)  
Percentage of pupils with statements of their special needs: 1.7% (average)

The school is situated in the outskirts of the city of Lincoln and most pupils come from two large housing estates. Housing is a mix of council, rented accommodation, privately owned and housing association. Statistics show that there is significant deprivation in some local areas. There is high mobility in the area, and in the last year 40 pupils left and 39 joined the school. Almost all pupils are of white British heritage. There is a broad range of special needs, the largest groups having emotional and behavioural difficulties, problems with their reading and writing, and speech and communication problems. Five pupils have statements of special need. The pupils generally have well below average attainment on entry to the school. A number of pupils join the school after the normal starting time, with low attainment.

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

Leslie Manser Primary School is a very good school. The pupils achieve well, due to the good teaching. Leadership and management of the school are very good. A particular feature of the success of the school is the personal development of the pupils, who are encouraged to be really enthusiastic and responsible learners. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- The provision for the personal development of the pupils is excellent and the pupils are developing into very responsible young citizens.
- The leadership and management of the school are very good. All staff, teaching and non teaching, have a shared commitment to creating a very positive learning environment.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. A particular strength is the way that all adults inspire the pupils to learn.
- The pupils achieve well and make good progress during their time in the school.
- Very good provision is made for the pupils with special educational needs and for those with particular gifts and talents.
- The curriculum is planned well and has been very effectively adapted to suit the needs of all pupils.

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

These areas for improvement should be read in the context of this being a very good school; they do not represent weaknesses, rather they are pointers to refine further the very good practice that already exists.

- Standards in mathematics.
- Standards of writing, handwriting and the presentation of work.
- There are occasions when some pupils miss out on some aspects of the curriculum.

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

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

The school was last inspected in January 1998 and has made good progress since then. Standards in the national tests in Year 6 have risen faster than the national rate. All the key issues from that report have been addressed well; for example: the school has raised standards in English, mathematics and

music and has also improved the management of the school. There is a very good commitment to maintaining improvement and the school is well placed to continue to move forward.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6, based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. The similar schools referred to are those with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	E*	D	C	A	well above average A above average B
Mathematics	E	E	D	C	average C below average D
Science	E	E	C	A	well below average E

As can be seen from the above table, standards have improved in recent years in the national tests for pupils in Year 6. In the tests for pupils in Year 2, standards have been declining in recent years and were well below average in 2002. There are a number of factors to explain the declining standards, the major one being the increasing number of pupils with special educational needs in these year groups. A further significant factor is that the attainment of the pupils on entry to the school is also declining. The children in the reception class make good progress from their well below average starting point, to reach below expected levels by the time they start in Year 1. Targets set for the pupils' achievements in Year 6 were not met in 2002, as the targets were set well in advance of the tests and there were a number of pupils who left and others who came before the tests were taken. The ones who came in were not as able as those who left. Statistics show that the pupils who took the tests made good progress from their performance in the tests for seven year olds in 1998. Evidence from the inspection is that standards in English and science are average in Year 6 and in mathematics they are below average. Standards in Year 6 in information and communication technology and art and design are above average, and in religious education they are above the expectations of the local agreed syllabus. Those in physical education are well above average. The pupils achieve well and make good progress during their time in the school.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastically involved in all the school has to offer.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in and around the school. The pupils behave responsibly and there have been no exclusions in recent years.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils are developing very well into mature and responsible young citizens. Relationships are excellent between all members of the school community.
Attendance	Attendance is average and the majority of pupils arrive at school on time.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is good and all teaching seen during the inspection was at least satisfactory. English and mathematics are taught well and the pupils consequently learn the skills of literacy and numeracy effectively. There are a number of consistent strengths in the teaching. The most significant of these is the high expectations that the teachers have, both of their pupils' performance and of their behaviour. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when this aspect of teaching was criticised. The pupils rise well to the challenge of these expectations and try hard. The teachers also work very closely with the learning support assistants. This close liaison ensures that these staff support the pupils for whom they are responsible very well, and these pupils are benefiting considerably. In the small number of lessons where the teaching is no better than satisfactory, the teachers are sometimes insufficiently confident in their knowledge of the subject and the pace of the lessons is not as brisk. The teachers meet the needs of the pupils in their classes well; for example, the pupils with special educational needs have very clear individual plans which the teachers follow well, and the pupils with particular gifts and talents have special provision made for them.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good range of curricular opportunities for the pupils. This provision is significantly enhanced by the wide range of visitors into school, but there are few trips out of school to give the pupils wider experiences. There are some subjects where some pupils in mixed age classes miss out on aspects of the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision is made for the pupils with special educational needs. Very precise individual plans are created for their progress. These plans are regularly updated and the pupils are very well supported and make good progress relative to their abilities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent provision is made for the pupils' personal development. The provision for their moral and social development is outstanding and the school provides a very rich variety of experiences to raise their awareness of the range of cultures represented in our society. The school has a sound anti racism policy.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a caring, welcoming, safe and clean place for the pupils. Procedures for checking on the pupils' progress are thorough and are beginning to be used to help the pupils to progress faster.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The parents have very positive views of the school and there is an effective partnership with parents.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership for the school. He is very well supported by those staff with management responsibilities and the school is very well managed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities very well. They are knowledgeable and involved, and contribute significantly to the success of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is very good at analysing its strengths and areas for development, and puts in place highly effective plans to raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	There are sufficient staff and learning resources and the accommodation is good. All resources available to the school are used very well. The school seeks all ways of obtaining the best possible value for money in its spending decisions.

## 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>• Their children are expected to work hard</li> <li>• The quality of teaching</li> <li>• The headteacher and staff are approachable</li> <li>• Their children like school</li> <li>• Their children are making good progress</li> <li>• The school is helping their children become mature and responsible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons</li> <li>• The information about their children's progress</li> </ul>

As can be seen from earlier sections of this report, the inspectors agree with all the positive views of parents. With regard to the aspects that parents would like to see improved, the judgement of the inspection team is that:

- there is a satisfactory range of good quality and well supported activities outside lessons;
- the reports give parents very good information about their children's progress and there are sufficient other opportunities for parents to discuss this progress.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

- 1 The pupils enter the school with well below average levels of attainment, make good progress and achieve well to reach average standards by Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards in Year 6 were below average.

Strengths in pupils' achievements are:

- the pupils make good progress;
- standards in art and design, information and communication technology, and religious education are above average;
- standards in physical education are well above average;
- standards in speaking and listening are above average;
- the pupils enjoy reading.

Areas for development are:

- standards in mathematics in Year 6 are below average;
- standards in English, mathematics and science are below average in Year 2;
- standards in writing are below average;
- the quality of handwriting is inconsistent through the school.

- 2 Standards in the subjects of the curriculum seen in lessons and in the scrutiny of pupils' work are displayed in the following table:

Standards	At the end of Year 2	At the end of Year 6
English	Below average	Average
Mathematics	Below average	Below average
Science	Below average	Average
Art and design	Above average	Above average
Design and technology	Average	Average
Geography	Average	Average
History	Average	Average
Information and communication technology	Average	Above average
Music	Average	Average
Physical education	Above average	Well above average
Religious education	Above average	Above average

- 3 The children make good progress in the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup> to reach below average standards from their well below average starting point. They make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, as there is a strong emphasis on this aspect in all areas of learning. By the time they reach Year 1, some children have reached the Early Learning Goals<sup>2</sup> in their personal, social and emotional development. Attainment in other areas of learning is still below average at this age, despite the good progress made in all areas of learning.
- 4 The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds give the attainment of the pupils in Year 2 last year as being well below average in reading and mathematics, and in the bottom five per cent of all schools in writing. This was the case when compared with all schools and when compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. There was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this year group. Standards found in the inspection are better, being below average in English, mathematics and science. There is a new team of teachers for the pupils in Years 1 and 2, and these pupils are making good progress.
- 5 In the national tests for 11 year olds in 2002, attainment was average in English and science and below average in mathematics, when compared with all schools. In comparison with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, attainment was well above average in English and science, and average in mathematics. Figures are produced which compare schools with those that scored similarly in the tests for seven year olds four years previously. This comparison shows that attainment was average in science, below average in English and well below average in mathematics. However, a significant number of pupils left and were replaced by others in this period. The statistics provided by the school show that the ones who joined did not attain as well in the tests for seven year olds as those who left. Figures provided for those pupils who were at the school for the entire four year period show that they made good progress. The relatively high mobility within the school is one of the major factors leading to standards not rising more rapidly. There has been some variation in performance of boys and girls in the tests over the years. The school has conducted careful analysis of this and has put in place initiatives to address these differences; for example, books that appeal specifically to boys have been bought. During the inspection no evidence was found to suggest that there might be a difference in performance now. Standards found in Year 6 during the inspection were average in English and science and below average in mathematics. They are lower in mathematics as, although the pupils have learnt routines for calculation well and know the results of additions and multiplications, they are not good at applying their knowledge to new situations and problems.
- 6 As can be seen from the above table, standards are above average in art and design, physical education and religious education in Year 2 above average in art and design, information and communication technology and religious education, and well above average in physical education in Year 6. In art and design the pupils are achieving above average standards due to the wide range of media used and the opportunities that they have to work with visiting artists. In information and communication technology standards are benefiting from the well equipped computer suite, and pupils have a good range of skills and are confident in using them. The pupils are reaching high standards in several aspects of physical education, for example dance and gymnastics. Pupils have a good understanding of the different aspects of religious education by the time they leave, resulting in the above average standards being attained.
- 7 The pupils on the school's register of special educational needs have a wide range of needs and benefit from the specific help they receive, particularly in English and mathematics. As a result, these pupils achieve well. Targets are specific, realistic and often challenging. They are measurable, attainable and reviewed regularly. The good achievement of pupils with special educational needs is a direct result of the good, and often very good, quality of teaching and support they receive, as well as the way the provision is managed.

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<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage contains the children of reception age.

<sup>2</sup> The 'early learning goals' are the expected levels of attainment for children as they start the subjects of the National Curriculum in Year 1. 'Stepping stones' are the steps leading towards these goals.

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

- 8 The pupils have very positive attitudes to school and to learning. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school continues to be good and there was no evidence of bullying or harassment during the inspection. Relationships between pupils and adults, and between pupils themselves, are excellent. The positive, friendly and supportive ethos has a significant impact on the quality of all pupils' learning. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, display a very good approach to lessons and all aspects of school.

