

INSPECTION REPORT

THE NATIONAL CE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Grantham

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120598

Headteacher: Mr J D Gibbs

Reporting inspector: Anna Dawson
11608

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 March 2003

Inspection number: 248161

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Castlegate Grantham Lincolnshire
Postcode:	NG31 6SR
Telephone number:	01476 563895
Fax number:	01476 563801
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend Eric McDonald MA
Date of previous inspection:	17 th November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
11608	Anna Dawson	Registered inspector	History; physical education; geography; special educational needs; educational inclusion.	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school; the school's results and pupils' achievements; teaching and learning; key issues for action; leadership and management.
9895	Roger Williams	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; quality and range of opportunities for learning; partnership with parents and carers; pupils' welfare, health and safety.
11510	Keith Oglesby	Team inspector	Science; design and technology; English as an additional language.	
22657	Mark Madely	Team inspector	Mathematics.	
25509	Judith Clarke		Information and communication technology; Art and design.	
23392	Ann Ellison		English; Music.	

The inspection contractor was:

Quality in Focus Limited
 Thresher House
 Lea Hall Park
 Demage Lane
 Lea by Backford
 Chester
 CH1 6LP

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 Alexandra House
 33 Kingsway
 London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The National CE Junior School is a voluntary aided school catering for pupils aged seven to 11. It is a large school, situated in the middle of the town of Grantham in Lincolnshire. Most pupils have attended one of two nearby infant schools before they enter the school in Year 3. Pupils start with a wide range of attainments which are overall above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. There are 491 pupils on roll grouped in 16 classes. There are 235 girls and 256 boys. There are 88 pupils on the register for special educational needs, which at 17.9 per cent is broadly in line with the national average and most of these have learning difficulties in literacy or social and emotional difficulties. There are eight pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need. This is broadly in line with the national average. There is a significant minority of gifted and talented pupils. 8.4 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is below the national average. The vast majority of pupils are from white European backgrounds. Five pupils are learning English as an additional language, which is low in comparison with the national average. Their main languages are Chinese, Tagalog, Punjabi and Bulgarian. The school has a stable population. The characteristics of the school are broadly similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection in 1997 apart from a small rise in the percentage of pupils with special educational needs. The school is oversubscribed.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school with many strengths. It is very well led and managed. There is very good provision to help all pupils succeed. The quality of the teaching and learning is very good overall. The provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent. The school's aims of developing personal as well as academic and social skills are promoted successfully and consistently by the staff and reflects its Christian school status. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils are achieving very well overall. In English, mathematics, music and physical education standards are well above average by Year 6.
- There is very good provision for all pupils to succeed academically and socially. Pupils' personal development is excellent.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and management. The Governing Body is experienced and knowledgeable and works very well with the headteacher to move the school forward.
- The quality of teaching overall is very good and there are excellent relationships between pupils and staff.
- The curriculum is rich. The pupils participate in an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. These make a significant contribution to pupils' learning and develop their confidence and self-esteem.
- The partnerships with the parents and the local community are very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in science for some average attaining pupils and some higher attaining pupils could be higher.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection in 1997 in resolving the key issues. There is very good improvement in the development of pupils' independent learning skills, in planning pupils' work and in providing more practical and investigative activities. Very good improvement has been made in the management of the school and the strategic oversight of the Governing Body. The high standards have been maintained and there is good improvement in almost every other aspect of the school's work apart from standards in science, an aspect which has been recognised for development.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
<i>well above average</i>	A
<i>above average</i>	B
<i>average</i>	C
<i>below average</i>	D
<i>well below average</i>	E

There has been an overall steady rise in standards since the last inspection, which reflects the national trend. Inspection findings show that standards in the current Year 6 are well above average in English, and mathematics and average in science. The pupils are on course to attain the targets set for them in English and mathematics. Standards are also well above average in music and physical education and above average in art and design, geography, history and information and communication technology. Standards are at least in line with the national expectations in design and technology and many pupils attain at higher levels. French is taught to the pupils in Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the very good provision made for them and the skilled help they receive from the teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and those learning English as an additional language achieve as well as other pupils. The gifted and talented pupils are challenged and achieve very well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school and concentrate hard during lessons. Pupils are mature and the personal responsibility shown by them is excellent.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The vast majority of pupils behave very well in lessons and around school. This results in a calm orderly community.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Pupils respect the views of others. Most play and work happily together. There are excellent relationships in the school.
Attendance	Above average. Most pupils are punctual and lessons start on time. The overall attendance for this year has been adversely

Aspect	Comment
	affected by illness.

The positive approach by the school towards encouraging pupils' very good behaviour, their positive attitudes to work and respect for self and others, is central to the Christian aims and values of this church school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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.

Teachers have particular expertise in English, mathematics, physical education, music and special educational needs. Teachers plan their lessons very well together and place very good emphasis on pupils' personal, social and health education. The basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics are taught very well. Subjects are often linked together in lessons to maximise pupils' learning. Teachers apply effective methods to extend pupils' thinking skills and to encourage them to take responsibility for their learning. Where teaching is satisfactory, pupils work at a slower pace. In one unsatisfactory lesson, the tasks were not well organised and did not sufficiently challenge the pupils. Information and communication technology skills are taught well across the curriculum. The school provides very well for all groups of pupils. Staff make good use of their assessments of pupils' work to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and the gifted and talented achieve very well. The pupils who speak English as an additional language make very good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum is rich and meets statutory requirements. Visits made to places of interest and visitors who come to school, enhance pupils' learning very well. Provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Learning difficulties are identified early. The pupils are helped very well in lessons or in small groups outside the classroom. Pupils make very good progress towards their targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. These pupils make very good progress and participate fully in lessons and extra-curricular activities. The school takes care to celebrate the cultural heritages of all its pupils.

Aspect	Comment
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Pupils' achievements in sport and music make a significant contribution to their personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school takes very good care of all the pupils. Good use is made of assessments of pupils' work to guide curricular planning and to support pupils' academic progress. Good procedures are applied for child protection.

The school has a very good partnership with parents. The parents think highly of the school and feel the school has high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Most help their children at home.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher sets very good educational direction for the school. The deputy headteacher, senior management team and the staff work together successfully to achieve the aims of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The Governing Body has considerable expertise. The governors work very well together with the experienced chair of governors to achieve the school's aims and fulfil their statutory duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school has very good systems for monitoring and evaluating its performance in order to take the school forward.
The strategic use of resources	The governors and headteacher work closely together to ensure that the school makes the best use of available resources. Spending is very closely monitored to get the best value for money.

The accommodation is satisfactory. The staff make the best use of the available resources to help pupils learn but the lack of space in the hall restricts some physical activities. There is a sufficient number of teachers with subject specialisms who are assisted by the experienced teaching assistants. The learning resources are good overall. The school works very well with parents to help their children learn.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents think highly of the school and appreciate the care given to their children.• Their children like school and make good progress.• The leadership and management of the school.• The quality of teaching is good and is helping their children to achieve their best.• They feel comfortable about approaching the school with queries or concerns.• Their children are given the opportunity to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A few parents would like the provision for homework changed.• Some parents feel they are not well enough informed about their children's progress and that the school does not work closely enough with them.

The inspectors agree with the positive view of the school held by the parents. The provision of homework falls within the normal range and usefully extends pupils' learning. The school works closely with the parents and provides them with very good information about their children's progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall, the pupils achieve very well. By Year 6, standards are well above average in English, mathematics, music and physical education. Standards are above average in art and design, history, geography and information and communication technology. In science and design and technology, they are satisfactory and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This is good improvement overall from the last inspection in 1997. Standards have risen well in English, mathematics and physical education and the high standards in music have been maintained. In all other subjects the school has maintained above average standards apart from science where the standards are nevertheless satisfactory. The pupils' personal development including their cultural, social and health education have also improved.
2. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs varies between year groups and causes some fluctuations in the overall results for the year. The results over the last three years show that standards have kept pace with the national trend for improvement and high standards have been maintained in English and mathematics. The school has set challenging targets for pupils to attain in English, mathematics and science in 2003. In science, most pupils attain the expected Level 4. The proportion of pupils attaining this level exceeds the national average but the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 is similar to the national average. However, some average and some higher attaining pupils could attain higher standards. The school recognises that standards in science can be improved and the newly appointed subject leader has made a good start in fulfilling her responsibilities.
3. The overall attainments of the pupils on entry to school cover the full range. A significant proportion of pupils have special educational needs but the majority have abilities which are average or above average. Pupils' skills in mathematics and reading are overall above average while their writing skills are broadly average.
4. There was no evidence of any major variation in attainment and achievement between boys and girls. A significant minority of pupils are identified by the school as gifted and talented. The needs of these pupils are met through extension lessons and the challenges set by the teachers. The school has a comprehensive policy to meet the needs of the gifted and talented pupils and they achieve very well. The school is good at tracking the progress of all pupils and setting appropriately challenging work that promotes achievement. For pupils with special educational needs, the individual education plans are frequently reviewed and detail very clearly how the targets are to be achieved. The pace and quality of the learning of the pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need are very good, whether in a small group or one-to-one situation, because the specialised teaching is well tailored to meet their needs.
5. There is a very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language, none of whom are at the early stages of learning English. These pupils make very good progress in learning English. The support is good from the staff and from the Local Education Authority (LEA) to help the pupils to settle in. Because of the very good quality teaching and learning and the level of support, the children make very good progress in English and other subjects. Throughout the school, the staff use methods to help the pupils' understanding of the lessons. Subject vocabulary and the lesson objectives are clearly explained and understood by the pupils.

