

INSPECTION REPORT

The North Cotes Church of England

Primary School

North Cotes, Grimsby

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120579

Headteacher: Mr W F Scott

Reporting inspector: J'Anne Robertson
13158

Dates of inspection: 11th – 12th February 2003

Inspection number: 248156

Short 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:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The North Cotes Church of England Primary School Sea Lane North Cotes Nr Grimsby Lincs
Postcode:	DN36 5UZ
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Jones
Date of previous inspection:	24 November 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

North Cotes Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is smaller than average with 71 pupils on roll aged four to eleven years. It serves a diverse and dispersed population; which includes the village of North Cotes and the surrounding district, including an ex-RAF base, which provides affordable housing and a Missionary training centre. The school is a popular school, with an increasing pupil roll. Children from the mission represent a significant proportion, 34 per cent, of the school's population. The school has a high level of pupil mobility with a turnover of approximately a third of its pupils each year. This is related to the training programmes parents are involved in at the Mission. Some of these pupils, 4.6 per cent, have English as an additional language. This is higher than the national average. The main languages represented at the time of the inspection were German and Korean. These statistics represent a significant change in the school since the last inspection. Thirty-three per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs with one pupil having a statement. This is above the national average. The nature of these pupils' needs are varied and include emotional and behavioural problems and speech and language difficulties. Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly in line with the local authority average. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a highly effective and well managed school with an interesting well rounded education for children at its heart. It provides a very creative and inspirational curriculum and because of this the gifted and talented shine and the less able enjoy success. Provision is very good for pupils with special educational needs, pupils for whom English is an additional language and pupils who are gifted and talented. The quality of teaching is consistently very good. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Excellent leadership and management offered by the headteacher.
- The governing body is very effective.
- The quality of teaching is consistently very good with examples of excellence.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are excellent.
- Standards in English and, particularly, reading are well above national averages.
- Standards in music are excellent and in art, design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT) and geography are very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs, pupils who are gifted and talented and pupils with English as an additional language is very good.

What could be improved

- The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels of attainment, Level 3 at Key Stage 1 and Level 5 at Key Stage 2 in English (especially writing), mathematics and science.

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 November 1997, and it has made very good progress since that time. The headteacher, staff and governors have successfully addressed the issues that were identified for improvement. The school has in place effective planning and assessment practices and procedures. Standards have improved and, in particular, progress is very good in raising pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science. Standards in ICT, music, and design and technology have continued to improve as a result of good leadership and enhanced facilities. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, where it was deemed to be good. It is now consistently very good with examples of excellence in all classes.

STANDARDS

Care needs to be taken in the interpretation of the school's results since there were only 13 pupils in the 2002 Year 6 cohort. Such small cohorts make comparison with national test results unreliable as an indicator of overall standards since results tend to fluctuate considerably from year to year.

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

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

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

There are strong indications from the school's own information on the eligibility for free school meals that the above comparison with "similar schools" does not do justice to North Cotes. Furthermore, the high percentage of annual pupil turnover and the Department of Transport and the Environment's data regarding high take-up of family benefits show clearly that there is considerable social and economic disadvantage in the school's catchment. Account has been taken of these factors in judging the school's educational achievements.

In the 2002 national tests in Year 2, the majority of pupils attained the expected level, Level 2, in reading and writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level, Level 3, was above the national average in reading but below in mathematics.

In Year 6 in the 2002 national tests the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level, Level 4, exceeded the national average in English, mathematics and science. The proportion reaching the higher levels, Level 5 and above, was below the national average.

Despite the wide variations from year to year to be expected in a small school, the overall improvement in standards has been broadly similar to the national trend. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils achieve above average standards in English and slightly above standards in mathematics and science. Progress made by pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is very good. For gifted and talented pupils it is very good in music.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes are excellent. Pupils are eager to learn with high levels of interest in all lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is excellent. There were no incidents seen of adverse behaviour. Pupils are polite and demonstrate courtesy in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	The school values personal development and there are many examples of pupils taking responsibility and engaging in independent learning. There are excellent relationships. Pupils take care to include everyone in their games and activities.
Attendance	Attendance is very good. Recording and monitoring of attendance is thorough.