Strengths in this aspect are:

- the relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils are excellent;
- the pupils are enthusiastic interested learners;
- the pupils behave well and are very tolerant of others with behavioural problems;
- the pupils develop into mature young citizens.

There are no areas for development.

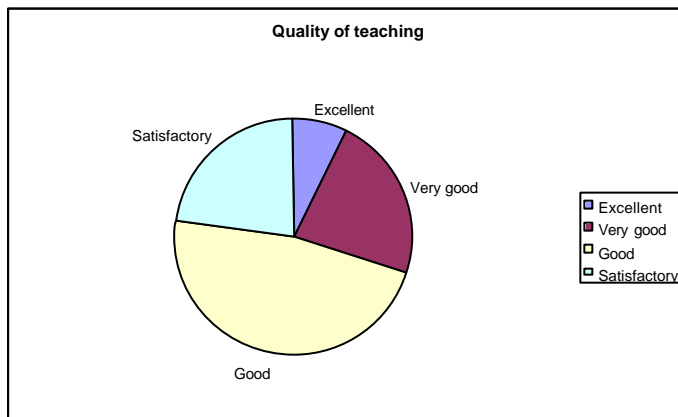
- 9 The pupils are very attentive in lessons and settle down quickly and calmly to their work. Even the youngest children in the Foundation Stage quickly learn the routines of the classroom and develop good working habits and behaviour. The older pupils display high levels of concentration and are very eager to ask questions. In a Year 2 science lesson the pupils showed great curiosity and thirst for knowledge when learning about sound; "How does it travel so fast?" asked one pupil, "How do you know what the ear looks like inside?" challenged another. The pupils enjoy the wide variety of activities, concentrate hard and find lessons interesting. In a Years 3 and 4 literacy lesson, for example, pupils were disappointed when the lesson had to finish.
- 10 The majority of parents feel that behaviour in the school is good and that the pupils are helped to become mature and responsible. They are pleased that their children enjoy coming to school. Inspection findings confirm the parents' views. The pupils' behaviour was good during the inspection. The infrequent instances of poor behaviour were quickly addressed in a calm, positive and mature manner; for example, the possible sanctions of their behaviour are explained very clearly to pupils and they are requested to reflect on it. Year 6 pupils feel that any instances of poor behaviour or bullying are sorted out quickly due to the strong knowledge teachers have of individual pupils. Pupils are generally well behaved and orderly at lunchtimes. There have been no exclusions from school during the previous academic year. The pupils identified with emotional and behavioural needs make good progress in their learning, due to all teachers having very positive strategies in place. The behaviour of pupils with special educational needs is good in and around the school. They have very positive attitudes to their school. The relationships, which are outstanding throughout the school, make an excellent contribution to these pupils' overall learning. Consequently, pupils feel confident and valued and contribute very well in lessons.
- 11 The pupils have excellent relationships with each other and adults. They listen attentively to others and work sensibly, in pairs and groups. There is a great deal of mutual respect within an enthusiastic, lively atmosphere. The use of registration time, when pupils are given opportunities to discuss how they feel, is fundamental in developing these relationships. For example: in a Year 4 registration, where pupils were listening to music, they reflected sensitively on how the music made them feel; "a bit sad like people going to war". In lessons pupils are often seen spontaneously offering to help each other. Older pupils look out for younger pupils in the playground and relationships are harmonious. Pupils new to the school are welcomed and sensitively supported by their class friends. A particularly good feature during the inspection was the time given for paired reading throughout the school. This gave all pupils an opportunity to mix with others and to build up caring and supportive relationships. There was a clear sense of pride from older pupils as they observed the improvements in performance of their reading partners.

- 12 The pupils' personal development is very good. All pupils take pride in their own and other's achievements. For example: when creating a Torah scroll in a religious education lesson Year 2 pupils were very appreciative of the work of others; "That's excellent", exclaimed one pupil. Pupils in all year groups take responsibility for classroom tasks and carry them out sensibly. Those pupils elected to the newly formed school council take their roles seriously, and this provides opportunities for some pupils to be involved in developing their citizenship skills. The pupils' self esteem is very well promoted through the care teachers take in valuing all pupils' opinions.
- 13 Attendance is satisfactory and is in line with the national average. The majority of pupils arrive on time, which ensures an efficient start to the day. Registration is punctual, is effectively combined with the school's theme for the week and leads to a purposeful, friendly and supportive atmosphere from the beginning of the school day. Unauthorised absences are above the national average due to continual problems with a handful of infrequent attendees.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 14 The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection, when there was little very good or better teaching and a significant number of unsatisfactory lessons.

Strengths in teaching and learning are:



- the teachers have very good classroom management skills;
- the teachers have high expectations, both of their pupils' behaviour and performance;
- basic skills are well taught;
- mutual trust and respect exists between pupils and teachers;
- good use is made of homework to support the pupils' learning;
- there is close liaison between teachers and learning support assistants.

Areas for development are:

- occasional lessons do not progress at the pace that is seen in most lessons;
- there are occasional lessons when the teacher is not totally secure in their knowledge of the subject being taught.

- 15 The quality of teaching and learning is particularly good in Years 1 and 2, where it is very good overall for these pupils. There is a new teaching team for the pupils of this age, and these teachers understand the needs of these pupils particularly well and are enabling them to make very good progress in lessons. There are other classes throughout the school which enjoy very good teaching. A particular strength of the teaching is the way that the teachers organise and manage their classes. They create a calm and orderly learning environment, in which it is easy for the pupils to learn. Noteworthy is the way that the teachers manage the pupils who have behavioural difficulties: very clear parameters are set for these pupils and there is a consistent method of dealing with them which ensures that they do not disrupt the learning of other pupils.

- 16 At the last inspection, there was some criticism of the expectations of the teachers. This has been fully addressed and the teachers now have consistently high expectations of their pupils. The pupils are expected to work hard and rise to this challenge with high levels of concentration and enthusiasm. This was seen a number of times during the inspection; for example, in a very good physical education lesson in Year 6, the teacher expected high levels of behaviour and performance from the pupils. They responded by being enthusiastically involved in choreographing their own movements in response to a musical sequence. This was based on their work in history on the Second World War, which added relevance to the activity. In an excellent mathematics lesson with Years 3 and 4, the teacher challenged the pupils really well, giving them just a short time to recognise patterns in fractions. The pupils responded very well; there was absolute silence with an almost audible ‘whirring’ of brains. The expectations were exemplified by the fact that some pupils used large numbers in their fractions.
- 17 There are very good levels of mutual trust and respect between pupils and adults. This has a particularly positive effect on the quality of discussions and debate in the classes. For example: in an excellent literacy lesson in Years 1 and 2, during the warm up, in which the teacher was revising phonics, such was the quality of the relationships that a girl suggested that another pupil should have a house point. This lesson also exemplified the way that the learning support assistants are used to make a very valuable contribution to the pupils’ learning. The learning support assistant was fully integrated into the lesson. Much of this valuable work done by the learning support assistants throughout the school is the result of the considerable time spent, after school and in breaks, in planning with the teacher of the class. They are therefore absolutely clear about the learning objectives<sup>3</sup> and how best they can help the pupils achieve them. The learning support assistants are valued highly by the teachers and this is yet another example of the mutual respect evident in the school.
- 18 Basic skills are taught well. This is particularly evident in English, with the skills needed to master reading and writing, and in mathematics, where basic number skills are also taught well. Necessary skills are an integral part of the teaching of other subjects; for example, in subjects such as history and geography the pupils are taught research skills well, and the basic skills of map reading. The teachers make good use of homework to reinforce the pupils’ learning. For example: in a very good history lesson in Year 1, the teacher suggested that the pupils should tell their parents or carers what they had learnt about the great fire of London.
- 19 The teachers and learning support assistants provide very effective support for the pupils with special educational needs. The learning support assistants are very well deployed and have a very good understanding of the individual pupil’s learning needs, which they meet very effectively. The teachers make sure that all adults, including volunteers, know in advance what the lesson objectives will be and how they will be achieved. This especially includes skilful questioning, which involves every pupil, thereby giving opportunities for speaking and listening at a level matched to their ability. In addition, the learning support assistants make notes during the introductory and concluding parts of lessons, which they share with the classroom teacher, as part of their close liaison. A very good example was observed during the literacy hour in Year 1, when the support assistant assessed the responses of the pupils in her group.
- 20 In the lessons where the teaching was only satisfactory, there were two areas that held back the pupils’ progress: occasionally the teachers did not set a sufficiently brisk pace to the lesson and, in some cases, the teacher was not entirely confident in the subject being taught. They referred to notes and this slowed the pace of the lesson and therefore of the pupils’ learning.

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

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<sup>3</sup> Learning objectives are the skills, knowledge and understanding that the teacher is aiming that the pupils should learn during the lesson.

- 21 The school provides a good range of curricular opportunities for its pupils, which covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum in the different subject areas and the agreed syllabus for religious education. The opportunities the school provides are relevant to the needs and interests of the pupils, and clearly reflect the aims of the school. The school has responded well to all the key issues in the previous report and has made changes that have brought about significant improvement.

Strengths in the curriculum are:

- the curriculum is well planned;
- literacy and numeracy have been fitted well into the day to create more time;
- the literacy strategy has been adapted well to suit the pupils;
- the school has modified national guidance well to suit their needs;
- the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good;
- there is a very good range of visitors;
- excellent provision is made for the pupils' personal development.

An area for development is:

- the curriculum has not been totally thought out for pupils in mixed age classes in Years 3 to 6.