6. Since the last inspection, the school has improved its use of test and assessment data to identify where pupils need most help. The school has successfully put into place a number of strategies to raise pupils' attainment. The introduction of the national literacy and numeracy strategies and the development of pupils' research and problem solving skills are helping to maintain high standards in English and mathematics. The teaching assistants are deployed very well and pupils in most need get the help they need to improve their work. The staff use well resources which are aimed specifically to support the teaching of basic skills. In the lower attaining groups, there are sufficient staff to support pupils' individual needs. Equally, the needs of the gifted and talented are met through class work set to meet their needs and additional small tuition groups and extra-curricular provision.
7. Assessments made on entry identify groups and are used to set targets and so help pupils make maximum progress. Alongside these targets, the staff consistently encourage pupils to succeed by promoting a culture where pupils succeed personally, socially and academically. All groups of pupils are fully involved in school life.
8. The involvement of parents in their children's learning has been strengthened as the expectation for helping their children is shared effectively through the home-school agreement. Most parents respond well overall by helping their children with reading and homework tasks. Homework is used well to support what pupils have learned during the day and to develop their research skills. No pupil is disadvantaged in learning at home as there is a homework club provided before school where pupils can work.
9. There are features of the school's provision that promote pupils' achievement very well. The learning opportunities that are given to pupils, the tuition and expertise of the teachers and the frequency of their attendance at extra-curricular clubs make a considerable contribution to the overall attainment of pupils. Personal and social development is a strong feature of the school. The agreed code of conduct known as the Pupils' Charter is shared between the whole school community. Pupils' views are strongly represented through their participation in the lower and upper school councils and personal, social and health education lessons. The emphasis on the development of social and thinking skills and applying these skills in their learning across the curriculum promote pupils' self-disciplined approach to their behaviour and their work. This has a considerable impact on pupils' personal and social development.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good. The school has maintained this very high level of enthusiasm by pupils since the last inspection, and this is a strength. Pupils are eager to learn and make a very positive contribution to lessons in their answers to teachers' questions and by venturing opinions and posing their own questions. For example, in a Year 5 art and design lesson, pupils filled the board with creative ideas about how they could depict movement in a painting. Pupils really enjoy being at school and take an active part in the activities provided, both in the classroom, and in the excellent range of extra-curricular clubs and interests which the dedicated teachers provide at lunchtimes and after school.

11. Pupils are very well behaved. Pupils' behaviour is a strength of the school. The school has worked extremely hard to maintain such very good behaviour since the previous inspection. The pupils' charter and school and class rules embody the school's very high expectations for exemplary behaviour, and, generally, pupils live up to them. The behaviour policy is reviewed regularly, and parents' and pupils' views are sought. The school emphasises achievements and rewards and this positive direction and its consistent application are responsible for pupils' very good behaviour, both in and out of the classroom. It is particularly noticeable in the playgrounds, which are small for the number of pupils; yet, they play sensibly and safely despite the limited space. The behaviour policy makes it clear that bullying, racism or sexism are not tolerated under any circumstance. Teachers use the flexibility afforded by the personal, social and health education lessons to deal with these serious matters. Sanctions are clearly understood and applied by all staff and pupils, and break time detentions are the most severe in use currently. There have been no exclusions in the recent past. On those rare occasions when there is serious misbehaviour, including violence, parents are immediately involved and play their part in its resolution.
12. Pupils are well aware of the effects their actions have on others and have a very good understanding of the effect this can have, not just in lessons, but at all other times around the school. Pupils respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others very well and this is encouraged and exemplified by all the adult staff who work at the school. Self-esteem and mutual respect are qualities the school aims to develop in all its pupils. It is very successful in this aim.
13. The initiative and personal responsibility shown by pupils are excellent. The school expects its pupils to be self-reliant and responsible and they are encouraged to help in class and around the school as soon as they join. There is a culture of fostering independence and helping others throughout the school, both socially within the school community and academically, in research and independent learning. As pupils mature within the school, they take great pride in becoming house captains and vice captains, monitors and prefects, and school councillors. This excellent achievement adds considerable value to pupils' time at the school and prepares them well for secondary education.
14. Relationships at the school are excellent. Its Christian basis of spirituality and morality underpins the school's work and aims very successfully. Pupils are polite and helpful, both to each other and to adults, and there is mutual respect between children and all the staff. At the inter-school swimming gala, the school team behaved impeccably and displayed considerable sportsmanship throughout the event, applauding members of other schools' teams when their own team member was beaten. They provided an excellent example to other competitors and enhanced the reputation of the school.
15. Attendance is good. It has been maintained at a high level since the last inspection. The most recent attendance figures, for last term, show a drop in attendance, but they are still above the national average. The school's analysis revealed that this was due to a very high level of sickness caused by an influenza epidemic; attendance has improved since then.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. It is a strength of the school which has been maintained since the last inspection. A high proportion of the teaching is high quality. The key issues from the last inspection relating to planning more

investigative activities have been resolved. Teachers' planning is a strength and teachers make very good use of assessing the pupils' abilities to plan further work.

17. Pupils learn very well. They work very hard to acquire new skills and knowledge. This includes pupils who learn English as an additional language who make very good progress. The commitment of all staff to do the best for pupils is clearly illustrated in their approach to teaching. Teachers have worked very hard to plan cooperatively and share their expertise. Weekly meetings ensure consistency in teachers' planning for all classes within the same year group. Evaluation meetings help teachers to improve the quality of their work as the best practice and the extent of pupils' learning are shared. The points for improvement are noted and feed into future planning. Additional subject teams meet to ensure planning and pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are consistently developed throughout the school. The pupils' work is continually moderated to inform future planning. As a result, teachers' planning is of a consistently high standard across the school and the specialist interests of staff are shared to benefit all. For instance, there is a leading literacy teacher and staff who have particular strengths in music, physical education and special educational needs.
18. Teachers have agreed common strategies to managing pupils' behaviour, and they have introduced initiatives such as the national literacy and numeracy strategies and personal, social and health education very effectively. This combination of a successful behaviour policy and challenging teaching is the key to the very good achievement of pupils, including the highest attainers, those with special educational needs and the pupils learning English as an additional language. Because there is very detailed record keeping, the staff are quickly able to plan to meet the needs of those who are absent for any length of time. No pupil is disadvantaged as teachers know the attainments of all pupils very well and adapt their teaching to meet their needs. Over the four years that pupils are at the school they make very good progress.
19. The teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy is very good. This is accomplished by teaching pupils in four ability groupings for each year group. It also gives teachers the opportunity to focus their teaching well on individual needs and group needs. Work is matched very well to the abilities of all the pupils. All pupils are taught how to learn for themselves. The pupils are mature and their response in taking responsibility for their learning is excellent. The pupils identify a problem to be solved and are taught very well how to work in small groups, listening to the views of others before they identify strategies and questions to find answers and solutions. This method of teaching not only teaches the pupils how to become good researchers but also develops their personal and social skills as they learn to work as part of a group. This method of developing tools for well-organized thinking and problem solving is particularly evident in history and geography. For example, pupils in Year 6 set up their investigations into the life and culture of the Ancient Greeks. The learning objectives are shared. Then the pupils go on to share and generate ideas before deciding on their best line of research questions to determine what they need to find out. At the end of the lesson the work is evaluated and pupils evaluate what they have learned. By the end of lessons pupils discuss what they knew previously and decide on mature questions to be answered to further their knowledge and understanding. The most able and gifted are challenged as well as they can be to set up their own investigations and participate in extension activities. There are a number of extra-curricular clubs, such as the science club, where the older pupils are taught by a science teacher from the secondary school, both at the school and the secondary school, where they access the resources and curriculum at a higher than expected level.

20. The teaching assistants direct their help to those needing it most in different subjects. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good and the pupils benefit from these teaching arrangements. In lessons using the literacy and numeracy strategies; there is targeted support for pupils, and teaching assistants are well briefed about their roles when working with individuals or small groups of pupils. In addition, pupils experiencing difficulties with reading, handwriting and spelling receive further help in small groups from teaching assistants and knowledgeable voluntary helpers. They follow a well-planned programme to improve their knowledge of letter sounds that involves games, computer programs and commonly used words. In lessons observed, pupils were keen and concentrated well on their work. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need receive very good support from skilled teaching assistants, so that they are fully involved in all lessons. Weekly and termly visits by outside specialists help monitor progress, diagnose and suggest strategies for improvement. Because teachers focus attention on the targets in pupils' individual education plans, which are shared with the pupils and their parents, the pupils have a very clear idea of what they need to learn. The pace of learning is very good and a majority of pupils attain the nationally expected level in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
21. Pupils learning English as an additional language make very good progress. In lessons, the teachers ensure they use as many visual resources as possible and question pupils during their introductions so they can assess pupils' understanding. When pupils are working, they get very good support from the teaching assistants and other pupils who explain the meaning and context of vocabulary. Teachers give constant positive reinforcement to encourage the pupils to learn and build their self-esteem. This helps to keep the pupils on task and motivates them to achieve. The school has established good liaison with outside agencies to assess the pupils' needs. Liaison between the school and their families is very good. The multilingual club encourages families from minority ethnic cultures to come together and celebrate their traditions and language. This gives pupils confidence in talking and learning about their cultural backgrounds. The school has a number of dual language books that the pupils borrow to assist them in writing stories in their first language. Through homework and the multilingual club, parents help their children at home to learn and make a significant contribution to their children's achievement in English and in understanding their first language and culture.
22. Teaching is particularly strong in English, mathematics, special educational needs and some aspects of music and physical education and information and communication technology where the staff have particular expertise. The staff have been well trained in the national literacy and numeracy strategies and information and communication technology. The teaching of literacy through topic work in subjects and linking subjects together for cross curricular work such as science, geography and history is a strong feature. Teachers plan very well to integrate skills that pupils have learned. Pupils grasp securely fundamental concepts for learning and apply what they have learned across the curriculum. For example, pupils' application of a range of different forms of writing is evident in history and geography. Different types of music and the work of famous composers are linked with cultural aspects of history and art. Whole-class teaching of skills in the computer suite is very successful. Pupils apply their skills in information and communication technology well in all subjects.
23. The marking of pupils' books gives pupils positive feedback on their work but varies in its quality across the school to help pupils with their next learning objectives. It is very

effective in English to help pupils improve the quality of their work in writing. At its best, pupils review teachers' comments and suggestions for improvement during lessons and use them productively in further work. The marking demonstrates teachers' very good awareness of the pupils' personal targets as well as class learning objectives. During one lesson, a lower attaining pupil in Year 6 commented that the teacher's remarks were helping him to attain his target. Much valuable feedback is given by teachers during lessons to help pupils overcome difficulties. This encourages pupils to evaluate their learning and helps them to set their own targets for improvement.