Personal development, attitudes, behaviour and relationships are all strengths of the school. Relationships, in particular, benefit the development of pupils with special educational needs and newcomers to the school, including those with English as an additional language. The supportive environment enables them to make very good progress. Pupils take initiative frequently, as demonstrated within their music and projects, and their involvement in Sir Robert Swann's 'Project Antarctica' considering care of the environment. Pupils take responsibility for their learning and for that of others. For example, where older pupils act as mentors to younger ones at lunchtimes and in lessons through partnership reading groups.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is consistently very good throughout the school, with one third of lessons excellent. This represents an improvement on the last inspection, although, even then, teaching was always satisfactory and often better. Teachers have good subject knowledge in all subjects of the curriculum. There are effective strategies to promote literacy and numeracy skills and these are useful in raising pupils' achievements across the curriculum. Teachers provide varied learning opportunities that challenge pupils' thinking. They constantly tell pupils how well they are doing which spurs them on to greater endeavour. They have very high expectations that all will do their best. They have equally high expectations of their own professional performance. Lessons are well prepared with high quality planning which covers what needs to be done in an effective and manageable style. Teachers make good use of other adults in classes, enabling work to be set at different levels matched to the needs of groups and individuals. This leads to successful learning for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, with English as an additional language and gifted and talented. Teachers strongly encourage personal interest and creativity and this leads to outstanding performance in some areas, such as music. Most of all they demonstrate an enthusiasm for learning which is infectious.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school offers a rich, broad and balanced curriculum. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their musical talents and use of ICT skills.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and because of this they demonstrate very good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is very good. Teachers are adept at ensuring that these pupils interpret instructions and learning objectives and are therefore fully involved in the activities provided.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, with some outstanding opportunities for cultural development provided by music and the links made between the school and Gumlek, Nepal. Pupils' personal development is fostered by frequent opportunities to take responsibility, for instance, in their school council.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Health and safety issues are given high priority and are resolved quickly. Arrangements for child protection are effective and practical. The school provides a safe environment. All staff know and care for pupils well.

There are very good opportunities provided for pupils to work in the local community and in wider communities, as for example in their continuing association with Gumlek School, built by North Cotes fund raising, and the Antarctica environmental project. The school provides a wealth of cultural experiences to increase understanding of their own and others' cultures. Awards gained by pupils for instrumental music exceed what is normally found in schools. Good provision is made for design and technology and physical education with the newly built technology room and re-designed hall. Partnership with parents is strong and positively supports learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher offers a clear educational direction for the school. He is dedicated to the school and gives his life to its development and to the development of the pupils. He is well supported by the staff team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors hold the school to account for performance and improvement and fulfil their responsibilities effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance is effective and leads to appropriate priorities within the School Development Plan.

The strategic use of resources	The school provides an exceptionally rich learning environment and facilities far beyond what is usually expected in schools, let alone small village schools.
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The headteacher's contribution is outstanding. In the parents' words his contribution is such 'that he gives over and above that which most would expect.' Governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They apply the principles of Best Value effectively. The aims and values of the school are well chosen and are seen in all the activities provided for pupils. In particular, there are extensive opportunities for creativity, personal development and the valuing of others. Because of this the school produces future citizens who are thoughtful, reflective and creative. This is an outstanding aspect of the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school. • Children make good progress. • There is good behaviour. • The teaching is good. • The school encourages children to work hard and achieve their best. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few criticised the range of extra-curricular activities.

The inspection confirms the very positive views of the parents. Views regarding extra-curricular activities are not endorsed. The range is over and above that which might be expected of a primary school. Extra-curricular activities are quite rightly carried out during the day as a significant number of children are bussed to school and would therefore miss out on after school provision.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Excellent leadership and management offered by the headteacher