- 22 The curriculum is well planned and regular reviews of the schemes being used leads the school to make adjustments to units of learning so that they are more closely matched to the needs of the pupils. This is a strength of the school. One area for development within Years 3 to 6 is the current rolling programme of topics. Due to the necessary changes each year in the make up of mixed age classes, some pupils, in some subjects, can miss out on aspects of the curriculum. The teaching of literacy and numeracy follows the national strategies and the school has been very skilful in fitting the two subjects into the day in a way by which more time has been created. There is good use of literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum, and the paired reading session at the beginning of each afternoon impacts, not only on progress in reading, but also on the very positive attitudes of the pupils.
- 23 Provision for personal, social and health education is very good. The teachers are highly skilled in weaving these very important aspects into different subjects whenever there is an opportunity. It is a school where personal, social and health education is inextricably linked with other areas of learning. Some lessons are targeted to cover quite specific aspects. Aspects of sex education and drug education are dealt with sensitively as they arise, and issues are also covered by the visit of the school nurse, who talks specifically to the older pupils about 'getting older'.
- 24 There is a satisfactory range of good quality extra curricular activities; these are well supported by the pupils, who thoroughly enjoy them. These activities, combined with a wide range of visitors into school, give the pupils an extended and enriched curriculum. Due to external constraints, the school is unable to provide many visits out of school to provide wider experiences for the pupils. Pupils benefit from the good relationship between the school and a local teacher training establishment, resulting in many overseas visitors in school. The RAF reunion held at the school yearly is a significant part of the school's tradition. The school has good relationships with the adjoining nursery school and with the many secondary schools to which the pupils transfer at the end of Year 6. Effective links with these secondary schools ensure a smooth transition from primary to secondary education.
- 25 The pupils with special educational needs are often taught in specific groups within lessons for English and mathematics. The ability setting of classes for these two subjects helps these pupils to work at their level. Nevertheless, tasks are challenging and rigorously planned. Learning support assistants are fully included in all aspects of the provision. They form a very strong, knowledgeable and caring team. Supported by the school, they have attended courses covering a wide area of special educational needs, including behaviour and language development. All pupils



with special educational needs have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum. The school is totally committed to educational inclusion, as evidenced in the practice and impact. Individual educational plans are set by teachers and classroom assistants, in conjunction with the coordinator for special needs and outside agencies, as appropriate. Targets set are attainable, realistic and well focused. The register of pupils with special educational needs is well maintained and updated every half term by the coordinator. It fully reflects the most recent code of practice. Links with the local community are good.

- 26 The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent, and is a strength of the school. Its provision for the pupils' moral and social development is excellent, and that for the pupils' spiritual and cultural development is very good. This is a very significant improvement since the time of the previous inspection. The school places great emphasis on all these aspects of the pupils' personal development, which broaden and deepen the pupils' experiences. It is at the heart of the purposeful and pleasant atmosphere which can be felt in school.
- 27 The school makes very good provision for the pupils' spiritual development. Through its teaching, the school actively develops a climate in which all the pupils can flourish and develop a respect for others. The pupils are given the opportunity to explore beliefs when they learn from Old Testament stories and relate these to life today. The teachers give the pupils the opportunity to consider feelings and emotions. In one lesson seen in Year 3, a very sensitive discussion about death included good exploration of the pupils' feelings. Throughout Year 1 to Year 4 circle time<sup>4</sup> is used for the pupils to discuss any feelings or issues they wish with teachers and their peers. Acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements and there is a comprehensive scheme for collective worship, which is followed by the whole school. This includes planned opportunities for the development of spirit, encouraging the pupils to think about hope, helping others, and people special to them, for example. Registration periods also provide times for reflection. During the week of the inspection the pupils were asked how music played made them feel. One boy explained sadly how the music reminded him of his late grandmother. He received sympathy and understanding from the other pupils, demonstrating their developing maturity in spirituality.
- 28 The provision for moral development is excellent. One of the school's aims is to promote moral values and tolerance. The clear moral code is the basis for behaviour, which is promoted consistently in all aspects of school life. There are clearly laid out systems of rewards for good behaviour, as there are for effort or attainment. There are behaviour codes displayed in the classrooms, which are understood by everyone. School rules refer to politeness, respect for others and property. The school celebrates achievement in numerous ways. Certificates, cups and rewards are presented in sharing assemblies. The pupils take pride in their school and are given a variety of responsibilities through being monitors for numerous activities, to develop their independence. The quality and role models of all staff set a good example to the pupils. Lessons often provide a platform for debate, so that the pupils can freely express their views. In one geography lesson a debate on local issues about traffic in the centre of Lincoln produced thoughtful comments from the pupils. In a history lesson the pupils considered the qualities people needed to live through and survive the last war. The pupils respected the views of others. Through the personal, social and health education programme the pupils reflect on personal qualities such as tolerance, kindness and sensitivity to others' needs. Honesty, fairness and respect for truth are values that form a natural part of school life.
- 29 The provision for the social development of the pupils is also excellent and a further strength. There are numerous opportunities for the pupils to work together within lessons and the pupils respond well to these. The pupils are caring and polite. A collection of photographs includes those where the pupils are working cooperatively in science, when they do experiments with magnets and springs. The pupils support each other and undertake new challenges in lessons in a positive way. The pupils share equipment well, and boys and girls work well together. The school has a number of sports teams, giving the pupils the opportunity to take part in teamwork. The pupils with special

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<sup>4</sup> Circle time is an opportunity for pupils to discuss issues in their classes, in a less formal and non-judgmental way.

educational needs are fully included in the life of the school. This inclusive nature of the school provides an excellent base for the pupils' social and moral development.

- 30 The curriculum includes a celebration of a wide range of cultures and prepares the pupils very well for life in a multicultural society. There are opportunities for the pupils to develop partnerships with people from many lands, to raise their awareness and understanding of the lives and customs of others. The school has made links with at least six countries, using the Internet 'e-pals' system, and there have been Christmas card exchanges with the pupils in Texas, Louisiana and France. There have been visitors to the school from Japan, Italy, France and the United States. 11 Pakistani educators who were in school promoted much discussion in classrooms, widening the pupil's awareness of other cultures. The pupils consider the feelings, values and beliefs of others through their studies of other faiths in religious education and through other lessons. Chinese New Year has been celebrated in Year 3. In a geography lesson seen, the pupils were made aware of current issues in the world by reviewing local and international news. In the pupils' reading there is a wide range of cultures represented and the very successful Arts Week enriches the pupils' experiences of creative and cultural activities. The school develops the pupils' awareness of their own culture very well. They are involved with local sports clubs. The pupils are knowledgeable and proud of the history of the school, and play a major role in the reunion of the RAF squadrons on whose airfield the school is built. The school choir enters the Lincoln music festival and the school has been involved in the Trees for Parishes scheme.

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

- 31 The school has succeeded very well in creating "a happy, well resourced, bright, cheerful and well disciplined learning environment", as contained within its aims. All pupils, whatever their ability, flourish and develop in an atmosphere that supports and values each individual. Teachers and learning support assistants take great care of pupils in their classes and are sensitive to their academic, personal and social development. Standards have been maintained in this area since the last inspection.

Strengths in this aspect are:

- attendance is carefully monitored and concerns quickly followed up;
- the schools rules and rewards are consistently applied and carefully monitored;
- there is a safe, clean and supportive environment for pupils;
- there are good assessment procedures in all subjects;
- assessment procedures are beginning to be used to make an impact on standards.

Areas for improvement are:

- raising the profile of child protection;
- assessing priorities to any health and safety hazards identified.

- 32 The checking of the pupils' attendance is very good and has improved recently, with the introduction of first day contact. The computerised attendance system is used very effectively to check pupils' attendance, to analyse trends and to follow up any unexplained absences. The education welfare officer works closely and effectively with the school on cases of persistent non attendance.
- 33 There are efficient arrangements for checking on and promoting good behaviour. The system for rewarding good behaviour is well accepted and pupils are proud to achieve house points and individual stickers to celebrate their achievements. The school has no separate anti bullying policy and the procedures used are similar to those for poor behaviour. Discussion with Year 6 pupils indicated that they are aware that teachers will work independently with pupils to support and encourage improvements in behaviour.

- 34 Child protection procedures are good overall, but the policy has yet to be agreed by the governing body. The school relies heavily on verbal communication of concerns and has yet to formalise procedures for all staff. The headteacher has received suitable training and staff monitor all pupils carefully, through daily and weekly discussions in staff meetings. The headteacher and class teachers work tirelessly to support and care for any upset children.
- 35 Overall, procedures for health and safety are good. The school's policy for health and safety is in place, and the appointed governor visits termly. On a day to day basis, the site maintenance officer is diligent in ensuring a safe environment. The school has yet to prioritise hazards identified to ensure the most essential tasks are carried out first. Sufficient members of staff are trained in first aid, and appropriate procedures are in place to record and monitor any accidents. Pupils are given good opportunities to learn about their own safety; for example, in a reception class lesson children were learning how to keep their teeth healthy.
- 36 Monitoring of the pupils' personal development is very good and is based on the very detailed knowledge that all staff have of their pupils. The use of registration time, personal, social and health education lessons and religious education lessons provides very good opportunities for pupils to express their feelings. The pupils' academic and personal achievements are consistently acknowledged through celebrations in assemblies and rewards in classes.
- 37 Since the previous inspection, the school has established good procedures to assess and to monitor the pupils' progress. A full programme for assessment in all subjects has been successfully instigated. There are now comprehensive guidelines to teachers on assessment procedures and on recording formats, which result in a consistency of approach throughout the school. Test results are recorded, so that the pupils' achievements can be tracked year by year in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. These are related to national standards and give the school reliable data for target setting. Parents are made aware of the targets at Parents' Evenings. In addition, there is a home/school diary system, which is maintained in every class. This system is developing particularly well in writing, which has been a curriculum focus this year. Data is used well to monitor the progress of different groups of pupils, such as boys and girls, the gifted and talented and those who have special educational needs. The assessment coordinator maintains a portfolio of pupils' work in English, which is levelled, dated and annotated. Other subject coordinators have started a similar record of pupils' work, where teachers can check the validity of their assessments. The school has effectively addressed the areas of concern identified at the time of the last inspection. Assessment is now being well used to plan what the pupils need to learn next.
- 38 Pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated into the caring environment of the school. There are appropriate procedures in place to identify pupils who may have a learning or physical disability. When a concern is first raised, either by a parent or a teacher, the pupil is monitored. If necessary, the pupil is put on the appropriate stage of the school's special needs register. The provision for the pupils requiring specialist help is very good. The quality of the individual educational plans is comprehensive, with targets broken down into small, achievable steps and reviewed regularly with all concerned, including the pupil.

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

- 39 The school has continued to improve relationships with parents since the previous inspection and they are now good.

Strengths in this aspect are:

- the quality of the annual reports;
- the enthusiasm of the school association in supporting learning.