24. Regular homework is clearly planned for each year group. Tasks include work in English, mathematics and research work. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning and most parents agree it is well-organised and are happy to support their children at home. Opportunities are offered to pupils to complete their homework before school with the support of staff and use of the computers. The additional work pupils do at home and the high quality extra-curricular activities usefully contribute to pupils' interests and learning and encourage pupils to further success.

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

25. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils are very good. They have improved since the last inspection and are strengths of the school. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant throughout the school. The appropriate statutory curriculum is well in place, and time is allocated for considerable enrichment to pupils' overall development spiritually, culturally and socially. In addition, the curriculum for older pupils is enhanced by the provision of French lessons in Year 6.
26. The National Literacy Strategy has been well embedded into school practice and teachers are using the framework flexibly to meet pupils' needs. Research skills are very well used to promote literacy in science, geography and history. There are good strategies for teaching numeracy skills; for example, in geography to gain ideas of distance and direction when planning routes and when using grids. The school's involvement with the other schools in its cluster group has a positive influence on its work in mathematics and English through developing and sharing best practice.
27. The school offers an inclusive curriculum for all its pupils and classroom assistants and volunteer helpers are very well used. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good, and they make very good progress in their learning as a result. Those pupils who have English as an additional language are also very well provided for by the school, and they learn very well. The multi-lingual club is well attended by parents and pupils and a total of seven European and Asian languages are represented there. Pupils and parents make displays and learn songs and jokes. This provision plays a very important part for the pupils concerned by raising their confidence and self-esteem and thereby contributing to their progress at school.
28. All pupils have a fair opportunity to take part in all aspects of the curriculum. Teachers, classroom assistants and volunteer helpers are very well deployed to support this. The school makes excellent provision for extra-curricular activities. On one day during the inspection there were no less than seventeen different activities and clubs held during lunchtime, before and after school and they are all very well attended. This represents a major commitment for teachers who give freely and unselfishly of their time to enable such a wide choice of activities. The provision of such a variety of activities gives considerable enrichment to the curriculum, and this

is very much appreciated by pupils and their parents. Several of the clubs provide pupil care and welfare benefits also, such as the pre-school homework club and the lunchtime 'quiet' club, while others cater for sports and hobbies as well as subject related areas.

29. There is very good provision for personal social and health education. It is taught as a discrete lesson as well as through other subjects such as science and religious education. There is a school council for both the upper and lower schools and these are used very effectively to develop pupils' sense of responsibility and their role in the school community. For example, in a lower school council meeting, pupil representatives raised a perceived problem of a cycle rack obstructing part of the playground, and they discussed ways to improve safety in a very mature and sensible way. The council was responsible for writing the Pupils' Charter, used as school rules. Sex education is taught very well by the teachers and the school nurse in line with the school's policy. The community police officer attends the school regularly to take the citizenship course including educating pupils about drugs. There are residential visits to France and the Isle of Wight for pupils in Year 6. The pupils in Year 5 attend a residential centre in Norfolk. These trips are popular and well-attended by pupils; parents attend as helpers.
30. The school makes very good use of the local community, and this adds an important dimension to pupils' learning. Visitors to the school are many and varied and the local area is used well for field trips and surveys. For example, the nearby River Witham and Bourne Woods are a focus for research projects in geography. The school choirs and the orchestra are in demand for events in the community and there are good sporting links with other schools through football, netball, swimming and cross-country running. The school has achieved the Sport England Gold Activemark Award and is currently being assessed for the Arts Council Gold Award.
31. There are very good links with local schools and colleges. In addition to sport, a secondary school teacher helps run the science club and pupils use his science laboratory when needed. The school is a founder member of the Network Learning Community which spans five local education authority areas. Several higher education establishments use the school for training their student teachers and pupils from secondary schools and colleges attend for work experience. A particularly valuable initiative took place with Trent University, which led to sponsored pilot projects for higher ability pupils this year. The school has introduced a programme of thinking skills for all its pupils as a result. There are strong links with local businesses. In addition to sponsorships for the school, employees from local businesses visit the Years 3 and 4 Bookworm Club to read with pupils. These links provide considerable variety and enrichment for the pupils at the school. There are good arrangements made to help pupils transfer to secondary education.
32. The school makes very good provision for the spiritual development of the pupils. The choirs and orchestras create a spiritual atmosphere with their music as pupils enter the hall for collective worship each morning. Quiet and harmonious singing provides a sensitive background to prayers and the choirs are able to provide a lead for hymn singing. Pupils are presented with spiritual messages or thoughts and there are opportunities for reflection. The drama group makes contributions to special services in the church, such as weekly services during Lent and the pupils demonstrate an awareness of the spirituality of the church and behave with respect and maturity. The school also encourages the pupils to think positively about themselves and to reflect upon their place in the world around them. The school places emphasis on personal

development coupled with awareness and a concern for those in the wider community.

33. There is very good provision for pupils' moral development. Planned opportunities for moral education are made in subjects such as literacy, when stories and fables are used to consider moral dilemmas and pupils are able to give clear opinions of right and wrong and the problems that could arise from not being truthful. The school shares in the celebrations and sorrows of those in the school family and this helps to develop an understanding of empathy and morality. Pupils are elected to the school councils where they can express their views or exercise their responsibilities to others. The various merit systems in use are highly valued by the pupils and consistently reinforce the values and beliefs of the school.
34. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. They co-operate in lessons and are able to work collaboratively on tasks. When evaluating the work of others they show great sensitivity and always balance a criticism with a positive comment. They are well-behaved and show respect for the views of others in discussions. The extra-curricular clubs provide excellent opportunities for pupils to meet with pupils from other classes and year groups. The school holds social events for pupils and there are many occasions when pupils perform music for the benefit of the community. The pupils support several charities during the year and sponsor a child in Africa.
35. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Pupils are aware of differences and similarities of some other cultures. Awareness is raised through music, art and displays in the school. Pupils have many experiences of European culture through the many visits and visitors to the school and the inclusion of French in the Year 6 curriculum. Pupils are made aware of the diversity within United Kingdom society. The provision of the *Culcha Club* and the *Multi-lingual Club* provide very good opportunities for pupils to celebrate and learn about their own and the culture of others. Although there are some bilingual books in the school library, there is a shortage of general literature based on other cultures. The school supplements its provision with library loans and is seeking to extend its provision.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school has maintained the high level of care for its pupils found at the time of the last inspection. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Child protection is the responsibility of the headteacher and a senior teacher and both have had recent training. All staff have had training, and each new member of staff receives training and documentation from the child protection officer. Health and safety are seen as priorities by the school and are well covered in practice, however, the school has not yet developed a formal and comprehensive system for recording risk assessments for buildings, classrooms and outside areas. First aid is handled well and there are sufficient trained staff. The child protection officer has responsibility for this essential area of care and good records are kept and parents are informed appropriately. The school is endeavouring to promote healthy eating, having joined the *Healthy Schools* initiative and this was the theme for personal social and health education lessons during the week of the inspection.
37. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory and this results levels above the national average. The school secretary and teachers monitor absence closely and lateness is recorded. The school takes great pains to discourage parents from taking pupils out of school during term time and they are expected to apply for permission. This is not granted during the period when pupils take tests. Teachers keep registers up to date. However, although the school does have the facility, attendance data are not kept on the computer; monitoring and data handling are done manually.
38. Pupils' behaviour is monitored and promoted very well. Serious incidents are rare and are recorded by the headteacher. He ensures such incidents are treated very seriously and that parents are as involved as pupils in the aftermath. The school's behaviour policy incorporates the Pupils' Charter, which pupils developed themselves at the school council. They also negotiate their class rules with the teacher at the start of each year. The behaviour policy contains a sanctions system, culminating in a period of detention during breaks or lunchtime, but the emphasis is on rewards, increasing self-esteem and a positive outlook. There have been no exclusions and this indicates the success of the positive behaviour policy. Class teachers fulfil a pivotal role in monitoring and managing behaviour at the school. The consistency with which the policy is applied and the firm but friendly insistence on excellent behaviour at all times are responsible for the high level of behaviour of pupils. They are in no doubt as to what the school expects of them.
39. The school does not tolerate bullying, sexism or racism; there is a clear policy against bullying which all pupils understand. All staff, including midday supervisors, apply the policy effectively and the headteacher is always involved. There are very few incidents of this nature, and there have been none recently. The school has very good procedures for monitoring such serious misbehaviour.
40. The pupils' behaviour is managed very well by the staff considering the limited playground space for the large number of pupils. Considerable ingenuity, excellent supervision, staggered breaks, the large number of lunchtime clubs, and the commitment of the whole staff have led to this significant success.
41. There are very good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. The school expects, and gets, a high level of personal responsibility as soon as the pupils start in Year 3. They are expected to take on an increasing range of extra duties and their confidence and self-esteem flourish as a result. By the time

they reach Year 6, pupils fulfil positions of responsibility, as elected house captains, vice-captains and corridor and door prefects. Both the lower and upper schools have school councils, with elected class representatives, and are very involved with matters involving the school community. Through this involvement and trust of its pupils, the school has embedded its high expectations for responsibility and good behaviour very successfully.