1. The headteacher offers a clear educational direction for the school. In the parents' words his contribution is such that *'he gives over and above that which most would expect. He is dedicated to the school and gives his life to its development and to the development of our children'*. Parents and governors appreciate his leadership style and the vast range of opportunities he initiates for the pupils' learning. This leads to a curriculum that is exciting and creative, based around real projects that are sustained over long periods of time. For example, the building of a school in Gumlek, Nepal, with the pupils involved in recording their own CDs of the school band in action to raise funds. This project started with the foundations laid in 1997 and has been sustained ever since, with the pupils of each school writing letters to each other.
2. He has established, with his staff, a well thought out curriculum framework that fully covers the required components of the National Curriculum and meets the demands of planning for mixed-aged classes. This offers flexibility where age groups may alter whilst ensuring that pupils are taught the appropriate learning objectives for their age. As a result of this teachers are able to share clearly with parents how teaching is covered within the classes. Parents appreciate this clarity of communication and recognise the progress made by their children.
3. As a teaching headteacher with nearly a full time teaching commitment he has developed management systems that are simple in structure but capture the important tasks of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, reviewing policies and school priorities and analysing school information regarding standards. He achieves this through an effectively structured monitoring file, which includes records of classroom monitoring by himself, subject co-ordinators and the link adviser. There are follow-up reviews with teachers when training needs and development opportunities are identified. Monitoring is regular and rigorous and opportunities for further development are followed through.
4. There are effective performance management systems, which further contribute towards maintaining the high quality of teaching seen. Targets set for pupils' achievements are based on a full analysis of the national tasks and tests results at the end of each key stage and on additional information gathered from optional standard assessment tests. These targets for improvement are debated with staff, pupils and parents. There is celebration when they are achieved. The result of this approach is that pupils are 'hungry for learning' and feel they have achieved a lot by the time they leave the school.
5. The headteacher has, with governors and staff, constantly sought to bring about improvements in accommodation and learning resources. This has had a positive impact on standards and there is good provision of specialist resources for music, ICT and design and technology that is well utilised. For example, recently, the hall has been modernised providing additional space for under-five's to play and a bouldering (climbing) wall for extended sports provision for older pupils. A new technology room has been built, incorporating alternative energy sources from wind and solar power, which are used to drive models made by the pupils.
6. It is the drive and vision of the headteacher that leads to a commitment to improvement which embraces everyone, staff and pupils alike. This makes the school a learning school at all levels.

The governing body is very effective

7. Governors hold the school to account for performance and improvement through effective regular monitoring visits and business meetings. They are well informed regarding the school's strengths and weaknesses and understand how to analyse the school's performance information. Because of this they are able to ask challenging questions and set relevant priorities in the school development plan. These are focussed on the improvement of standards and continuous improvement in the school's provision. For example, the governing body has been concerned to improve the adult to pupil ratio for certain activities, such as group work in literacy and numeracy lessons and the teaching of pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language. It has achieved it partly by funding additional classroom assistants and partly by enhancing voluntary classroom support. Some governors are among the volunteers. Governors are involved in all stages of the writing and review of the development plan and regularly question the headteacher and co-ordinators regarding its outcomes.
8. Governors review policies on a regular cycle and update these where required in consultation with staff. They receive reports from the headteacher and co-ordinators. They have developed effective links with teachers which enable them to keep up to date on curriculum matters and how any changes may affect the pupils or the requirements for staff training. They ensure that performance management procedures for the headteacher and staff are implemented annually and use the resultant information to determine the staff development programme. This positively supports the development of the highly effective staff team that they manage.
9. Governors have been active in the development of the school's aims and values and because of this are able to say how these are reflected in the practices of the school. The governors fulfil their roles and responsibilities well, with the exception of some minor omissions from the last annual report. The chair of governors is aware of this and has already set in motion plans to address this in the next report. Governors ensure that the school provides a safe environment by carrying out regular health and safety checks and following up on any recommendations rapidly. Governors apply the principles of Best Value to their spending decisions and use the monies entrusted to their care well.

The quality of teaching is consistently very good with examples of excellence

10. The quality of teaching is consistently very good throughout the school, with one third excellent. This represents an improvement on the last inspection where teaching was always satisfactory and often better. Teachers have good knowledge of all subjects of the curriculum and, for those subjects in which they take a lead, they maintain their own professional development regularly through courses and cluster meetings.
11. There are effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills and good links are made by teachers between the basic skills taught in literacy and numeracy lessons and other lessons across the curriculum. For example, English was taught through other subjects by:
 - use of lists and instructions; in food technology when making Jewish latkes, and in science when listing conductive and non-conductive materials;
 - extended pieces of writing in geography, using persuasive argument in travel brochures, and comparative writing in history, identifying the differences in life past and present;

- use of imaginative writing for poetry.

In mathematics understanding was developed by:

- weighing and measuring ingredients for cookery in the early years;
- the use of measurement in a Years 5 and 6 science lesson identifying changes in the height of shadows in relation to the distance between an object and a light source. Pupils used their understanding of mathematical problem solving well in this situation and went on to successfully plot tables into a graph.