Areas for development are:

- the governors' annual report to parents does not contain everything required by statute;
  - there is little information to parents about the curriculum.
- 40 Parents have very positive views about the school and the majority of parents feel their children like school. Almost all parents who replied to the questionnaire agree that their children are expected to work hard. They feel that teaching and behaviour are good and this is supported by the inspection findings. Some parents feel that they receive insufficient information about how their children are getting on. Inspection evidence found that the annual reports are of very good quality and that other opportunities for parents to receive information are similar to those found at most schools. Some parents felt the range of activities outside lessons is unsatisfactory. However, inspection evidence shows that there is a satisfactory range of good quality activities, including a breakfast club.
- 41 The school tries hard to involve parents in its work. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress, through regular termly meetings as well as reports. The school association organises a variety of events and the money raised is used to enrich pupils' learning resources, for example: with the purchase of playground equipment and books. Some parents help in school and their contribution is appreciated.
- 42 The quality of documentation provided for parents is good. The annual reports to parents are written in a clear, readable style. They explain in detail what pupils know, understand and can do, especially in English, mathematics and science, and are consistent in reporting targets for improvement. A particularly innovative feature on the reports is the recording of pupils' efforts and attainment in each subject by using grades. This is particularly helpful and clear. The half termly newsletters are detailed and provide sufficient information about the activities happening in school. However, the school does not yet send out adequate curriculum information to help parents to support their children's learning. The prospectus meets statutory requirements and is informative and well put together. The governors' annual report does not meet statutory requirements and provides very little information about the activities of the governing body.
- 43 The school has worked very hard to build very positive relationships with parents of pupils with special educational needs. The parents know who the coordinator is, and the teachers make regular contact with the parents of those pupils who have individual education plans, to review the targets that have been set.

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

- 44 The quality of leadership and management of the school is very good overall. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection, when there were a number of areas for development within leadership and management.

Strengths in this area are:

- the headteacher has a very clear knowledge of his school and the way forward. He is a good delegator and very supportive of his staff;
- subject coordinators and the special educational needs coordinator manage their areas very well;
- the governing body is very involved and knowledgeable;
- the finance committee of the governing body monitor finances very well and they are very involved in planning.

There are no areas for development.

- 45 The headteacher has a very good knowledge of what is going on in the school. Part of the reason for this is the time he spends in the classroom, supporting the teachers and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. There has been a significant amount of this monitoring since the last inspection, carried out by the headteacher, the coordinators for English and mathematics and local

authority advisers. This is one of the major reasons for the improvement in the quality of teaching and the raising of standards. Very careful analysis has also been carried out of the school's results and very good plans have been put in place to address areas for development found. For example, this analysis showed that reading was an area for development, so the very effective paired reading times have been built into the timetable for five weeks each year. The effectiveness of these sessions has been validated by further analysis done, which shows that both the younger and older members of each pair benefit significantly in terms of raising their reading abilities.

- 46 The coordinators are very well supported and lead their subjects well. They have been given very good guidance and are expected to produce plans to raise standards in their subjects. Where relevant, these plans are built into the school improvement plan. This is a comprehensive document, with useful background information as well as a review of action and successes to date. The plan then has an interesting and detailed rationale for developments for the next three years and concludes with all necessary detail for items for development. The headteacher's termly report to governors gives good information about these items for development, ensuring that the governors are kept up to date on progress being made. At present there is no coordinator for the Foundation Stage, this role being included as part of the Key Stage 1 managers' responsibility. There is therefore nobody in management with particular expertise on the education for these young children. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed. The coordinator provides very effective support and guidance to all teaching and support staff. All statutory requirements are fully met. There is a knowledgeable governor for special needs. A particular strength of the school's arrangements is the fact that the governor is also a part time teacher at the school. This dual role provides her with a very good overview of all matters, which she regularly shares with the governors at meetings.
- 47 The governors are knowledgeable, well informed and very involved in the management of the school. The committee structure of the governing body is effective in monitoring the effectiveness of the school and planning developments. They are constantly looking for ways in which they can be more supportive of the school; for example, governors have recently been given specific subjects to overview, whereas before they were attached to particular teachers. This was felt to be a more effective way of monitoring standards. The finance committee takes a very active role in setting the school budget and receives the monthly statements. Very good practice is carried out as, after the committee has reviewed these statements, every member of the governing body receives a copy with any relevant notes of explanation. The governing body is fully involved in setting and monitoring the school improvement plan and their expertise ensures that all the right questions are asked. This close involvement of the governing body ensures that all funds available to the school are very well managed. Although the school has just replaced the school administrator, there has been no loss in the efficiency of the management of the school, due to the very careful planning of management in school and by the governors.
- 48 The number of teachers is appropriate for the size of the school. They are suitably qualified to provide a good standard of education for their pupils. Staff new to the school are given very good levels of support to help them in their early days in post. This is largely because of the very good teamwork ethic that exists between all school staff. They are mutually supportive and very ready to share their knowledge and expertise. There is an adequate number of learning support assistants who complement the work in classrooms very well, particularly in supporting pupils with special educational needs. The accommodation is good. The classrooms are generally well appointed and provide good bases for learning, and a good sized hall is used well for a variety of purposes. However, in order to get to some classrooms, pupils and staff have to pass through other classes. Although this is done with a minimum of fuss, there is quite natural disruption to learning on occasions. The library is in the process of being resited in the new entrance area and provides a welcoming space. The school is also fortunate in having a large and well stocked computer suite and a room set aside for music teaching. Both of these are used well to enhance the pupils' learning. The outside environment is very good, with plenty of hard surfaced play areas as well as a large grass area and playing field. Resources are satisfactory in quantity and quality, and are used well to support teaching and learning across the whole curriculum and across the age range of pupils in the school.

- 49 The school has established very good financial procedures that are based firmly upon the principle of best value. Taking into account all relevant factors, the school provides very good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50 The following should be read in the context of this very good school and not regarded as weaknesses. In order to continue to raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) raise standards in mathematics by:
  - (a) ensuring that the pupils are encouraged to use a wide range of methods of calculation;
  - (b) increasing the opportunities for the pupils to use their mathematical knowledge in a variety of contexts;
  - (c) increasing the opportunities for the pupils to explain their thinking and to record their working in a variety of ways, including those developed by themselves;

*(paragraphs 5, 74)*

- (2) raise standards of writing and handwriting and the presentation of the pupils' work by:
  - (a) placing a stronger focus on the teaching of spelling;
  - (b) increasing opportunities for extended writing;
  - (c) systematically and consistently teach handwriting skills;
  - (d) setting higher standards in the presentation of work;

*(paragraphs 67, 68)*

- (3) ensure that all pupils have opportunities to cover all aspects of the curriculum by considering methods to adapt the curriculum for the pupils in mixed age classes.

*(paragraphs 22, 84, 93)*

In addition to the areas for development above, governors should consider the following for inclusion in their action plan:

- (4) consider the appointment of a coordinator to be responsible for the Foundation Stage curriculum.

*(paragraph 46)*

- (5) ensure that all statutory requirements, with regard to the governors' annual report to parents, are met.

*(paragraph 42)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	70
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	53

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	16	33	16			
Percentage	7.1	22.9	47.1	22.9			

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 nearly two percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part time pupils)	290
Number of full time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	67

FTE means full time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	61

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	39
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	40

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
National comparative data	0.5



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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	12	13	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	9	8
	Girls	7	7	9
	Total	14	16	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	56 (73)	64 (73)	68 (92)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	9	8
	Girls	6	9	8
	Total	13	18	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	52 (76)	72 (88)	64 (80)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	18	22	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	12	17
	Girls	14	10	17
	Total	29	22	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (63)	55 (51)	85 (79)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	12	16
	Girls	13	11	16
	Total	21	23	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	53 (57)	58 (57)	80 (64)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	253	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	30	0	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.8
Average class size	29.0

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

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	205.5

*FTE means full time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	526,590
Total expenditure	532,049
Expenditure per pupil	1,834
Balance brought forward from previous year	20,460
Balance carried forward to next year	15,001

### **Recruitment of teachers**

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

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	290
Number of questionnaires returned	88

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	29	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	40	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	42	5	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	48	7	1	1
The teaching is good.	49	33	2	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	33	15	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	22	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	30	0	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	36	38	8	1	5
The school is well led and managed.	36	43	4	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	41	3	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	35	20	6	11

*Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding*

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

- 51 A number of the children in the Foundation Stage have attended the nearby nursery school, but some have had little or no nursery experience. Children enter the reception class at the beginning of the year in which they become five.

Strengths in provision for the Foundation Stage are:

- the range of activities to enhance confidence and self esteem;
- the relationships that exist in the classroom;
- the use of praise and encouragement;
- the secure routines that are in place.

Areas for development are:

- the use of large equipment in the hall;
- the use of the paired reading sessions to develop the children's speaking skills as well as their love of books.

- 52 The quality of education provided for the children in the Foundation Stage is good and all the children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. The large majority of children enter the reception class with levels of attainment that are well below those normally expected. A significant weakness is their lack of confidence and self esteem; in their first weeks in the class they will stand near to the activities prepared for them but will not actually be confident enough to take part. The teacher and the nursery nurse have to use all their skills to encourage the children to take part in simple activities, such as playing in the sand or painting. At the time of the inspection, even though children had made good progress and were moving quite confidently into activities, many were still playing on their own and had not reached the point where they were sharing their play with each other. On entry to school language skills are weak, with many children not responding to the teacher at all, whilst others respond with a single word. The fact that, by the time they reach the end of the reception year, they are beginning to respond quite happily to the teacher's questions during whole class activities, and that they are beginning to play and work together, means that progress, although very slow, has been good.

- 53 One of the major reasons for the good progress children make is the relationships they establish with the teacher and the nursery nurse. Adults use praise constantly to boost the self esteem of the children. By receiving this boost to their confidence, the children show a high regard for the staff and there is a strong sense of mutual trust. This, coupled with the planning of challenging but achievable activities, means that the children learn new skills and knowledge, even though the steps forward are at times small. The teacher keeps careful records of the children's progress and regular observations are made during activities. The results of these are used well to ensure she plans activities to challenge each child.

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

- 54 Teaching in this area of learning is good and all the children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Due to the number of children who enter the reception class lacking in self confidence, this is an area where there is particularly strong emphasis. Throughout the year the children are constantly encouraged to become more confident in trying new activities and feeling at ease with each other. In order to do this, the teacher and the nursery nurse intervene in activities and build up the self esteem of children with praise and encouragement. If the classroom environment changes in any way, or there are changes to routines, these are carefully explained to the children so that they feel secure in the new setting.