42. The school's procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance are very good. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics is very strong. A wide range of procedures is regularly used to assess standards and measure progress. Both group and individual pupil's results are extensively and carefully evaluated. Assessment procedures in other subjects are of good quality but are generally less regular and less detailed. The school complies fully with the requirements for statutory assessments in Year 6. Pupils' test papers are examined in minute detail to look for trends and to help inform future teaching. Information gathered from the assessments is used to allocate the pupils to appropriate teaching sets and to modify the teaching programme in English, mathematics and, to a lesser extent, science. Parents are fully involved in pupils' individual education plans. These are manageable, detailed and regularly reviewed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Parents strongly agree with the aims and values of the school. The strong links with parents which existed at the time of the previous inspection have been well-maintained by the school. Parents feel the school gives their children a very good start in life, both personally and academically.
44. Parents are provided with very good quality information about everything happening at school. Information about academic progress is given through annual reports for each subject and parents are also informed about their children's learning targets. Newsletters and other communications tell of events and curricular initiatives. Newsletters are excellent; they are produced very professionally, and contain an insert called 'The Nash', which is written by a group of pupils in Year 6. It gives results of pupils' surveys, encourages safety at crossings and promotes healthy foods. The special educational needs co-ordinator and the school nurse have surgeries and 'drop in' sessions for parents where they can be updated and discuss any concerns. Over the past two years, the school has run seven different open meetings on curricular initiatives which were to be implemented, such as literacy and numeracy. These meetings were in addition to the normal schedule of open meetings for parents. The prospectus and governors' annual reports are informative.
45. Homework is set regularly and parents are kept informed and are expected to comment in diaries. Despite the fact that most parents work, there is a good level of parent-helpers and they are deployed very well in classrooms by teachers to help pupils learn. There is always a good response from parents when extra help is needed for special events and trips. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, are properly involved and consulted over developments.
46. The school has very effective links with parents. A recent course for parents through the auspices of the Workers' Educational Association on 'Helping in Schools' attracted ten parents. Two of those who were successful in completing the course are now running a Young Enterprise Project series of lessons about the community

for pupils in Year 3, in conjunction with a representative from the Inland Revenue. The school is constantly seeking parents' views. For example, there is a Year 3 entry survey shortly after pupils join, a Year 6 exit survey and meetings and curriculum information evenings are evaluated by parents on each occasion. Such initiatives are making a very good contribution to children's learning. The Parent Teacher Association is very active and is a major contributor to school funds and to the school community generally. They regularly raise very substantial amounts of money for the school, especially through their 'Fun Run' and the summer fair. They also organise a good number of social events. Parents have a very good impact on the work of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The headteacher provides very good leadership and direction for the school. He has a clear overview of the work of the school and is a very able administrator. He organises the school to maintain the very good teaching and learning. There is a positive school ethos which embraces the commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils within its aims and objectives, curriculum and organisation. This is reflected in the very good relationships in the school and the shared commitment of the whole community to move forward. He manages the school very well, delegating responsibility and empowering staff and senior management by encouraging them to participate in school management, planning and improvement. The senior managers work very well as a team to carry out their roles with commitment to move the school forward by assisting the subject coordinators.

48. There is a very efficient governing body. The governors are knowledgeable and together they are a confident team, having benefited from training and advice in the recent past. They are in a very good position to support the leadership and management of the school and use their personal qualities and professional experience to promote the school's best interests. They are very aware of the need to continue to raise standards and to promote the school and its aspirations within the local community. The governing body is very well led by the hardworking chair of governors. There is a very successful committee structure with five working parties to work through the detail of the school's progress towards its targets. Individual governors take responsibility for aspects of the school's work such as literacy, numeracy, science and special educational needs and the other curriculum subjects. A good pattern of meetings and contact with the school has been established where governors can talk to the staff and liaise with them about the development of their subject. The governors are kept very well informed by the subject leaders' annual reports to governors and the presentations they give at meetings on the current curricular initiatives. For example, this enables the governors to establish good relationships with the staff and build up an effective understanding of the work of the school. They are very well informed by the headteacher of the ongoing development towards the targets in the school development plan through regular and informative reports. The governing body is fully involved in making key policy and planning decisions. Since the last inspection in 1997, the school has made very good improvement in addressing the key issues.

49. There are very good strategies in place to monitor the school's performance and take positive action. Strengths and weaknesses are correctly identified and action plans for improvement have been successfully implemented in all subjects across the curriculum. The monitoring of pupils' work, teachers' planning and to a lesser extent, the teaching and learning, is a major factor of the success of the school. The focus for recent school development has been the maintenance of high standards in English and mathematics and the development of information and communication technology. New initiatives are sought out and acted upon. For example, there has recently been a particular focus throughout the school to teach pupils to think and learn within a structured and rational framework. The staff realise the importance of teamwork as a tool for raising standards. The staff work together systematically in year groups and subject led groups across the school to ensure consistency between classes and the pupils' development of knowledge, skills and understanding. The sharing of ideas and expertise contributes successfully to teachers' professional development. The school has gained the Investors in People Award, and has successful systems in place for staff development and training. The performance management system has been implemented successfully recently and is an extension of the very good practice that already existed within the school. Trainee teachers who are trained at the school during the course of the year benefit from the expertise of the staff and the very good provision that is made for them. The visiting music specialists teach pupils well in additional instrumental tuition. The lunchtime and administrative staff are well-trained in the school's approach to positive behaviour. They make a positive impact on the smooth running of the school and pupils' personal and social development.
50. A very good level of support is available to ensure all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. This is used to particularly good effect in the way the teachers are deployed in the literacy and numeracy lessons. The management of pupils with special educational needs is excellent. The coordinator manages the needs of all the pupils excellently, training staff in new methods and demonstrating up-to-date resources. Those pupils needing most help are supported individually as the teaching assistants work towards helping the pupils meet the targets set on their individual lesson plans. For English and mathematics and some other subjects where there is an identified need, pupils work in very small groups in class with teaching assistants where help is tailored to their particular needs. Otherwise they are withdrawn and help is given individually or within a group. The school is very well served by the skilled teaching assistants who plan very well to meet the needs of the pupils with the teachers and the special educational needs coordinator. The coordinator holds weekly surgeries for parents to discuss their children's progress and suggest ways in which parents can help their children at home.
51. For the pupils who are learning English as an additional language, visual resources used in lessons and the use of information and communication technology are helping these pupils grasp the structure of English and the meaning of the subject vocabulary. Pupils benefit from constant encouragement and consequently they make very good progress towards their targets.
52. The school has satisfactory accommodation and learning resources in subjects are good. The information and communication technology suite is small in relation to the number of pupils it serves though the resources are at a satisfactory level. The school is working towards increasing its provision. The quality and quantity of learning resources are good; these are accessible to staff and pupils. There is very little space inside and outside the classrooms. The hall is small and T-shaped which limits physical exercise in dance and gymnastics for the older pupils. Playgrounds

are very small for the numbers on roll and uneven in places. The Greenlawns playing field nearby provides a grassed area for games and athletics. The school makes the best use of all available space and the pupils move around the school between lessons and up to the playing field in a very orderly fashion. The extra-curricular activities for physical activity during lunchtime and after school make a significant contribution to the development of pupils' physical skills. Some parts of the older school buildings with steps are difficult to manage for physically disabled pupils. The recent classroom extensions and improvements the buildings are modified so that they are easy to enter for all pupils. There are very good links with the nearby infant schools and the secondary school. The links with the secondary school enable staff to share resources and planning so that work is not duplicated. There are useful initiatives such as the science club using the expertise of the staff and the secondary school resources to extend the gifted and talented pupils.

53. The inside of the school is enhanced by the colourful displays of pupils' work, providing an attractive environment which is used well by the staff and pupils and maintained to high standards of cleanliness by the premises staff. The school administrative staff work hard and very efficiently to ensure the day-to-day smooth running of the school.
54. The school budget is managed very well. The Governing Body with the headteacher exercise their responsibilities very well for oversight of the budget. The financial, staffing and curricular implications of spending are carefully considered. Expenditure is linked well to the priorities identified in the school's development plan. Opportunities are taken to bid for resources and monies to enhance pupils' opportunities to learn such as the grant awarded to develop pupils' thinking skills. Detailed and up-to-date monthly information on expenditure and forecasts inform discussion and decision making. The recommendations of the last financial audit of the school have been resolved. The governors and the school seek to find best value for money before committing to expenditure. In view of the educational provision, the standards that the pupils currently attain, the quality of the leadership and management and the resources available, the school gives very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. The governors, headteacher and staff should:
 - (1) raise standards in science by:
 - raising teachers' expectations to challenge the average and higher attaining pupils further in lessons to experiment and investigate;
 - providing further in-service training for staff to develop their subject expertise.