12. This 'knitting' together of learning experiences is a strong aspect of the teaching as it enables pupils to very effectively understand the links to be made between subjects. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly using the school's agreed structure. They are particularly careful to ensure that each lesson builds logically on what was learnt in the previous one. They explain learning objectives at the start of lessons and ask pupils challenging questions, which demand recall of previously learned key information. They reiterate the learning objectives during lessons and link them to pertinent teaching points for groups and individuals. They go on to use plenary sessions well for checking pupils' understanding.
13. Teachers provide varied learning opportunities that challenge pupils' thinking and they tell them how well they are doing. There is a good pace in lessons, with all pupils working hard and making very good progress. The pupils work productively and with a strong sense of purpose.
14. Planning at all levels, from the long-term curriculum plan for all subjects and all classes through to weekly and daily plans, covers what needs to be done in an effective and manageable style. Teachers make appropriate adaptations to their plans in order to meet the needs of individuals and groups using their very good understanding of their pupils. This knowledge and understanding of the pupils leads to good quality assessment which enables progress towards targets set. Targets are set for the pupils in such a manner that they know what it is they need to do and why. They therefore can and do take on responsibility for their own learning. Where pupils require further explanations to understand the task, as in the case of those with English as an additional language, this is done sensitively and to good effect. This means that these pupils are able to follow instructions and complete tasks successfully without being at any unnecessary disadvantage. They are making very good progress in their acquisition of English and its use to access learning in class. Some who have been in the school less than two terms are now able to carry out simple conversations and, most importantly, are able to ask questions and seek explanations where they are unclear about what to do. Teachers expect the pupils to question them and respond readily to this, providing additional help and support where required. This means that all pupils are confident and are not afraid to seek explanations.
15. Teachers make good use of other adults in classes, enabling work to be set at different levels matched to the needs of groups and individuals. Lesson plans and learning objectives are fully discussed with these other adults, enabling them to provide very high quality assistants to groups and individuals. This benefits all pupils, including those with special educational needs, with English as an additional language and those who are gifted and talented. Most of all, teachers demonstrate an enthusiasm which is infectious. They make good use of a wide range of resources, such as pictures, text and artefacts. This enables all pupils to benefit from lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are excellent

16. Overall, attitudes remain excellent, which was the case at the time of the last inspection. This is directly related to the very good quality of teaching provided and the manner in which teachers capture pupils' interest through knowing them as individuals. Because of the high quality of attitudes in lessons 'time flies', with brisk learning and good quality discussions. All too often lessons end too soon for the pupils because they wish for more. This often leads to whole class groans of 'Oh no!' when teachers announce that the closing stages have been reached.
17. Pupils are well motivated and grasp all opportunities for learning with eagerness. Many examples are seen of pupils taking responsibility. Some examples include:
 - using computers independently out of lesson time;
 - practising their musical instruments voluntarily at lunchtimes with limited need for adult help;
 - organising assemblies for themselves and recording their music on CD;
 - use of their school council to consider how to improve aspects of the school, such as learning new games at break-times and buying in the equipment from a given budget;
 - older pupils acting as mentors to younger pupils during lunch and break-times and in paired reading. They carry out these duties with pride with the reading sessions positively promoting standards.
18. There were no incidents seen of adverse behaviour. Again, this is related to the teachers' knowledge of individuals and their ability to notice when pupils need a nudge to go in the right direction. They do this by making pertinent teaching points that refocus pupils on the work in hand. Pupils are polite and courteous, both in lessons and around the school. They take a genuine interest in each other's needs. No one is allowed to be left out. Parents particularly appreciate the values that the school sets and comment on how these extend positively to pupils' lives outside of school. The school also incorporates fully the varied beliefs represented in the community in the life of the school and its work with New Tribes Mission and Gumlek, Nepal. For example, pupils value highly their pen pal letters from Nepal. These were received with delight by the pupils during the inspection and they were eager to respond. Parents comment positively on the inclusive nature of the school and how the pupils and staff welcomed those from other countries and cultures.
19. There are excellent relationships. Success is praised and rewarded through the school's system for certificates of achievement not only for working hard in subjects but also for personal endeavour regarding personal, emotional and behavioural development. The pupils have high self-esteem as the result of the praise and constructive criticism they receive. All pupils 'walk tall' because of these levels of self-esteem. Parents commented at the Parents' Meeting "*Our children feel they have achieved a lot by the time they leave.*"

Standards in English and, particularly, reading are well above national averages

20. Pupils achieve well above average standards in English. In particular, they make very good progress in reading and use this skill to acquire a wide range of knowledge through the use of books and text downloaded from the Internet. Progress made by pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is very good.