One indication of how much progress they have made in this area of learning is the way in which they move quite happily into different activities and make choices as to where they are going to play. At all times the atmosphere in the class is one of quiet, peaceful orderliness. All the children help to tidy away activities at the end of each session; they get ready for physical education and, when ready, walk to the hall in a very sensible manner. Although they make good progress in this area of learning, the majority of the children will not have reached the Early Learning Goals by the time they start in Year 1. They will continue to need a great deal of support in developing their self esteem and confidence and in their ability to work together in pairs or groups.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

- 55 Children coming into the reception class lack confidence in speaking and have very poor listening skills. The good teaching they receive and the strong emphasis on this area of learning in all aspects of their work ensures that they make good progress. By the time they reach the end of their reception year, in spite of the good progress, the majority of children will not have achieved all the Early Learning Goals. Particularly weak areas are in reading and writing. Before starting school, many children have not had a wide range of opportunities to enjoy listening to stories. They have not developed a love of books, nor played many games and activities that will make them confident with familiar words. The curriculum is full of such opportunities. With the help of the teacher the children made a list of what they needed for a party. Alongside this activity the nursery nurse made sandwiches for a party and laid out the party table. The fun of linking language development and making the food made learning a pleasurable and meaningful experience for the children. In this kind of activity the children learn familiar words and begin to turn their own squiggles into letters. With the teacher they share the big book and begin to be able to read together and identify words that have the same beginnings. Word games help them to put the correct word with an appropriate picture. The development of early writing skills is slow, with the majority of children unable to write their names. This is due to the fact that the children have very poorly developed manipulative skills. Many activities are provided where they learn the fine control of objects such as pencils and brushes.
- 56 In the reception class the teacher uses elements of the literacy strategy and children enjoy aspects such as the work from a big book. They are beginning to be able to talk about what is in the pictures and predict what is going to happen next. Many of them still need their confidence boosting. The teacher and nursery nurse achieve this by using praise and questioning skills which enable the children to feel they are eager to answer.

## **Mathematical development**

- 57 Children enter the school with low skills in mathematics, mainly due to their lack of confidence in being able to talk about what they are learning, and their poor memories. In many cases what they appear to understand one day will have been forgotten when it comes to similar work on the next day. They do, however, make good progress due to the good quality of the teaching and the high quality of the activities that are planned for them. Children with special educational needs also make good progress and are fully integrated into all the activities, with good support from the adults. However, many children will not reach the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning. Number skills are given a high priority; displays emphasise different aspects of mathematical work and activities are interesting and challenging. In an activity where children were recognising numbers up to eight, the teacher had hidden large cards with numbers on behind a book. Gradually a part of the number came into view and the children were challenged to guess what the number was from the portion they could see. The activity captured the interest of the children and they became more and more excited as they accurately identified the numbers. This was then followed by a session where the teacher asked them to identify a number that was 'more than' or 'less than' the number on display. Well planned activities such as these provide an exciting context in which to learn about numbers, shapes and mathematical language such as 'heavier than' and 'lighter than'. Much of the learning in the class includes the use of number games, number songs and taking opportunities during the day to count and introduce the language of

number. Mathematical sessions are well structured and include activities to meet the needs of the differing abilities of all the children. At the time of the inspection many children were showing a marked increase in their confidence and obviously beginning to enjoy the mathematical activities they were presented with, and this is a very positive development in their learning.

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

- 58 Children entering the reception class have very limited experiences of their own world. Due to the good teaching they receive, and the interesting range of activities, they make good progress. By the end of the reception year the majority will not have achieved all the Early Learning Goals, but they will be starting to be much more aware of their immediate environment. Children with special educational needs are well taught and make good progress. Much of the work in this area of learning begins with what they can see around them. Before going outside to plant sunflower seeds, the children talked with the teacher about things in the immediate environment that they liked and that made it attractive. As she talked to them about planting the seeds she produced a big book all about sunflowers. The teacher and the children looked at the book together and talked about the flowers; they already remembered the names of parts of a flower, such as roots, leaves and flowers. This brief interlude, introducing the book, made a very good link with their work in speaking and listening, and encouraged more conversation and new words for the children's vocabulary. Visitors are regularly used to broaden the children's experience and make their learning fun and interesting. When the dental nurse came, the children listened carefully: they sat quietly and took their turns in responding to her questions about healthy foods. The children have already done some work on healthy eating and it is pleasing to the teacher that they can remember that 'sugar is bad for your teeth' and there should be 'no fizzy drinks at bedtime'. The computer is always readily available as one of the activity areas, and the children show considerable confidence in being unafraid to use it. A strong feature of the work in this area of learning is the opportunities that are taken to make links with other areas of learning.

### **Physical development**

- 59 Children enjoy all the areas of physical development and show considerable confidence and skill in making large movements. When making fine movements, where more control is needed, their skills are poor. For this reason the children will not achieve all the Early Learning Goals in physical development. In order to try to improve the children's fine manipulative skills, there are many activities provided where children have to use their fingers carefully: for example, using scissors with care, pencil drawing and using small objects. The children all make good progress because of this constant emphasis and the good teaching. There is good provision in the outdoor area for children to experience a range of wheeled trucks, role play and opportunities to throw and catch. In the school hall the children come in quietly. They know how to go into a space and they listen carefully to the warm up instructions. On the apparatus the majority of them are quite confident and are able to choose two different ways of moving from one item to the next. At the end of a particularly warm and sunny afternoon it was a joy to see them experiencing the pleasure of running, jumping, rolling and dancing across the school field before settling down into a group.

### **Creative development**

- 60 The provision for creative development is good and the quality of teaching is of a similar standard. Children make good progress for this reason. Because of the problems the children have in controlling their fine movements, they will not, in spite of the good progress, achieve all the Early Learning Goals. The good support given to children with special educational needs means that they also make good progress. The children are quite confident now in using creative materials. They mix colours to produce paintings of their faces. Drawing materials are used to produce good quality pictures of a pineapple and, by cutting paper and sticking it, they are able to make colourful pictures of the daffodils. In the music room the children add sounds to a story, using percussion or their voices. This is another excellent link with literacy, as the children read the story with the teacher with great enthusiasm and then decide how they are going to bring it to life with sound. They work really hard but, for many of the children, controlling the triangle or a beater is a difficult challenge. The role play area is Doddington Park Vets and there are resources to stimulate play.



At present, although children use the area for imaginative play, they tend to play on their own and have not reached the stage of group or paired play. Timely intervention by the teaching staff encourages this to develop and progress is being made.

## ENGLISH

- 61 Standards attained by the pupils in Year 2 are below average. In Year 6 the pupils attain standards which are average. Throughout the school pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. Since the previous inspection, when English featured as a key issue, the school has made significant improvements.

Strengths in the subject are:

- standards of speaking and listening in English and across other subjects;
- the pupils make good progress in all aspects of English;
- the school adapts the National Literacy Strategy well to suit the needs of individual pupils;
- the pupils receive appropriate challenges which suit their needs very well;
- the quality of teaching;
- the pupils thoroughly enjoy reading.

Areas for development are:

- writing throughout the school;
- handwriting and the presentation of work.

- 62 In Year 2, the pupils' standards in speaking and listening are just below average, with a significant proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels. This represents very good achievement because the pupils enter the school with literacy skills that are well below average. They make rapid strides in speaking and listening, because the teachers and classroom assistants use very good strategies for promoting these skills. There is a strong focus on discussions, both in groups and in classes. The pupils listen politely to one another and give way to each other's contributions in discussions, so that they are constructive and undertaken in an atmosphere of mutual respect. The pupils are encouraged to speak clearly and there is an increase in the breadth of vocabulary. The pupils are presented with correct technical terms; this enables them to understand new concepts in science or in mathematics, for example.
- 63 In Year 6, standards in speaking and listening are above average as there is a significant proportion of pupils who achieve levels that are above average. The majority of pupils have a good command of standard English. They confidently engage in conversation with adults, and in discussions in English and in other subjects. A very good example of this was observed in a very effective religious education lesson in Year 6, where the pupils discussed God's messages in the Book of Exodus from the Old Testament. The pupils were soon engaged in a lively discussion as to the meaning and began to link the messages with implications for present day life. This was a direct result of the encouraging atmosphere created by the teacher.
- 64 In Year 2, the pupils' standards in reading are just below average, though some pupils achieve standards that are average for their age. All pupils are taught a good range of reading skills, such as phonics and using pictures and context to help them to make sense of words. Most pupils read fluently and offer opinions about what they have read. The pupils are encouraged to read regularly at home. There is a home/school diary, which is maintained in each class. Parents and other adults are encouraged to write comments about the quality of the children's reading and any difficulties they may encounter.
- 65 In Years 3 to 6, the pupils make good progress in reading. By the time they leave, they reach the average levels for their age. Most pupils read accurately a variety of texts and have an understanding of significant themes and characters in the books they read. The more able pupils choose books by authors such as J R R Tolkien or J K Rowling. These pupils confidently and enthusiastically explain their preferences, and offer opinions as to the 'genre' of their favourite books. A particular strength of the pupils' reading is the enthusiasm that they display for books and for reading. The teachers' infectious enthusiasm is another contributory factor to their

progress. In addition, the paired reading scheme, where the older pupils are carefully allocated to younger partners, is paying dividends, in that it is beneficial to both pupils in improving their reading levels. Moreover, the teaching of reading is effectively coordinated with work in subjects other than English. As a result, vital opportunities for practice and reinforcement are not missed.