(Paragraphs 5, 82, 83, 84)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	71
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	50

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	16	36	15	1	0	0
Percentage	4	23	51	21	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	491
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	41

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	88

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
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 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	57	60	117

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	51	46	54
	Girls	57	48	55
	Total	108	94	109
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (93)	80 (86)	93 (98)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	44	45	47
	Girls	46	49	51
	Total	90	94	98
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (86)	80 (92)	84 (89)
	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	460	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	14	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)	19
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	31

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	128

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	874310
Total expenditure	864710
Expenditure per pupil	1761
Balance brought forward from previous year	4810
Balance carried forward to next year	14410

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)	0.6
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 70 per cent

Number of questionnaires sent out	491
Number of questionnaires returned	344

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	42	4	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	43	51	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	54	6	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	56	10	1	0
The teaching is good.	48	47	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	50	19	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	35	4	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	37	1	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	29	51	16	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	45	45	4	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	46	3	1	3

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

50	43	4	1	3
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PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

Subject summary

56. Standards of attainment in English are very good. Over the past three years, the school's results in the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds have been well above the national figures. The rate of improvements in standards over this period are in line with the national trend. In Year 6, the majority of pupils are attaining well above the levels expected in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Since the last inspection, the National Literacy Strategy has been introduced. This has secured and extended the good practice already in place. The school has introduced a number of initiatives to encourage pupils' enthusiasm for the subject and to bring a breadth of literacy experiences. The experienced subject leader provides very good leadership and management.

Subject commentary

Speaking and listening

57. Pupils achieve well in speaking and listening throughout the school. They express their ideas clearly and at length. The teachers provide frequent opportunities for discussion to develop these skills. Pupils learning English as an additional language listen attentively and quickly learn to participate in class discussions. Teachers model language carefully for less able pupils in lower year groups to develop appropriate speaking abilities. By Year 6, most pupils express complicated ideas and theories in a concise and articulate manner. They use well chosen adjectives to give impact, and grasp an opinion or idea and convey it to others with assurance. They speak fluently and are at ease when talking to adults and other pupils. In each year group, pupils concentrate over long periods and show respect when listening to the opinions of others. If they do not agree with other views, they state their own opinions with consideration and respect. They have the confidence to share things they have noticed about their work and how to make improvements. A positive aspect of lessons is the frequency and range of opportunities most teachers provide for answering questions and for discussion.

Reading

58. Pupils start at the school with a wide range of standards in reading. The average ability of pupils is generally higher than the national average but this varies from year to year. The school makes good provision for less able pupils by placing them in smaller groups and deploying teaching assistants well to give additional attention to those who will benefit. Challenging texts are used for more able pupils in the guided reading sessions of the literacy hour and teachers ask questions to promote understanding of the text and vocabulary. Pupils achieve well in reading and, by Year 6, most read fluently with good expression and comprehension. They show increasing knowledge of genres of books and can identify and explain their reasons for their preferences of different authors. In general, their knowledge of authors is confined to one or two popular children's writers, but some are more knowledgeable

and are able to discuss newly released fiction and compare different books by the same author. The emphasis on guided reading and the transfer of personal responsibility for reading to the family, impacts on the wider experiences of some pupils. Most pupils enjoy reading and many belong to the local library. Most pupils read at home but the amount and range of individual reading experiences vary considerably. Opportunities for personal reading in school occur during registration periods. The school does, however, provide excellent opportunities for pupils to read for pleasure and learning in extra-curricular activities. There are two lunchtime reading clubs when pupils can listen to stories being read or read quietly and independently. Very good help is given to less able pupils in weekly Bookworm clubs when teachers and teaching assistants work individually with pupils to develop reading skills.

59. Pupils are skilful in retrieving information from books and use indexes and contents pages quickly and efficiently. They use the library system to find information and will persevere and use a range of strategies. They are given useful opportunities for research projects to develop skills in retrieving and sifting information through both books and information and communication technology. When searching for information that is not readily available in the appropriate section of the library, pupils use initiative and perseverance and recognise that encyclopaedias will contain important, relevant facts.

Writing

60. In most years, pupils enter the school with standards in spelling generally higher than the national average. National test results, and pupils' work indicate a wide spread of standards in writing on entry to the school. The standards are broadly in line with the national average. Pupils achieve very well in all aspects of writing and follow a well thought out curriculum to acquire knowledge and skills. By Year 6, pupils' standards in writing are very good. Their stories and other forms of writing along with their handwriting and the presentation of work are well above average.
61. From Year 3 pupils develop a good style of joined handwriting and present their written work well. Lower attaining pupils are helped by attending the Handwriting club to improve letter formation and style. There is an emphasis on spelling and pupils have a weekly test and dictation exercise to give practice in putting learned words into a written context. In Year 6, handwriting and spelling are very good. As a result of clearly focused teaching, pupils have a secure knowledge of grammar and are able to apply this to their writing. They are able to identify parts of speech and make good use of the knowledge in their writing. They can recognise phrases and clauses, including subordinate clauses, and explain how this would enrich their writing. Pupils are confident when using language to create effect such as 'frost in intricate patterns...' and understand the importance of developing the setting, characters and plot of a story. Pupils recognise the need to vary the techniques used for different types of writing. They present factual information in report writing and can put forward a clear argument in persuasive writing. Pupils are aware of the need to alter the style of writing according to the audience and are able to identify casual vocabulary and suggest more appropriate formal words. They use accurate punctuation and ensure the meaning of writing is clear by confident use of a full range of punctuation marks. Pupils themselves have high expectations. They are self-critical and identify how to make improvements to their work before being told.

Teaching and learning

62. The teaching is very good and, as a result, pupils learn very well in lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are able to develop pupils' understanding of English. They use technical vocabulary as a natural part of teaching and pupils become increasingly aware of grammatical terms, their meanings and purposes. Teachers are skilled at asking questions that require a considered response. Answers are used to assess the knowledge of the pupils and extend learning. Teachers plan work for pupils according to the National Literacy Strategy. This ensures a structured approach to teaching and learning but, where it is rigidly applied, this leads to a slow pace in lessons and a lack of flair and stimulating activities to provide variety and rigour. Where teachers accurately gauge and cater for the needs of the class, lessons are interesting and pupils are fully involved in learning. This was particularly evident in a lesson for less able pupils where a listening centre, a computer and a teaching assistant were deployed successfully to provide a range of experiences for the pupils. Work on phonics involved posting words into appropriate boxes and pupils were focused and maintained concentration. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher's use of humour created excellent relationships and an ethos that resulted in pupils' learning very well.
63. Teachers generally have very good relationships with the pupils and there is mutual respect. This enables pupils to be confident when giving opinions on their own work or the work of others. Because of the good quality of teaching, concepts and knowledge are secure and this leads to work of a high quality. The range of clubs and opportunities outside the curriculum are very effective in developing pupils' enjoyment of literacy. Reading clubs provide opportunities for pupils to read or listen to stories for pleasure. There is a balance between sheer enjoyment of a story, discussion of finer points of text and vocabulary, and a chance to see how fictional incidents relate to pupils' own experiences. The Bookworm clubs provide help for pupils who are less confident in reading and the Handwriting club encourages improved presentation skills for those who require additional attention.
64. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The range and quality of opportunities given to these pupils, by teachers and teaching assistants, encourages learning. Pupils who are particularly able in the subject are also provided with challenging tasks to maintain high levels of learning. Teachers make good use of homework to help children learn. Marking varies and, although all teachers give praise and positive comments about work, the practice of setting targets and goals when marking shows some variation. There are examples of pupils using information and communication technology well for word processing and research projects, which helps to develop their application of skills in information and communication technology as well as in English.
65. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator has a clear overview of the subject and is very well informed and enthusiastic. Benefits for the subject are secured from various partnerships and sources to bring additional initiatives. For example, visiting poets and authors give the subject a high profile in the school and liaison with the secondary schools gives insight into the needs of the pupils as they move on. Parents are well informed about the subject and are involved in organising the library and resources. The school library consists of non-fiction books and provides an appropriate range of books. The school is working towards building up its stock of books to promote pupils' awareness of racial equality. Although aspects of monitoring and evaluating the subject are still to be refined, these aspects have improved since the last inspection. The co-ordinator regularly monitors the standard of pupils' work and teachers' planning and uses the information to adjust and improve teaching and learning.

MATHEMATICS

Subject summary

66. Standards of attainment in mathematics are very good. Over the past three years, the school's results in the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds have been above and well above the national figures. Improvements in standards over this period have kept pace with the national trend. Pupils achieve very well and standards of attainment by Year 6 are well above the national average, this represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum is aimed at high achievement for all and around nine out of ten pupils are on course to attain the nationally expected level and approximately four out of ten to attain the higher level. The subject is managed very well.

Subject commentary

67. In Year 6 standards are well above the national average. Pupils have a good understanding of place value and extend this into work on decimals with ease. Higher attaining pupils are very comfortable using two places of decimals and provide clear explanations of what happens to the decimal point when, for instance, changing metres to centimetres. Number facts are secure with the vast majority of pupils understanding all four number operations both mentally and in written form. Higher attaining pupils also work accurately with squaring and square roots in mental arithmetic questions.
68. All pupils use correct terminology and most confidently explain their methods. They are becoming more comfortable with problem solving. They pick out the 'key information' and carefully select the appropriate operation. Lower attaining pupils work well with single stage problems while average and higher attaining pupils work consistently accurately with two and sometimes three-stage problems.
69. Pupils work confidently and accurately when plotting coordinates in all four quadrants and, through this work, show a good understanding of negative numbers. They describe flat and solid shapes using the correct terminology, including their symmetries. Higher attaining pupils accurately measure angles to one degree and understand the 'angle sum of a triangle'. Everyone has worked with area and perimeter but only higher attaining pupils are able to consistently use a formula to calculate areas.
70. Pupils collect data in tally charts and accurately transfer the information to a frequency graph. Higher attaining pupils work with continuous data, like temperature, and use line graphs to show their data. All pupils interpret basic graphs and pie charts well. Higher attaining pupils contrast and compare two-line graphs of continuous data and accurately tell when night and day might have been.
71. Pupils join the school with above average attainment. Through the school they make good progress because the curriculum is demanding, the work is set at an appropriate level for pupils and the teaching gives good clear explanations of concepts and tasks. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good. Support is carefully planned with their targets in mind, indeed, the planning for the lower attaining pupils is usually much more detailed than for other sets, and this is particularly so in Years 3 and 5. Support assistants are knowledgeable, patient and supportive while at the same time they challenge the pupils to do as much as they

can themselves. The progress of the few pupils with English as an additional language is good. Their progress is closely monitored. The school correctly places these pupils in the set most appropriate for the mathematical abilities, not their English ability. Within the set they are helped by teachers, who usually explain clearly technical vocabulary, and by their peers.