21. Children learn to read fluently from a very early age. Younger children, in Reception and Years 1 and 2 especially, are taught through the use of a well-structured phonics programme and good quality guided reading sessions. They are helped in these sessions by the teachers' skilful interaction and questioning. For example, in one lesson the teacher asked why the main character in the story, 'Amazing Grace', acts in the way she does, what her feelings are and who she is trying to look like. Such questions led the pupils to consider the main sections of the book and the main events using their recall and prediction skills. They were able to compare events with those in other books they had read, such as 'Jungle Book'. During the discussions the teacher introduced extended vocabulary. In response the pupils modelled their own answers by using this extended vocabulary. This was particularly helpful for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, as they gain access to a wider vocabulary. In the written follow-up to the reading the pupils used the new words with confidence in writing sentences about characters. In another lesson they explored the use of speech marks comparing cartoon-style speech bubbles with prose. They went on to compose their own examples with accuracy and enthusiasm. The pupils approach new and unfamiliar text with confidence and use contextual, pictorial and phonic clues effectively with growing assurance and to support their writing.
22. By the end of Year 2 writing standards are high, with Reception children able to write their own names, complete sentences with the correct missing words and to use their early attempts at writing to convey meaning. They are able to read back their writing. As they progress through Years 1 and 2 pupils write longer pieces of writing and pay attention to the correct use of capital letters and full stops and the use of other grammatical conventions, such as commas and speech marks. They use a variety of styles correctly, for example, simple rhyming couplets for poems, structured story lines for tales using their imagination, and lists and instructions for recording non-fiction pieces. The pupils are ahead of the standards normal at this stage.
23. Older pupils in Years 3 to 6 read fluently and are able to discuss current and previously read books, recalling their favourite books and authors and explaining why they have particular preferences. They read frequently and use the school's and local library to extend their range.
24. It is particularly helpful that guided reading sessions are given time separately from the main English lesson. They are organised across Years 3 to 6, with pupils paired as reading partners. Older pupils take pride in assisting younger ones in developing their reading skills. In turn, the younger children listen with awe to the older pupils and gain from them a love of books and reading. Because the partnerships between the pupils work so well the teachers and assistants are able to take groups for reading and guide pupils in key points regarding genre, authors and illustrators. Discussion is used by teachers very successfully to ensure pupils' understanding.
25. By the end of Year 6 writing standards are as expected for their age. However, there are few examples of the higher levels. Because reading is taught separately writing is given a greater focus in the main English lessons and this is improving the quality of work. In lessons focussed on poetry text pupils throughout the Key Stage learned about the use of personification, implied meanings and the descriptive use of verbs. The older, Years 5 and 6, pupils went on to consider how the meanings of words change over the course of time. They showed a good understanding of all of these aspects of poetry and went on to use them with competence in their own poetry writing.
26. The pupils show a good grasp of the main features of spelling, punctuation and grammar and use this knowledge well in their work in all other subjects. The pupils

write for a range of purposes, for example, they composed tourist brochures, the quality of these rivaled those of published materials.

27. Because of the strong emphasis on discussion, the pupils have exceptionally good speaking and listening skills. This means that those with learning difficulties that may demonstrate slower progress in written work are still able to express their ideas clearly and accurately and, therefore, are able to demonstrate their potential. Throughout the school all pupils make very good progress.

Standards in music are excellent, and in art, design and technology, information and communication technology and geography are very good