- 66 Standards in writing are below average by the end of Year 2. The present strong focus on writing results in teachers using a good range of different strategies to consolidate and extend pupils' writing for different purposes. The teacher in Year 2, for example, gave the pupils a task of writing labels, to be attached to a helium balloon, to see how far it would travel. The pupils had to adhere to the size of the label and ensure that writing was clear, so that the label could be returned to the school in due course. This is just one example of the imaginative way the teachers plan specific tasks to meet the learning objectives.
- 67 By Year 6, the standards of writing are below average. There are weaknesses in this area of pupils' literacy, namely spelling and writing that consists of a rich everyday vocabulary. The pupils do not have the levels of writing skills required for effective communication that conveys meaning clearly in diverse forms, as required for extended writing, for example. Nevertheless, the strong focus the school is presently placing on this area of literacy is beginning to produce positive results. They write for numerous purposes, including reviews such as, 'A film crammed full to the brim with humour and adventure to make everyone laugh and cry, whatever your age'. By Year 6, the pupils use a good range of punctuation marks, including commas, speech, question and exclamation marks, correctly. There are a few pupils who misuse the apostrophe and often insert these incorrectly into words.
- 68 Standards of handwriting and presentation vary throughout the school. In Years 1 and 2, letters are correctly formed, with teachers and classroom assistants reinforcing this in small group teaching. As the pupils move through the school, there are some very good examples of pupils' handwriting, which is in joined script, legible and well presented. However, a sizeable proportion of pupils present work which is untidy and clearly showing some ingrained weaknesses in the formation of letters. Throughout the school, including Year 6, the pupils have regular practice in handwriting. This is done in an exercise book, specifically kept for the purpose. This separation of practice from use exacerbates the pupils' ability to apply their newly learned skills into writing at speed.
- 69 While there are some weaknesses in writing, the teachers carefully plan to consolidate and extend pupils' writing skills across other subjects. During the inspection, the pupils in a mathematics lesson in Years 1 and 2 were asked to make up sentences on time. One said, 'At 10 o'clock Jim wrote a story about a bus.' In science, the pupils use appropriate scientific language such as 'bacteria' or 'decay' and in Year 3 the pupils described 'reversible and irreversible reaction'.
- 70 The overall quality of teaching in English lessons is very good for pupils in Years 1 and 2, and good, with some very good teaching observed, for pupils in Years 3 to 6. In each lesson the teachers emphasise key points, which build on what the pupils already know, and they ask questions well to assess how much they have understood. The teachers start the lessons well by sharing the learning objectives clearly with their pupils. This gets the lesson away to a brisk start and helps the pupils to concentrate on what they are learning. The teachers ask a good range of questions, often directed at particular pupils to match their attainment or to hold their attention. They use a wide range of strategies, which helps to involve all the pupils in their learning.
- 71 The key features of the school's approach lie in the development of speaking and listening, which is supported by excellent relationships between staff and pupils. The teachers build the pupils' confidence and self esteem by valuing what they say. They regularly present good models and give clear explanations and focused reinforcement, so that the pupils then use what they have learned independently. The teachers' excellent management of their pupils enables the lessons to proceed smoothly and without interruptions. Learning support assistants work very well alongside teachers. They are well briefed and adopt the same techniques so that pupils, especially those with special educational needs, have the benefit of more individual attention to further their learning. Assessments are carried out regularly, consistently and positively, and give pointers to pupils on how they may improve their work. Lessons finish well. The teachers carefully review with the

pupils what they have learned by asking key questions, or inviting the pupils to talk about their tasks. This helps to reinforce the pupils' new knowledge and further their speaking and listening skills. Consequently, the pupils have good knowledge of their own learning.

- 72 The management of English is good. Subject documentation is thoroughly and regularly reviewed and, therefore, well focused. There has been close monitoring of teaching. Good assessment systems have been established, which allow the school to track the pupils' progress. The information gained from assessments is used well to plan the next step of pupils' learning and to convey to parents how their children are learning. These factors contribute strongly to the rising standards in the subject.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 73 Standards are below average in Year 2 and Year 6. The pupils make good progress and achieve well due to the good teaching. Good progress has been made since the last inspection, as standards have been rising despite still being below average.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the pupils' ability to calculate rapidly and accurately;
- the progress that the pupils make;
- the quality of teaching and learning;
- the assessment of the pupils attainment;
- the attitudes that the pupils have to their work;
- the arrangements to teach the pupils in groups set by ability.

Areas for development are:

- to raise standards;
- to improve the pupils' ability to apply their knowledge to new problems.

- 74 Most pupils throughout the school have very good abilities in calculating. These basic skills are well taught, and most lessons start with a very slick and well paced mental session, where these skills are practised. For example: pupils in a lesson in Years 1 and 2 very rapidly recognised multiples of five up to 100 and were very quick in their ability to give the pair of a number to make the sum ten. Middle ability pupils in Years 5 and 6 were able to multiply numbers such as  $35 \times 9$  and  $45 \times 15$  very quickly in their heads. In a lesson with the higher ability pupils in Years 5 and 6, the lack of understanding of how to apply these skills to other areas of their work was demonstrated. The teacher reminded the pupils early in the lesson that there are a number of strategies for subtracting, and worked examples of various methods with the pupils on the board. However, when the pupils were set to do an exercise where these methods could be used, they did not select the most appropriate, preferring instead to use the single traditional routine that they had been taught. There is a further area for development: the pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to explain their thinking, think of their own methods of solving problems, or record their working in their own ways. This is resulting in them being often being unable to solve a new problem, which they have the knowledge to solve.

- 75 The pupils make good progress through the school. Despite standards being below average in both Year 2 and Year 6, there is ample evidence to show that individual pupils are making good progress. The major reason for overall standards not showing improvement between Year 2 and Year 6 is the high proportion of pupils who leave and are replaced. Those coming in are not as able as those who leave. This good progress is largely due to two factors, the good teaching and the pupils' very good attitudes to their learning. In almost all lessons, the teachers provide a sharp mental and oral session at the start. This sets the tone for the lesson, which usually progresses at a brisk pace. The teachers make good use of information and communication technology to support work in mathematics, in areas such as data handling, where pupils produce relevant

graphs. Numeracy is also well used in subjects such as science and history. For example: in Year 3 the pupils were measuring accurately the heights of seedlings. In a history lesson in Years 5 and 6, the pupils were ordering events in decades between 1950 and 2003.

- 76 The arrangements to teach the pupils in groups set by ability is very effective, ensuring that the teachers can target their class teaching to suit the whole group. The teachers are still very aware that there is a range of abilities in their groups, and set work for them appropriate to their needs, but with good levels of challenge. For example: in a very good lesson with the lower ability pupils in Years 3 and 4, the teacher provided a range of tasks on halving and doubling and the pupils were all successful at their own levels. This lesson also demonstrated the very good use that is made of learning support assistants. In this lesson, the assistant was working with the least able pupils and these were able to make good progress, due to her expertise and close attention. This good quality support for those pupils with special educational needs ensures that they are able to make good progress relative to their abilities.
- 77 The pupils have very good attitudes to their work. These attitudes are a direct result of the excellent relationships that exist and the mutual trust and respect between pupils and adults. In all lessons seen the pupils were keen to answer questions, settled quickly to their work, and cleared away sensibly. All this ensured that no teaching and learning time was wasted and enhanced learning significantly. There are good procedures for assessing the pupils' performance. These assessments are recorded carefully and enable the teachers to keep a careful check on the progress of their pupils and to take action if a pupil is not progressing as expected.

## SCIENCE

- 78 Attainment in science is average for the pupils in Year 6, and below average for the pupils in Year 2. Progress is good throughout the school because of the good quality of teaching in science. The pupils with special educational needs also progress well, mainly because of the extra help they receive from the learning support assistants.

The strengths in the subject are:

- the good quality of teaching throughout the school which promotes the pupils' interest and enthusiasm for science;
- the good progress made by all the pupils.

Areas for development are:

- to review the curriculum in science for the pupils in mixed age classes in Years 3 to 6;
- the development of the skills of scientific enquiry for the pupils in Years 1 and 2;
- the use of information and communication technology in science.

- 79 The pupils enjoy science. The teachers make lessons interesting and valuable in a number of ways. Many lessons have lively introductions. One teacher made reference to the way a young relative had mixed up lentils, flour and pasta when playing in her food cupboard. The pupils in Year 4 recognised this familiar situation, and keenly engaged in choosing the right kinds of separation methods for these materials. Often, very skilled questioning enables the teachers to assess the pupils' current knowledge while leading them subtly towards new ideas. The pupils in Year 3, who were observing seedlings, were challenged to think about what makes their seedling grow. This led to the idea of the sun as a source of energy, and the purposes of leaves. Another good feature of lessons is the strategies that teachers have for explaining scientific concepts to the pupils. In one Year 2 class, the teacher used a practical demonstration, which involved the pupils acting as the parts of the ear, in order to make a simple explanation of how sounds are heard. This delighted and enthused the pupils, promoting further questions about how fast sounds travel.
- 80 The teachers make detailed plans and good preparations for experimental work, ensuring lessons run smoothly. The teachers manage their pupils well in the classroom and, as a result, the pupils

are well behaved. Clear assessment systems are in place which focus on the objectives from the scheme of work, and teachers monitor the pupils' progress effectively.

- 81 There is a good breadth of study in science. The teachers ensure that science is taught in familiar contexts and they make good links to other subjects. The pupils' work shows that learning is related to everyday life through lessons about healthy eating and the uses of drugs and medicines. There are opportunities in most lessons to improve literacy skills, both in written work during report writing or recording, and in listening and speaking during discussions. The teachers use a good range of scientific vocabulary. The pupils in Year 5 and Year 6, learning about changes of state, talk about reversible and irreversible changes and some can give examples of these.
- 82 Learning support assistants provide invaluable help and support, both to the pupils with special educational needs and to many other pupils in the class. Science lessons make a good contribution to the pupils' cultural education. Work about light, for example, is linked to particular celebrations. One learning support assistant, who played her violin, enraptured the Year 2 pupils who were learning about sounds, encouraging their spiritual development. The pupils' social skills are evident when they listen to each other's views and help each other.
- 83 The result of good teaching is good progress. Although the pupils in Year 2 have not yet reached standards expected nationally, they are generally making good progress in knowledge and understanding of science. By Year 6 the pupils have had the opportunity to engage in a good deal of experimentation and investigation to enhance their knowledge and understanding of science. Skills of recording gradually become more sophisticated. Their work includes examples of both line and bar charts that they have drawn, showing good links with their work in mathematics. Revision books used towards the end of Year 6 ensure a review of scientific concepts.
- 84 At present, the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are not built up at a steady rate. Although there is a good revision system in place in Year 6, the curriculum is not organised to ensure that all the pupils have the relevant amount of time for all aspects of the science curriculum. The curriculum is not enriched by visits to field centres. A further area for improvement is the development of some aspects of scientific enquiry for the pupils in Years 1 and 2. The pupils of this age do not yet carry out enough experiments themselves in which they have to decide whether a test was fair, nor record in a variety of ways, like simple tables or using information and communication technology. Currently there is little use of information and communication technology in science. Sensors for monitoring temperature, for example, are in school and development is in the early stages, but insufficient use of information and communication technology is made as a source of data and information. In areas of study such as the earth and beyond, or the human body, computer simulations are not used as a route to enhancing the pupils' understanding.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

- 85 Standards are above average, both in Year 2 and in Year 6. The pupils are making good progress due to the good teaching. The pupils with special educational needs are supported well and also make good progress. Standards have improved since the last inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the standards being achieved;
- the progress that the pupils are making;
- the variety of media being used;
- the displays of the pupils' work.

An area for development is:

- the use of sketchbooks to develop a theme.