72. Across the school, the quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. All teachers establish a positive learning climate in their classes by managing the pupils very well and this enables pupils to concentrate on their work without distractions. The teaching of arithmetical skills is very strong in lessons and pupils benefit by knowing and being able to use number facts in a variety of situations. An example of this was a Year 5 teacher who corrected pupils who said 'zero point thirty five' during a lesson on decimals. All teachers have high expectations of their classes, whether it is interpretation of line graphs in Year 5, solving two and three-stage problems in Year 6 or starting to understand multiplication tables in Year 3. Pupils enjoy mathematics and behave well in class partly because of this challenge and partly because there are such strong relationships between adults and pupils. Teachers consistently use homework well to extend their lessons and they check that pupils have completed it.
73. In the best lessons, teachers explain the purposes of the work and return to them at the end of the lesson to check if pupils believe that they have learned. This is not universal and means that in some lessons pupils are unsure what they should be learning. Learning support assistants are generally used well and their support is clearly planned.
74. The school uses the National Numeracy Strategy well. It is used well to make mental introductions to lessons interesting and 'snappy'. Pupils use their numeracy skills in other subjects well. They measure accurately in design and technology before cutting material such as wood and use frequency graphs to represent information in both science and geography.
75. The management is good. Assessment procedures and the use of information are very good. Pupils' work and teachers' planning are monitored very well and the school maintains useful links with the local authority and nearby schools, which enable new ideas to flow into the school. The current impetus on 'problem solving' has been very well led and is very effective in raising pupils' awareness and understanding of this important aspect of mathematics. The inspection team disagrees with the few parents who feel that they have insufficient information about mathematics. The school has organised seven after-school sessions for parents over the last two years. The coordinator is clear on how the subject will continue to move forward.

SCIENCE

Subject summary

76. By the end of Year 6, standards in science for the current pupils in Year 6 are in line with those expected for pupils of this age. In the 2002 tests for pupils in Year 6, 93 per cent attained level 4 which was above the national average. However, the proportion of pupils attaining at the higher level 5 was similar to the national average. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged to be above average, although there were weaknesses in the pupils' ability to experiment and investigate. Teachers now spend more time on this, so pupils' attainment has improved in recent years. Overall, the school has just kept pace with the improvement seen nationally, but standards could still be higher at Level 5 for some average attaining and some

higher attaining pupils. All pupils' achieve satisfactorily. The new subject leader has made a good start to her responsibilities.

Subject commentary

77. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory because they work hard and the teaching is often good. However, the teaching has not been good enough to ensure the better progress seen in some other subjects. This is partly because a few teachers are not yet familiar or confident with the recent changes in the curriculum. As a result, in some lessons, the teachers' expectations are too low and the work is not demanding enough for many pupils. When they enter the school, almost one third are working at above average levels, but this proportion does not increase significantly by Year 6. Those with special educational needs, on the other hand, make good progress and most of these pupils reach the expected standard.
78. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to investigate and experiment. As a result, all pupils can carry out a fair test, handle equipment sensibly and record the results accurately. Pupils enjoy this work and work together with care and commonsense. However, teachers do not always make the most of this. In some lessons, pupils learn well because they are challenged to look at their results critically, ask questions and decide how to collect more evidence. A good example of this is when pupils in Year 4 study friction. They do a simple test with the teacher and then have to manage their own experiments to confirm the results and gather more data. This sort of work helps pupils to develop the skills of scientific enquiry, but in a few lessons the average and higher attaining pupils in particular make less progress, because teachers do not give them enough responsibility. Experiments are planned in every detail and so pupils do not have to think much and are not fully involved. In some cases, the teachers' instructions take far more time than the practical work. Teachers are understandably anxious that the lessons go well, but in some work pupils learn well from their mistakes. For example, a boy in Year 6 set up a test to see what conditions make microbes prosper. When he opened the box he wrote, *I freaked out when I saw the results, all my predictions were wrong. I think it is something to do with trapping the air in.*
79. A strength in all the classes is that teachers plan and organise lessons carefully. They explain ideas clearly, have plenty of examples to look at and make sure that pupils understand. As a result, all pupils build up a good fund of scientific knowledge. There are good examples of this in the work on erosion in Year 3, solubility in Year 4 and materials in Year 6. In two lessons in Year 5, the teachers introduced work on the fertilisation of plants very well. They shared their own knowledge and enthusiasm and used very good illustrations to make the process clear. These pupils soon learned the names of each part of a flower and could explain its function. This meant that they could move on quickly to dissect their own flower. They did this very seriously, making careful notes and sketches of what they discovered. In contrast, in almost half of the lessons the teachers were so anxious to make sure pupils understood that they spent too long talking when pupils already knew enough to move on.
80. Another strength to the teaching is that all teachers expect pupils to use their own words and accurate scientific terms to record what they do. This begins in Year 3, where, for example, pupils make very good diagrams of body parts and write good advice about diet and health. Pupils in Year 4 write clear explanations on why some of their electrical circuits work and others do not. Teachers in Year 5 show pupils how to turn their results into a possible theory, so pupils' use mature phrases such as

this suggests that... or when compared to the control plant... Consequently, by the end of Year 6, pupils have a good scientific vocabulary and are confident in the use of sketches, diagrams and charts to explain their findings. They show this, for example, when they present their work on pulse rates. Nearly all pupils do this well in their own way, without a template from the teacher. They are keen to do this for themselves when the work is interesting, and this helps them to remember and understand what they learn. In just a few lessons, pupils record without much enthusiasm, this is when the activity is not exciting enough to provide meaningful results.

81. Pupils have very good numeracy skills and teachers use these to good effect in most science lessons. Pupils use graphs, charts and branch diagrams confidently to show and interpret their results. Teachers help them to use these to solve problems or justify their predictions. For example, pupils in Year 3 carefully construct charts to show the relationship between plant growth and the amount of water given. They learn that there is an optimum quantity for best results. In a lesson on friction in Year 4, the teacher showed pupils how to ensure reliable data by repeating the test several times and finding the average. Work like this helps pupils to develop scientific ideas. It is an aspect of teaching which is not as good as it should be in some lessons. In these, data is collected but not examined closely enough to see if a pattern is emerging or whether more tests are needed.
82. The new subject leader works closely with teachers in planning lessons, but has not yet had the chance to look at the quality of teaching or to have an impact on standards. There are good systems for recording how well pupils are learning and whether they are making fast enough progress. Pupils' answers in the national tests are analysed carefully and there is a well-planned revision programme in Year 6. This prepares pupils well, but does not exclude experimental work. Equipment is sufficient and looked after with care, teachers do not have to waste time looking for things. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Information and communication technology is not used enough in science work, but this is set to improve with the purchase of electronic sensors. The programme is enriched by good links with the secondary school and a stimulating after-school club. There is much to build on in science. The school is aware that to raise standards further it must support teachers in getting the most from the very good new curriculum, and ensure that all lessons have the pace and challenge seen in the best.

ART AND DESIGN

Subject summary

83. Standards are above average by the end of Year 6. This is a similar position to that at the time of the last inspection. Art and design has a secure place in the work and life of the school as it is a medium in which all the pupils achieve well. Because the quality of teaching in art and design is good overall, the pupils achieve well. The teachers plan together with good effect to ensure that the pupils develop their skills successfully and use a wide range of techniques and media. They display the pupils' work in such a way that it captures their imagination, and encourages them to try hard with their own work. The subject is well led and managed.

Subject commentary

84. The school plans for art and design are thorough and ensure that the subject is taught not only in its own right but also used to support other subjects. For example, the pupils drew illustrations of their favourite books, one pupil drawing a particularly fine line drawing of 'The

Iron Man.' The pupils have many opportunities to develop and extend their skills further in the popular art and design clubs which make a valuable contribution to the standards the pupils achieve.

85. By the end of Year 6, pupils use a range of media to record their observations, moods and ideas. In Year 3, the pupils look at a number of portraits by famous artists and then paint their own self-portraits. In Year 4 the pupils listen to 'Handel's Water Music' and interpret the music with paint, swirls of colour energetically representing water. The pupils are often encouraged to reflect their thoughts and feelings in their work. This makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. In Year 5 the pupils study movement in pictures. They look carefully at the work of famous artists and note particular movements shown in their paintings. The pupils then complete their own 3-minute action sketches in charcoal. In Year 6 the pupils create their own landscape pictures using a wide range of media. The pupils are particularly pleased with their finished work.
86. The pupils thoroughly enjoy art and design lessons. They listen carefully to the teacher's observations and try hard, working in a very productive atmosphere. The teachers ensure that all are fully involved in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs, or who learn English as an additional language, have extra help and advice so that they achieve well. Those pupils identified as being gifted and talented in art are given opportunities to develop and extend their skills still further. The management of the diverse groups of pupils in the classes is a strength of the teaching of art and design. Teachers have very high expectations of the pupils and provide stretching activities, which challenge them. The pupils are encouraged to develop a critical awareness of their own and others' work. They speak knowledgeably about their work. Pupils study a range of artists and look at different cultures and the patterns and techniques these people use. They choose their materials with care and show good levels of application in their work. Observation skills are highly developed and in the art club the pupils use a range of media to represent a variety of different fruits.
87. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable subject coordinator gives good help and guidance to other teachers. Assessment of pupils' work is clearly in place and leads to carefully planned lessons. There are good quality resources and they are used effectively.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Subject summary

88. Standards in design and technology are broadly in line with those in other schools. Some pupils are achieving above average standards. This is a similar picture to that seen at the last inspection. The school has managed to keep up with the improvement nationally, because teaching is good, the curriculum is well-organised and the pupils persevere and work hard. By Year 6, most pupils have a sound understanding of the process of designing and making models. They evaluate as they go along and make improvements. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily.