MUSIC

28. The standards achieved by pupils in music are exceptional. More than two thirds of the junior part of the school play a wind or brass instrument, gaining grades normally taken in Years 10 and 11. The majority achieve Grades 2 to 3 and the most talented reach as high as Grade 6. The range of instruments includes; drums, guitar, trombones, saxophones, flutes, trumpets, clarinets and a euphonium. Younger players of only two terms to a year's experience are able to play as a group in unison, follow musical notation accurately and enter into a piece in progress without deflecting rhythm or pace, playing in the round with success and enthusiasm. They are able to sight read and apply their knowledge and understanding of pitch, dynamics and tempo to the pieces played. Older players are able to play pieces such as Polly Wolly Doodle, Ghost Train and German waltzes using 3/8 and 6/8 time in three parts. They successfully perform well-known pieces taking into account the use of slurs and staccato. They are able to demonstrate by playing and explain through clapping where quavers, semi-quavers, pauses and rests are used and their effect on the sound achieved.
29. For those who do not play a brass, wind or string instrument there are sessions for the percussion band to rehearse and play separately and as part of the whole school band. Again, the standards are high with pupils learning to play different rhythms. They are able to maintain their individual rhythms when playing together in different parts. This leads to a harmonious sound, which is enjoyable to listen to without the addition of tuned instruments. All the pupils are able to follow the conductor's signals, maintain tempo and alter pitch, working effectively as a group to produce live music of their own composition.
30. The quality of teaching seen in each of the band sessions was consistently excellent for all members of staff seen. They impart enthusiasm and inspire pupils to practice regularly. Clear explanations are given where any child requires further support. Each teaching point made is followed through with good demonstration of the sound to be achieved. Praise is used well and pupils leave the lesson with a sense of achievement.

ART

31. The quality of artwork seen in the pupils' sketch books, displays around the school, in classrooms and the school portfolio are of a very high standard. Pupils produce very individualistic pieces of work. Sometimes they are based on a given stimulus, such as a famous artist and sometimes based on their own free expressions of emotions around a theme.

32. They use a variety of tools, paints, crayons and chalks to achieve depth and perspective in their pictures and drawings. The skills gained for pictorial representation are used well in other subjects, such as drawing designs for models, depicting buildings and artefacts in history and drawing maps for geography. The good presentational skills gained from art are carried through into all subjects. As well as drawing and painting skills the pupils are taught how to make pottery objects and then to fire these in sawdust kilns, building on their knowledge of other cultures at the same time through such first hand experience. Art skills are promoted very successfully from when the pupils enter the school. The youngest children produce workable hand puppets, self-portraits and clay models. They use a combination of art skills and ICT to make their own CD covers and stylised portraits.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

33. The provision for design and technology is quite exceptional for a small primary school. As a result pupils attain very good standards in the subject. All pupils are involved in the full range of activities of the national curriculum, from making puppets, using hinges, pulleys and gears in working models, through to constructing powered vehicles. What is exceptional is the use of real life projects that are followed over long periods of time. The pupils have, for instance, designed and then built a climbing castle, which is full sized and safely usable as a playground piece of apparatus. They have learned about garden design and forestry care through their school copse project where they are instructed in the care of trees and maintain a record of each tree that has been planted. Responsibility for care of the trees is passed from one generation of pupils to the next. They are involved in 'Project Antarctica', following Sir Robert Swann's project's progress in cleaning up expedition waste in the Antarctic and learning to keep their own environment healthy. A specialised room has been constructed using funds augmented by the Parent Teacher Association, with a wind-pump and solar panel system from which the pupils can explore the use of alternative energy sources and use the battery stored electricity to power their own models. From this resource the children are beginning to develop an external area, including shallow water features using their environmentally friendly generated electricity. These varied projects are enabling pupils to gain high quality experiences of applying their knowledge and understanding of the subject in their own lives.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

34. Pupils benefit from high quality provision for ICT, enabling them to understand the use of computers and their peripherals in their daily lives. They are able to use digital cameras, producing their own photographs for frontispieces of school documents, policies and covers for projects and CDs. They have helped to produce a pictorial record of the life of the school in the later years of the last century. They record their own CDs of their musical performances, such as the Millennium concert and the last Christmas production of 'The Hoity Toity Angel' and understand how to replicate these at a commercial quality so that they can sell them to parents. Computers are used regularly by the pupils in all subjects, enabling them, for example, to produce information brochures, complete with maps and pictures downloaded from the Internet. They use computers with familiarity and fully understand where they can be of use and where another tool would suit their needs and purposes better.