- 86 Although there was little teaching of art during the inspection, the standard of work on display round the school and talking to the pupils gave ample evidence of the above average standards. There was also sufficient evidence to say that the quality of teaching and learning is good. The pupils' work round the school is very well displayed, raising the profile of the subject and giving the pupils self esteem. For example: in many of the communal areas there are examples of the pupils' work, which have been properly framed. The collages of blitz scenes, linked with the pupils' history topic on the Second World War, and the winter reflection paintings add considerably to the library and entrance area. The wide variety of media being used ensures that the pupils are having the full range of experiences. In the one art and design lesson seen in Year 6, the pupils were using a variety of three dimensional techniques in clay, wood, papier mâché and sewing materials. The results were very competently produced and effective.
- 87 The 'Journey of a piece of string' outside a Year 4 classroom is further evidence of the variety of media used, as well as the good use made of visiting artists. These very effective designs had been created during the visit of an artist, who had worked with the children. Further evidence of the work with visiting artists is the display in the hall of 'Elmer the elephant', a large flying model, along with an associated large material print, on which the youngest children had printed their own pictures of Elmer. This work demonstrates the good progress that the pupils make as they enter the school with poorly developed skills of using pencils and paintbrushes. Displays in classrooms, as well as in the information and communication technology suite, show the good use and effective results of using painting programs in information and communication technology.
- 88 Sketchbooks are used well, particularly for first drafts of observational drawings. For example: as part of their science work, the pupils in Years 5 and 6 had been observing apples decomposing at different rates in differing environments. The sketches of these were carefully observed and the finished drawings, using pastels, on display were very good. Sketchbooks are not yet used to develop a theme within the art topics. Art and design makes a significant contribution to the pupils' cultural development, with patterns based on artists such as Kandinsky on display.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 89 Standards in Year 2 and in Year 6 are average. This is similar to the situation at the time of the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is good and the pupils are making good progress. Those with special educational needs receive good support from learning support assistants and also make good progress.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the pupils' skills of making;
- the pupils' attitudes to the subject;
- the use of sketchbooks.

Areas for development are:

- to ensure that all pupils have opportunities to cover all aspects of the curriculum;
- to improve the pupils' skills of evaluation.

- 90 Pupils enter the school with underdeveloped skills in this area. They learn the skills well and, by the end of Year 2, cut and stick to produce satisfactory Mother's Day cards with moving parts. In a lesson where the pupils were making these cards, good use was made of the digital camera to take pictures of the pupils to incorporate into their designs. By the time they are in Year 6, the pupils have good skills of making, and the ability to form and join materials in a variety of ways; for example, the pupils in one Years 5 and 6 class were sewing the parts of their slippers together well.
- 91 The pupils' designing skills are helped by the good use of sketchbooks. These enable them to try a variety of designs, until they are happy with what is planned. The coordinator has produced

useful design sheets, which help to take the pupils through the whole process. Although these sheets contain a space for the evaluation of their projects, these evaluations are often insufficiently thorough to be worthwhile. Whilst comment is passed on the aesthetic value of the product, there is not often a genuine evaluation of whether it has met the design criteria or how it could be adapted to be improved.

- 92 The pupils thoroughly enjoy their design and technology lessons, and are keen to produce good results. For example: in a Year 4 lesson, where the pupils were making money containers, there were high levels of perseverance and concentration. Although some of the pupils found the task difficult, they were supported well by their classmates and by the good number of adults in the class. This mutual support was also seen in a lesson in Year 5, where one boy, having finished his task, offered help to his neighbours without any sense of interference. A contributory factor to the pupils' attitudes is the good teaching. The teachers ensure a very good working atmosphere by their management of their classes. They also use a good variety of methods, and provide good resources which enthuse and interest the pupils.
- 93 There is a good curriculum for the subject, but it has not been adapted to take account of the mixed age classes in Years 3 to 6. This means that some pupils in these year groups occasionally miss out on some aspects of the curriculum. However, there is a good system of assessment, which ensures that skills are learnt progressively.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

- 94 At the previous inspection, standards were judged to be average in Year 2 and in Year 6. Since then, the school has maintained its standards. All pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make good progress.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the quality of teaching and learning;
- the use of speaking and listening;
- the use of literacy;
- talks by visitors to the school.

An area for development is:

- the teachers' subject knowledge.

- 95 The pupils in Years 1 and 2 make sensible comparisons between the imaginary Scottish Isle of Struay and Lincoln. They show good understanding of simple maps and begin to use geographical terms, such as keys, to show places, shops, the post office, bridges and roads. In addition, the school community is involved in taking Barnaby Bear on holidays, most recently to Jamaica, and sending postcards from places around the world. The teachers successfully extend the pupils' knowledge by displaying the locations on the world map and sharing with the pupils what Barnaby found interesting or different from Lincoln. There are also very good links with other subjects, notably history, where, for example, the pupils mark Scutari on the map.
- 96 As the pupils move through the school, they build on their knowledge, skills and understanding in the subject, through the good teaching they receive. For example: in Year 6, in a very well prepared and presented lesson, the teacher helped the pupils to make comparisons between rainforests and deserts. He deepened the pupils' knowledge through very well prepared slides and explanations on life in Kuwait. He enabled the pupils to visualise the form of transport through the desert, for example, by describing the dromedaries' movements with considerable humour. The pupils could subsequently link the nickname of the 'ships of the desert' with the dromedaries.
- 97 The school very effectively uses local, national and international news as a strategy for teaching geography. During the inspection, Year 5 pupils sorted news into various groups and considered



the most pressing concerns for people in Lincoln. This is a very good strategy for the development of active citizenship, where the pupils realise that rights carry responsibilities. There was also a very good link with speaking and listening, where the pupils prepared a balanced debate on a number of local issues.

98 The overall quality of teaching is good. Occasionally there are gaps evident in the teacher's knowledge of the subject. This slows pupils' progress. The teachers manage their pupils very well and, through the outstanding relationships, there is a very good learning environment, where the pupils' contributions and views are valued and respected.

99 Teachers plan work with a nationally recommended scheme. A strength of these arrangements is the way that they adapt it to the needs of the pupils without losing the rigour of the subject. Presently, the school does not undertake field studies, because of factors beyond their control. However, visitors are encouraged to give talks to pupils about their part of the world: most recently, China. These visits help the pupils to appreciate cultures from other parts of the world.

## HISTORY

100 The last inspection criticised the overuse of work sheets, which slowed pupils' overall progress. Since then, the school has addressed this issue well. As a result, the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and standards are average in Year 2 and in Year 6.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the quality of teaching and learning;
- the use of drama to deepen pupils' understanding of history;
- the use of local history;
- the use of speaking and listening and of literacy;
- the development of historical enquiry.

An area for development:

- the teachers' subject knowledge.

101 In Year 2, the pupils understand that life was different in the past. They record, for example, the life of Florence Nightingale and how different the conditions were at that time from those in a modern hospital in Britain. The pupils have good knowledge of the great fire of London, from their study of Samuel Pepys' Diary. The more able pupils explain the reasons why the fire spread so quickly; for example, 'The fire spread quickly because many houses were built from wood'. The middle ability pupils also give good accounts of the events, such as, 'The King helped to put out the fire by ordering some houses to be burned up.'

102 By Year 6, the pupils have built on their understanding of history through wide ranging activities, which involve research and the use of their enquiry skills. The pupils learn what life was like during the Second World War and how it felt to be an evacuee. This study contributed well to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, because the pupils had to consider, not only the restrictions of life in that period, but also the qualities needed to live through and survive the war. There are good examples of pupils using their literacy skills. One wrote different qualities, such as, 'Soldier: brave, gallant, alert to danger, self confident, good knowledge of weapons, strong, do what you are asked. Mother: sacrificing, sense of duty, not wasteful, courageous, but with common sense.'

103 Throughout the school, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are well planned and prepared. Occasionally, the teacher is unsure of an aspect of history and refers to lesson notes. When this happens, pupils' progress and interest flag. However, the variety of strategies which the teachers employ helps the pupils to understand history and their place in it. For example: teachers often use drama, as was observed during the inspection, when the pupils in Year 3 took

on the roles of Spartans or Athenians, to present to the rest of the school. Having researched this aspect of Greek history, the pupils had to explain how their lives are changing as a result of these conflicts. To encourage full participation, the teacher suggested a choice of presentation: either answering questions from the 'floor' or presenting dramatically. This is just one example of an imaginative approach to teaching at this school. Consequently, the pupils are inspired to learn.

- 104 The pupils are very proud of the school's name. During the inspection, they were eager to provide information on why the school was named after Leslie Manser and how they commemorate his valour in giving up his life to save others. Annually the pupils invite members of the 51/60 Squadron, who give talks about their personal experiences.
- 105 The units of work for history are planned from a nationally recommended scheme of work. It has been tailored to the needs of the school. Visits to Lincoln City and County Museum assist the pupils to understand local history. Presently visits are limited, because of constraints beyond the school's control; however, the school borrows resources from the local museum. In addition, theatre visits by performing companies enable the pupils to develop an interest and a love of history.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 106 Attainment in information and communication technology is average for the pupils in Year 2 and above average for the pupils in Year 6. The pupils make good progress throughout the school. This is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection for the pupils in Year 6. The pupils with special educational needs also make good progress, often because of the help they are given by support staff.

The strengths in the subject are:

- the good quality of teaching, leading to pupils' good progress and pupils' enthusiasm for information and communication technology;
- the access to an information and communication technology suite and the arrangements for using it;
- the extra opportunities provided by the information and communication technology club at lunchtimes;
- the work of the coordinator.

An area for development is:

- the further use of information and communication technology in subject learning, as more modern hardware and software becomes available in classrooms.

- 107 The quality of teaching in information and communication technology is good overall. The teachers give clear introductions to lessons which are firmly focused on the lesson objectives. In one excellent lesson in a class of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, the teacher very skilfully developed the idea of forming questions with only a 'yes' or 'no' answer to distinguish objects, as a precursor to using a key. The use of fruits familiar to the pupils led to pupils brimming with excitement and eagerness. The teachers manage the pupils well in the computer suite, and have high expectations of learning and of behaviour. In a Year 6 class, the class worked industriously in two groups. Pupils whose turn it was to use the computers used PowerPoint to animate pictures and text and incorporate sounds into a presentation. Pupils not at the computer used worksheets which improved their knowledge of multimedia presentations. In this lesson pupils developed their skills at their own rate.
- 108 The pupils make good progress in development of skills. The recorded work of the pupils in Year 1 and 2 includes examples of work written in a variety of colours, clip art inserted into text and their use of several fonts. By Year 6 the pupils have used a wide range of applications, including word processing, spreadsheets as models and presentation programs, and questioned a variety of

information sources. In discussions the pupils say they would need help with forming graphs or charts from spreadsheets and some can remember using simulations. The pupils are assessed regularly and satisfactory recording systems are in place. This is better than at the time of the previous inspection, when assessment in information and communication technology was regarded as an area for improvement. The scheme of work is based on national guidelines and provides for progressive development of skills.