Subject commentary

89. Only two lessons were seen, in Year 5. The teaching in both of these was good. The teachers make helpful suggestions and give clear advice. Lessons are well-planned with plenty of equipment available, so no time is wasted. Teachers give pupils enough time to try their ideas and techniques and to make changes. They offer advice where needed, but do not impose solutions; pupils have to think for themselves. Pupils are introduced to tools, such as drills, saws, vices and electric

motors; they use these safely and sensibly. This skilful teaching means that most pupils work seriously for long periods and are beginning to analyse their products and suggest achievable ways forward.

90. A strength in most of the teaching is that teachers emphasise the complete process of designing, making and evaluating. This begins in Year 3, for example, when pupils make robots with pneumatic systems to operate levers. Teachers show pupils how to make planning sheets with sketches and labels and to refer to these in their evaluations. This helps pupils to reflect on what worked well and how it might have been better. Teachers in Year 4 encourage pupils to look at the needs of the user when they design and make torches. Some pupils manage this very well, using large well-defined diagrams. This helps them to develop their ideas through thinking about what the product has to do.
91. Some of the best examples of the design process are seen in Year 5. Teachers here have very good subject knowledge and this means that most pupils make good gains in their knowledge and understanding. Teaching is effective because pupils are given the chance to learn skills and then apply them. For example, pupils use and sketch pulleys, gears and belt drives before they choose the mechanism for their fairground ride. Similarly, pupils have the opportunity to try several different materials before they make their Tudor printing press. They learn to collect information in an organised way, for example, testing and recording which materials give the clearest print, which are easiest to apply and what can be learned from existing products such as rubber stamps. This is very good training in drawing up a design specification and gives pupils some early ideas about the uses of research to avoid commercial failure.
92. Teachers continue this work in Year 6, for example, when they show pupils how to use new printing and sewing techniques before they design their fabric bags and pillows. As a result these are generally well made and attractively decorated. There is a good link with art lessons, where pupils study African batik designs. Teachers build on pupils' previous design experience, for example when they help pupils to make detailed technical drawings on the way to making a powered vehicle. However, pupils in Year 6 do not quite achieve the quality and range of work seen in Year 5, partly because there is slightly less time available.
93. The subject is effectively managed by an enthusiastic coordinator, who leads by example in her own teaching. The curriculum has been adapted well from national guidelines, resources for this are generous and well looked after. The coordinator keeps an eye on teachers' planning and the standard of pupils' work, although there has been no regular monitoring of lessons. The school has organised valuable training for teachers, in some of this the teachers have to go through the same designing and making process that the pupils do. There are good systems to record how well each pupil is doing. A very comprehensive portfolio of photographs of pupils' work helps teachers to evaluate standards; this is particularly useful because it shows what can be expected from pupils of different abilities. The school is in a good position to raise standards further as teachers gain experience and expertise in the new curriculum and recognise that regular support and monitoring of lessons will be an important part of this.

GEOGRAPHY

Subject Summary

94. The provision for geography is very good. Pupils achieve very well and standards are above those expected by the end of Year 6. Although standards were similar at the time of the last inspection, the school has improved its curricular provision. The subject is managed well. The good quality and wide range of activities planned for the pupils give pupils first-hand practical knowledge and understanding as they develop their geographical skills. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development and is enriched by the links to other subjects such as history, English, art and design, French and information and communication technology and physical education.

Subject Commentary

95. The curriculum is well thought out so that pupils consistently and thoroughly build their knowledge and understanding of the geography of the local area to a contrasting locality in the United Kingdom before they study Europe and the world. In Years 3 and 4, pupils carry out fieldwork around the local area. In Year 4, pupils study at first hand the main features of their local River Witham. They have learned about the impact of the river on the local area including some of the negative aspects such as how the river is polluted by litter and chemical waste which has an adverse effect on the oxygen levels, fish and water creatures. A strength of the teaching results in the pupils' understanding of environmental issues and their skills in researching their own lines of enquiry. Pupils in Year 4 know about the work of the Environment Agency and give some well-thought out mature answers in discussion for improving conditions. By Year 5, pupils have the skills to compare and contrast the town of Grantham with Skegness which they visit on a field trip. Pupils have been introduced to simple mapping skills and successfully work out different routes using different forms of transport between the two towns. The pupils demonstrated a good understanding of geographical vocabulary associated with maps such as 'A' and 'B' roads and 'scenic routes'. The pupils work very well in small groups and pairs to discuss the shortest and longest routes and the travel expenses as they identify a best route for their family. By Year 6, pupils' skills are further developed as they become more aware of the wide world in which they live and have very good knowledge of where they would look in order to find information about it. Developing use of maps and atlases and information and communication technology enables pupils to identify main locations in Europe and in Kenya. Pupils in Year 6 compare life in Grantham with that of pupils of the same age in two locations in Kenya. This work is linked well to English as pupils research and devise their 'tourist brochures' using information and communication technology. Work is also linked to art and design and music as pupils study the African culture.
96. The teaching is very good. The subject is very well-planned; it is based on national guidelines. This, along with the school's clear policy for the structure of lessons, provides a good basis for planning. This results in pupils consistently building on their previous skills, knowledge and understanding as they get older. Work is matched well for the pupils with special educational needs. Those learning English receive good support. Teachers use the knowledge and understanding of places that some children have to enhance the learning of others. The breadth in fieldwork and enquiry skills motivates pupils and helps to raise standards to above average level. Links made to other subjects, such as the history of Grantham, African art and physical education are carefully planned. There are residential visits to Abbeville in France, the Isle of Wight and to an outdoor pursuits centre in Norfolk for the older pupils. Here, there are opportunities for them to develop cultural awareness and understanding of a different locality and to practise and demonstrate their skills in physical exercise and orienteering.

97. There is good leadership and management of the subject. The subject leader has very clear views about the development of geography throughout the school and encourages all pupils to become involved exploring and understanding the geography of the immediate locality. The resources for geography are of good quality and are suitable for their purpose. The subject leader has contributed very well to the quality resources from researching the local area for fieldwork studies and taking photographs for study in the classroom. The school benefits from up-to-date information as a member of the Royal Geographical Society. There is a very good partnership with local colleges and students of geography help pupils with their field studies such as the study of the River Witham. Aspects of the provision are regularly assessed with a view to their continual development and improvement.

HISTORY

Subject Summary

98. There is very good provision for history. Standards are above those usually expected in most schools by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve very well. These findings are similar to those at the last inspection. In addition, the breadth and depth of the curriculum have improved. Pupils' research skills and skills in literacy are developed throughout the subject and effective links are made to pupils' learning in other subjects such as geography and information and communication technology.

Subject Commentary

99. By Year 6, pupils' skills of historical enquiry are good and they have a sound grasp of the two kinds of resources, primary and secondary, that are available for purposes of research. For example, in a very good lesson, pupils took on the role of researchers and began to investigate the life and culture of the Ancient Greeks. The pupils organised themselves very well in groups to generate their research questions and decide among themselves aspects of their study such as the Ancient Greek arts, language, architecture and scholars. This also made a very good contribution to their personal and social skills as they abided by the group expectations. For instance, the chairperson organised the discussion and gave everyone a chance to contribute and share their ideas while others listened carefully and respectfully to what they had to say.
100. The pupils achieve well because of the good and very good teaching throughout the school. Teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and this is reflected in the good standards of presentation in pupils' written work. Pupils from Year 4 onward are taught why it is important to understand the history of their locality. Pupils' awareness of dates and events in various periods, such as 16th Century Tudor England, develops appropriately but their understanding of chronology is more variable. Pupils display great interest in the periods they study and they recall their earlier work, including visits to local places of interest and museums, with enthusiasm. All pupils work in small groups very well and share their ideas. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress because of the quality of support they receive from teachers and their peers when they work in groups. Extension work challenges the gifted pupils well as they, for instance, identify differences and similarities between story themes of myths and fables such as 'The Lion and the Mouse' and 'Theseus and the Minotaur'.

101. The very good quality teaching results in pupils' learning very well. Teachers plan the units of work in year groups which is a very effective way of sharing ideas and good practice. Planning across other subjects supports the work in history to a great extent. For instance, pupils in Year 6, in conjunction with other neighbouring schools, have written and presented an Ancient Greek play. They prepared interviews to find out about the Second World War from their grandparents and members of the community. Teachers' plans encourage pupils' skills of speaking very well. For example, by Year 6, pupils are used to going into the role of a historical character as their peers ask them questions to find out more about the period they are studying. Homework is often given which supports well the pupils' skills of research. The pupils in Year 6 compare and contrast the similarities and differences between the present and past Olympic Games using information and communication technology to good effect during initial research and to create titles and insert pictures.
102. Leadership by the subject leader is very good. The subject leader monitors planning and pupils' work to good effect. Continuous assessments are made of pupils' learning against the lesson objectives. Resources are good overall and are supplemented by library loans. There are adequate books and computer programs accessible to all pupils who wish to do further research. The extensive range of visits and visitors helps the pupils' cultural development very well. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development when, for example, they find out about the different way of life of different peoples such as the Athenians and the Spartans, the Ancient Egyptians and the Tudors.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Subject summary

103. Standards in information and communication technology are above average by the end of Year 6. This is a similar position to that at the time of the last inspection. However, there have been considerable increases in the expectations in the subject over the last few years and the school has worked extremely hard to maintain and build upon the strong position reported in the last inspection. There are some particularly good features of the pupils' work, which indicate that the pupils achieve well as the result of good teaching and learning. The subject is very well led and managed.