GEOGRAPHY

35. Geography is used very effectively to gain understanding of the wider world and why communities develop. The pupils have a very good understanding of natural resources and their influence on communities at local, national and international levels. They also have a heightened awareness of the importance of education in developing countries through their links with Nepal and pupils who arrive from around the world. The school has, over a substantial period of time, supported the building of a primary school and then a secondary wing in Gumlek with funds raised by the pupils, staff and parents. This has brought the world alive for the pupils particularly when they were able, over the past two years to track the travels of two parents as they cycled to Gumlek delivering letters in person and then travelled back by various countries. A poignant moment was when they opened a package of letters from Nepal and were still able to smell the wood smoke and spices that impregnated the paper. The pupils' research abilities are promoted beyond levels expected of their age because of such experiences. Standards are further promoted by the quality of teaching and the teachers' own first-hand knowledge and understanding of geography and travel. The provision of real experiences, not just in geography but in many subjects, is characteristic of the curriculum and an outstanding achievement of the school. It promotes pupils' general knowledge in such a manner that they are able to converse on a wide range of subjects with confidence and in-depth understanding not normally expected of their age.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs, pupils who are gifted and talented and pupils with English as an additional language is very good

36. The school has a creative approach to pupils' learning and much of the curriculum is based around projects that are sustained over long periods of time. It offers pupils in-depth study opportunities and to develop their talents in the creative arts, sports and media. This means that the school offers a rich, broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities for the gifted and talented to shine and for the less able to enjoy success. Because all are given opportunities to achieve, the pupils have a real sense of being valued as individuals in their own right.
37. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities, that further enrich the curriculum, and provide opportunities for pupils to achieve high standards in non-academic areas.
38. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and are supported within class by adults who understand their needs but do not allow these to be an excuse for lack of achievement. They are rightly challenged to achieve of their best and because of this achieve higher than might be expected. There are examples of the school successfully teaching pupils who would otherwise be in specialist schooling.
39. Gifted and talented pupils are given opportunities to extend their learning, especially in music where the standards and the number of pupils playing a musical instrument is outstanding.
40. The school is a highly inclusive school and those who come from other countries are fully incorporated into the life of the school. They make very rapid progress in their acquisition of English. At the same time their own culture and heritage is valued.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels of attainment, Level 3 at Key Stage 1 and Level 5 at Key Stage 2 in English (especially at writing), mathematics and science

41. As identified by the school prior to the inspection, continued attention needs to be given to achieving higher levels in the national tests at the end of each Key Stage. Not infrequently, the school's test results have compared with other schools more favourably at the national target levels than at the higher levels. There is no reason why this should be so, especially when evidence from other sources amply illustrates the high achievement of which the school's most able pupils are capable.
42. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils achieve above average standards in English with particular reference to reading. There are examples of the higher levels of writing being achieved by a few pupils by the end of Year 6 but not consistently so. In the national tests in mathematics, the standards at the higher levels lag behind those of similar schools in Years 2 and 6. Inspection evidence shows that standards are currently in line with national averages and with some examples of higher achievement, especially in problem solving and number. In science standards at the higher level (Level 5) for Year 6 were not as high as the national average. Inspection evidence shows that the school is beginning to address this well and pupils are attaining higher levels in lessons. The use of additional adults to support raising of attainment in literacy and numeracy is showing evidence of a positive impact on standards at the higher levels.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

43. Increase the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in the national tests in Years 2 and 6 by:
 - (i) implementing the priorities set out in the school's development plan which focus on raising the higher levels of attainment in these subjects;
 - (ii) building on the established good practice in relation to reading;
 - (iii) further developing the small group work and the use of other adults to support teachers;
 - (iv) ensuring that those elements of the national tests on which the higher levels depend are covered more thoroughly and regularly;
 - (v) ensuring more challenging objectives are set for the most able pupils in lessons.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	19
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	9

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	7	8	4	0	0	0	0
Percentage	37%	42%	21%	0	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		71
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		13

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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	6	5	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	5	5	4
	Total	11	11	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (80)	100 (80)	91 (80)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	5	4	4
	Total	11	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (80)	91 (80)	91 (90)
	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	9	4	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	7	7
	Girls	3	1	3
	Total	9	8	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (92)	67 (92)	83 (85)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	11	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (100)	92 (100)	92 (92)
	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	57		
White – Irish			
White – any other White background	11		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean			
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian			
Mixed – any other mixed background			
Asian or Asian British - Indian			
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani			
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background			
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1		
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese			
Any other ethnic group	2		
No ethnic group recorded			

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)	3.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.3:1
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	53

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/03
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	£
Total income	164890
Total expenditure	162000
Expenditure per pupil	2240
Balance brought forward from previous year	10000
Balance carried forward to next year	2890

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	71
Number of questionnaires returned	61

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	23	3	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	72	25	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	43	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	49	8	0	2
The teaching is good.	74	26	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	43	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	18	2	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	43	46	10	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	74	25	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	30	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	39	2	0	8