- 109 Work in information and communication technology contributes well to pupils' development in literacy. Both lessons seen and pupils' work show that a good deal of language associated with information and communication technology is used, such as hypertext, hyperlinks, or interactive. Learning support assistants regularly provide invaluable support to groups of pupils. The pupils with special educational needs progress well and the pupils help each other when necessary.
- 110 The information and communication technology suite is a valuable resource to aid learning. It consists of 15 up to date computers, which means that the pupils usually use the computer individually, giving them the best opportunities to enhance their learning. A digital projector is available and this enables teachers to demonstrate elements of lessons clearly. New equipment for pupils to learn how to detect and measure events like changes in temperature or in light level, is in school and ready to be used later in the year. There is good arrangement for the use of the suite. The pupils in Year 1 are usually taken in groups to use computers, and pupils from Year 2 onwards use the computer suite as a class. In addition to improving the pupils' information and communication technology skills in the suite, the teachers can use the information and communication technology suite for one lesson a week in the mornings for literacy or numeracy, and in the afternoons to enhance learning in other subjects. This enables pupils to apply skills they have learned to new situations. For example: in a history lesson in the suite, the pupils were able to search for information from a database about important historical events in the last 50 years, which they then fitted to a time line. Pupils improved their skills in being selective in the information they chose. From the outset the pupils learn how to save and access their own work, which is necessary for effective learning with information and communication technology.
- 111 Every day at lunchtimes there is an information and communication technology club, which provides pupils with the opportunity to use the computers freely. Pupils can use the Internet at this time, complete their own work, use graphics or educational games. This is popular and is contributing positively to raising standards in computer skills. The school has made valuable contacts with many nations worldwide through 'e-pals' and some teachers are building web pages which classes can access.
- 112 The coordinator leads and manages the subject well. His useful plans for the future include reviewing information and communication technology use across the curriculum, preparing example folders of pupils' work and reviewing the needs of support staff. The most important priority for development identified by the coordinator in his development plan is the need for modern computers in classrooms. Though there are already computers available in classrooms, they are fairly slow and not suitable for much modern software. To this end the coordinator is looking at the curriculum to identify where information and communication technology could be further used in subjects.

## **MUSIC**

- 113 Standards in music are average for the pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. The pupils are making satisfactory progress, due to the good teaching. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection report, when standards in music were below average. The pupils with special educational needs make similar satisfactory progress, often because of the help they are given by support staff.

The strengths in music in the school which have contributed to this better picture are:

- the specialist skills of some teachers which contribute positively to the subject;
- the work put in to revising the curriculum by the coordinator;

- the pupils' access to a good range of musical experiences;
- the pupils' enjoyment and enthusiasm for music.

The main areas for development are

- the use of information and communication technology in music;
- the further development of music clubs.

- 114 One strength of music is the contribution that the teachers who are specialists in music bring to the subject. This enables the pupils to develop a range of musical skills. This is an improvement on the last inspection, where rhythm and pitch were judged to be the predominant areas of the pupils' learning. In a very good lesson seen in Year 6, the teacher was able to show the pupils how to control their breathing with their diaphragm so that the pupils could hold a long note when they were singing. The pupils honed their performing skills, the teacher providing a competent accompaniment on the piano. They developed their skills of harmony and knowledge of dynamics, pitch and song structure. The pupils incorporated drums and cymbals fairly rhythmically into the piece and there were plans to include tuned instruments in the following lesson. The pupils with special educational needs are helped well by classroom assistants to learn songs, for example, so that they can take a full part in lessons.
- 115 Since the time of the previous inspection the coordinator has contributed considerably to the raising of standards in music by writing and revising schemes of work. Currently the scheme is based on national guidelines, which ensures the progressive development of the pupils' skills of listening to, appraising, composing and performing music. This scheme is accompanied by a commercial resource which is designed to help teachers who are not music specialists. However, only parts of this resource are found to be helpful to the pupils' learning, and its use is to be reviewed at the end of the year. The coordinator has also had bought many other resources, including recorders for the pupils, though there are still insufficient pitched instruments.
- 116 The pupils enjoy a good range of musical experiences throughout the year. There is a choir, for which the pupils are auditioned, which develops the pupils' singing and performing skills, and they enter the Lincoln Music festival. At other times the pupils can join a singing club and there is a music group for the pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 during the summer term. The Arts activity week included a performance of 'Don Carlos' by a visiting company who provide opera for children. Photographs show the enjoyment and delight on the pupils' faces when they listened to the opera. The school has a system of 'composer of the month' and during the week of the inspection there was a musical theme to registration and assemblies, enabling the pupils to broaden their knowledge of different kinds of music. In one class the pupils could recall listening to the music 'The arrival of the Queen of Sheba' by Handel, played the day before. In one assembly the headteacher played a tape of a wide range of styles of music and provided much information about composers. Music is used as an ambience in some classrooms, and dance classes help the pupils learn about rhythm.
- 117 The pupils enjoy music and respond very enthusiastically to musical activities. Their behaviour is good. In hymn practice and in lessons the pupils were noticed to sing in a lively manner, and generally tunefully, though there is sometimes insufficient emphasis placed on diction. One Year 6 lesson was a lively musical workshop with a multitude of opportunities for the pupils to develop musically, particularly the skill of listening carefully to each other. Performances develop pupils' social skills very well, as they learn to work together. The pupils are happy to play and sing together, and learn self control through musical experiences. There is no information and communication technology used in music currently, and this is an area for development. Bearing in mind the history of the school, the coordinator would like to forge links with the nearby Royal Airforce Band. This could raise the profile of music in school and encourage the pupils to learn an instrument.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

118 Standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 are above average and in Year 6 they are well above average. This is a considerable improvement since the time of the last inspection. The pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2, and make very good progress for the remainder of their time in school. The work they do is challenging and exciting because of well balanced programmes of activities and the high expectations of the teachers. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Strengths in the subject are:

- good teaching in all the aspects of the curriculum;
- the positive attitudes pupils have to the subject;
- the good balance between the strands of gymnastics, dance, games and swimming;
- monitoring the success of the curriculum.

There are no areas for development.

119 Lessons in all the aspects of physical education are very well planned. In all the lessons that were observed, a good balance was achieved between the direct teaching of skills and vigorous activities for pupils to take part in. In a Year 2 class the warm up was initially led by the teacher, but then the focus changed to following the movements of the pupils. The whole of the lesson moved from the teacher to the pupils, enabling them to use their imagination and make considerable input into the activities. A major strength in all the lessons was the way in which teachers skilfully used demonstrations by pupils. In a very successful lesson, where the pupils were reenacting a Greek legend, the teacher used pupils to demonstrate so that the range of movements of other pupils was broadened considerably. She particularly asked the pupils to talk about why they had chosen to move in that particular way. In doing this, the pupils had to evaluate their own work and that of their partners. Not only is the balance between the different strands of physical education carefully addressed, but also a strong feature of the teaching is the transfer of skills from one area to another. In a very good dance lesson, where Year 6 pupils were choreographing their movements into a musical sequence, the teacher was skilfully bringing in work the pupils had done during gymnastics. The way in which the pupils were able to use these movements was testimony to the good teaching in all the areas of physical development.

120 The pupils' work is well supported by a range of extra curricular events and activities. On Wednesday evenings the school hall is a place of graceful action during the dance club, whilst on Thursday it reverberates with energy as boys and girls enjoy the football skills training and show what good progress they are making. Out of school they are enjoying considerable success in football, athletics and swimming, and this helps to generate a pride in their school. The school is very successful in a number of inter school competitions, particularly in swimming, where standards are well above national expectations.

121 The subject is very well coordinated. A very good feature, which contributes to the success in this area, is the way in which the success of the curriculum is monitored each year so that teaching and learning and provision can be improved.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

122 Standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6 are above average. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection. The good progress pupils make in this subject is due to the good quality of teaching and the direct links made in lessons with the personal experiences of the pupils and the life of the school. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the good quality of teaching and learning;
- the pupils' knowledge and understanding of what they have been taught;

- the strong links that are made in lessons between religious education, personal, social and health education and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

There are no areas for development.

- 123 The quality of teaching throughout the school has a major impact on the progress the pupils make and the level of understanding they acquire about the many aspects of religious education. Lessons are well planned to include plenty of variety to sustain the interest of the pupils. One lesson began with a joyful sing along that skilfully led into a discussion about songs with a religious connection. The pupils talked about how some songs belong to particular times of the year and this again brought the discussion round to Easter, which was the significant theme of the lesson. The pupils in school love stories and many lessons have a story base.
- 124 Listening to the pupils in lessons, and in conversation with them, it becomes very clear that they have a real understanding of the issues they have been learning about. A lesson recalling the events from bible stories and identifying the main messages demonstrated this very well. The pupils could clearly recall the story of Adam and Eve from Genesis, and talk about the messages in this and other stories, such as Jonah and the Whale. A feature of all these discussions was the mature way in which pupils could share ideas. This was particularly the case when pupils were discussing the Ten Commandments and came to the issue of adultery and marriage. This was dealt with in a sensitive manner and pupils responded with sensible comments and remarks. In the majority of lessons seen, the teachers took the opportunity to develop aspects of the pupils' personal development. They did this with considerable skill, weaving these aspects into their lessons. A superb example of this arose in a Year 3 lesson, when pupils were discussing events leading up to the death of Jesus. With great sensitivity the teacher led the discussion into talking about the tragic death of Jess, a young girl the class had met before her death. A moment of reflection was included as they thought about what she had brought to them and they talked about the sadness of such a young person dying. This wonderful inclusion of powerful aspects of the pupils' lives and development is one of the reasons why they are growing up into such mature and caring people.
- 125 The subject is extremely well coordinated and the coordinator has a very clear understanding of the powerful influence this area of learning has on, not just the religious understanding of pupils, but on their whole development.