Subject commentary

104. Those pupils who are identified by the school as being gifted and talented because of their information and communication technology expertise are helped by the teachers to develop and extend their skills even further. They generally work together in the computer suite and are expected to take their learning further than the rest of the class. Often these pupils demonstrate particular techniques to the rest of the class. Some of the pupils in Year 6 help the teacher with the information and communication technology club for the pupils in Year 3 and in this way they use their expertise to help others. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language have extra help with their learning on the computers and so they achieve well alongside their peers. All pupils achieve well as a result of good and often very good teaching and the accurate checks the teachers make on the pupils' skills development.
105. In Year 3, the pupils often make rapid progress as they learn how to be as independent as possible in using the computers and are acquiring and developing

good information and communication technology skills. For example, in Year 3, the pupils practise using both hands as they type in their work on the computer. They are taught to use both hands so that they become quicker at typing. In Year 4, the pupils command the computer turtle to create different shapes by using repeat commands. In Year 5, the pupils are at present busy planning a kitchen. They recognise the need to be aware of where the services are for their kitchen and to work within a budget. The pupils developed a good understanding of the need to plan their kitchen carefully and place the equipment strategically. By Year 6, pupils develop good skills in using the computers. In Year 6, pupils are busy investigating different software which they will be able to use to create their own web page. Pupils use different tools to import video clips and text. One pupil has already begun to develop his own PowerPoint presentation based on the Gulf War.

106. There are many planned opportunities for the pupils to develop and practise their skills in other subject areas of the curriculum. For example, the pupils in Year 5 use a spreadsheet and graphing program to create line graphs of the hours of sunlight in different capital cities of the world. Pupils gained their information from the BBC weather website and then put the information onto their spreadsheets. The higher attaining pupils then interpreted the data reflecting that the number of sunlight hours probably also has a strong correlation with the temperature graphs of these cities.
107. Teaching and learning in information and communication technology are good and sometimes very good. Time in using the computer and information technology equipment is spent productively. The computers are used efficiently and because of the opportunities available for the pupils and the clear teaching of skills they all learn well.
108. The subject coordinator is knowledgeable and gives very good help and advice to other teachers. Teachers have received their training for information and communication technology and show a good level of expertise. The coordinator has a clear perception of standards throughout the school and is working hard for further improvement. Procedures for checking pupils' learning are fully in place and enable teachers to plan their work successfully. Resources for information and communication technology throughout the school are satisfactory. The computer suite, although providing a good teaching resource, is small. The pupils have to share time on the computers, as there are only 15 in the suite. The computers are relatively old and the printers can be overwhelmed by the tasks they are required to do. Time allocated in the computer suite in this large school is at a premium and is just sufficient. Lessons in the computer suite are supported by work in the classrooms and the computers are used well to aid the pupils' learning. There has been a recent drive within the school to improve the use of information and communication technology in other subject areas and this has worked well. The pupils are very keen to attend the computer clubs run by members of staff and this has a beneficial impact upon their learning.

MUSIC

Subject summary

109. The quality of the school's provision is very good. Pupils attain very good standards in music. By Year 6, they achieve very well and have made very good progress. The contribution of music to the life of the school is outstanding. The leadership and management are very good. High standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

Subject commentary

110. In Year 3, pupils work in line with the National Curriculum expectations using a commercial scheme and develop confidence in the subject and learn technical terms such as 'tempo' and 'dynamics'. At this stage pupils are also learning how to handle instruments and the importance of following a teacher's instructions on when to play the instrument. The numerous opportunities to learn to sing or play a musical instrument contribute greatly to pupils' levels of expertise and by Year 5, they read and compose rhythmic pieces working collaboratively. By Year 6, pupils are able to compose tunes using tuned and un-tuned instruments. They identify the difference between major and minor scales and relate their sounds to the feelings they invoke. When given the opportunity to compose using scales and modes from different cultures, they discuss whether the resulting melodies are major, minor, dorian, pentatonic, chromatic, Indonesian or Indian draga styles. They give reasons for their judgements and choose appropriate percussion instruments to enhance the sound and mood of their compositions. Pupils use information technology to record their compositions and show confidence when using keyboards for melodies or for effects.
111. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and the wide range of teaching situations means that teaching is very good overall. There is a wide range of musical tuition in the school. The differing abilities of pupils are planned for in lessons and technical terms are explained clearly which helps those learning English as an additional language. Peripatetic staff teach string and woodwind instruments well and pupils make excellent progress. The range of musical opportunities offered to pupils is exceptional. Several members of staff are committed to the development of music in the school and they work well together to the great benefit of the school. All pupils have equal access and opportunity to participate in musical activities. Extra-curricular activities cater for senior and junior choirs, recorders and recorder orchestra together with guitar classes, full orchestra practices and percussion accompaniments. Pupils are able to sing in harmony and in four-part rounds. They do choral speaking and the recorder orchestra includes descant, treble and bass recorder.
112. The co-ordinator is very well qualified in the subject as are other members of staff. Resources are very good. The separate music room provides an appropriate setting and ensures that the wide range of tuned and untuned instruments is accessible. The involvement of pupils and musical experiences they offer enrich the life of the school and contribute very successfully to pupils' spiritual development. Mornings begin with large numbers of pupils producing a musical performance to delight the audience. Prayer and reflection during worship are accompanied by quiet and uplifting singing of prayers. Throughout the day, pupils can be found participating in music with pride and pleasure. They listen to a wide range of music from other cultures and periods. The subject contributes very well to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Subject summary

113. The quality of the school's provision for physical education is very good; this is reflected in the well above average standards of achievement by the end of Year 6. Physical education permeates the work of the school, resulting in pupils' motivation to achieve a developing awareness of their own physical wellbeing, and an enrichment of their personal and social lives. The subject is well led and managed and the school

has been awarded the Activemark Gold status until 2004. There is an extensive range of clubs and activities outside lessons. Since the last inspection, there has been good improvement in provision.

Subject commentary

114. Overall, pupils achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs succeed as well as most other pupils. Those with control or movement difficulties are assisted by teaching assistants, some apparatus being specially adapted to their needs. They receive plenty of encouragement from their teachers and are helped by their very caring friends. The highest attaining and talented pupils make more rapid progress as the expertise and opportunities offered to them meets their needs. All pupils benefit from good quality coaching in the extra-curricular clubs and the opportunity to compete against other teams.
115. The abundance of well-coached extra curricular sports clubs has a very positive influence on the abilities of the pupils who attend regularly. Staff and volunteer helpers freely give up their time to enable pupils to take part in a huge range of clubs such as soccer, rugby, cycling, netball, cross country, swimming and table tennis. They often provide pupils with good coaching and the chance to compete against other schools. The school has been extremely successful locally and nationally in recent years in almost every sport. By Year 6, pupils have attended on average seven extra-curricular clubs, many of which promote physical skills. The clubs have given pupils the opportunity to try out sports that are new to them, develop their skills further and make friends with pupils from other classes and year groups. Clearly clubs are very important to pupils and most manage to attend clubs of their choice.
116. In athletics, most pupils show a growing understanding of how to pace their running for longer distances, though a few pupils were not fit enough to run continuously for four minutes. Others understood the importance of a high knee lift in sprinting. In dance, all pupils could repeat a sequence of moves in English country dancing and performed the 'Long Set' quite well. They knew that the strenuous exercise of the dance had caused them to be out of breath and their heart to beat faster. They offered sensible suggestions, based on their science studies, as to why this happened. The swimming gala was a successful event where pupils won a gold medal. It was well organised and pupils' behaviour was exemplary. Pupils were keen to cheer on their pupils but also applauded others' efforts. Standards in swimming are high. In most years nine out of ten pupils leave school having the ability to swim 25 metres, using at least one recognised stroke, and having an understanding of water safety.
117. Teaching is good overall. The teaching varied from good to satisfactory with one lesson which was unsatisfactory. All teachers showed entirely appropriate awareness of safety issues when teaching physical education, including taking great care of pupils travelling to the school field or to the swimming baths. Where teachers' subject knowledge was strong they interpreted the sound lesson planning well and thus provided pupils with good lessons, which often involved them in almost continuous strenuous activity, whether it be in dance, rugby or athletics. Teachers of Year 6 pupils used video very well to give pupils a visual example of the dance moves they would need. This enabled the excited and interested pupils to learn the steps much more quickly. They thoroughly enjoyed the country dancing and worked very hard, becoming extremely tired after a complete dance. These lessons make a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. Effective links in the curriculum are made to other subjects such as history and geography as pupils listen to and interpret music from different cultures and periods such as African rhythms or Tudor music.

Following a very good demonstration of a body swerve in a Year 5 rugby lesson, a small number of pupils were immediately successful. The others all tried hard to master this complex and demanding manoeuvre and enjoyed their improving skills and the lively practice. Weaker teaching and learning are typified by lack of organisation, insufficient teacher demonstration and too little physical activity.

118. The management of the subject is good. The curriculum is rich and varied and includes intra- and inter-school sports. Teaching and learning are monitored and appropriate procedures for the assessment of pupils' learning are in place. Approximately one third of the staff have expertise in sport. The school uses the available school-based accommodation very well but some of it is unsatisfactory particularly for Years 5 and 6. The narrowness of the hall limits pupils' ability to move freely and creatively, for instance, during an apparatus session in gymnastics. The playgrounds are small, have drains at a lower level than the surrounding surface and have either buildings or building work in process very close by. All of these factors inhibit pupils' movements during games sessions. However, excellent use is made of the surrounding area for games, athletics, cycling and running. Resources are particularly good for games skills lessons.