

# INSPECTION REPORT

**CHURCH LANE PRIMARY AND NURSERY  
SCHOOL**

Sleaford

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120387

Headteacher: Mrs A Ashton

Reporting inspector: Mr R Heath  
1262

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2003

Inspection number: 252185

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 9 (11)
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Lane Sleaford Lincolnshire
Postcode:	NG34 7DF
Telephone number:	(01529) 302696
Fax number:	(01529) 304542
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Barbara Jones
Date of previous inspection:	Not applicable

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1262	Mr R Heath	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology	Characteristics of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management
9942	Mrs S Stevens	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development Attendance The school's care for pupils Partnership with parents
2041	Mrs V Reid	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Science Design and technology Geography History Physical education Religious education	Curriculum
8645	Dr D Ward	Team inspector	Art and design Music Educational inclusion Special educational needs English as an additional language	

The inspection contractor was:

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Bristol  
BS1 5RW

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33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Church Lane Primary and Nursery School is situated at the northern end of the town of Sleaford. Following a reorganisation of Sleaford primary schools in September 2001, the school changed its character from infant and nursery to its present type. Pupils are being phased into the junior classes and currently the oldest pupils are in Year 4. In January 2003, pupils and staff moved into a new building provided under the Private Finance Initiative, a national government initiative, built and managed by national commercial companies. The building will accommodate a school of average size with seven classes from Reception to Year 6 and a nursery. This year is the last to have three classes of pupils in Year 2. At the time of the inspection, there were 182 boys and girls in the Reception to Year 4 classes and 52 children attending the Nursery part time. The school is becoming a popular choice with parents and pupil mobility is significant. For example, during the last school year, 12 pupils left the school and 19 arrived other than at the usual times of admission or transfer.

Relatively few pupils take free school meals and this is below average. Almost all pupils are white and the few others are mainly from Asian backgrounds. At the time of the inspection, only one pupil was at an early stage of English language acquisition. About one in five pupils are on the register of special educational needs, which is close to average. This includes 17 pupils with very specific need, each requiring an individual education plan. Most of them have learning difficulties, some arising from physical impairment; six pupils have a statement of special need. Children enter the Nursery with a wide range of attainment but it is below average overall. The school is involved in two national initiatives to promote pupils' education and well being: the Healthy Schools initiative and a partnership with a local college in the training of teachers.

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

This is a good school. Its many strengths are those designed to support each individual pupil in their learning and ensure that they achieve their best. In particular, the teaching of personal, social and health education makes a strong contribution to pupils' overall development into good citizens. From a low base, pupils make good progress in all subjects and achieve as well as they can. A significant proportion of pupils achieve high standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Attainment in design and technology, religious education and in music in Years 3-4 is above expectations. The quality of teaching is such that it leads to effective learning. Teachers work hard to ensure pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent and pupils' personal development is very good. Governors and staff work very well as a team and together provide very good leadership. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Leadership of the school is very good.
- The staff have a strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils achieve as well as they can.
- Teaching is good or very good in almost equal proportions.
- The high standard of care for pupils is reflected in their very good social and moral development.
- Pupils' behaviour is consistently very well managed.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good.

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

- Systematic monitoring and evaluation of each pupil's progress from entry to the school, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

*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 changed its character and age-range and therefore comparisons with a previous inspection are not valid. Governors and staff, however, are preparing carefully and thoroughly for the teaching and learning of older pupils as it transforms into a full primary school for children aged 3-11 years.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores (which takes account of the achievements of all pupils in its calculation, including those with special educational needs) in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	D	C	D	E
writing	D	E	E	E
mathematics	E	E	E	E

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

Despite the low results in the national tests in 2002, over 80 per cent of Year 2 pupils achieved at least the basic standard in reading, writing and mathematics. Of the 74 pupils assessed, a quarter of them were on the school's register of special educational needs, mostly because of learning difficulties. Six pupils had very significant difficulties with learning and remembering the most basic skills of reading, writing and number. Pupils do better in reading than in writing and mathematics, especially in achieving the higher levels. Overall, girls do much better than boys. The trend in recent years has followed the national (upward) picture, but the relatively high proportions of pupils with learning difficulties have kept the school below or well below national averages. The nature of pupils now entering the school has changed since its reorganisation; fewer of them have special educational needs. Unvalidated results for 2003 are better than those of 2002, especially in the standard of writing which has improved considerably.

Pupils' overall standard of attainment in the work seen during the inspection is close to that expected for pupils in the current age range. Pupils generally acquire confidence and accuracy in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT and gain a sound understanding of science by doing worthwhile practical investigations. In other subjects, good or very good teaching helps them use a variety of resources in acquiring appropriate skills and knowledge. Standards are above average in design and technology, religious education and in music in Years 3-4.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and are eager to learn and do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good around school and in lessons. All staff have consistently high expectations and pupils respond positively. No exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	The very high quality of relationships is at the heart of this school. Pupils are caring and helpful and, overall, a joy to be with.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Most pupils arrive punctually and attend well; a few do not, despite the school's best efforts.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery & Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good	Very good

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

Teaching and learning are very good in English and are good in mathematics and science. Basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are thoroughly taught and learned. Pupils are taught well how to structure their writing to make it interesting. Some of the teaching of mathematics and science in Years 1-4 is very good. Design and technology, ICT and religious education are very well taught. Teachers work hard and enthusiastically on behalf of their pupils. Pupils respond by showing interest and involvement in lessons. Those pupils with special educational needs are well taught and make good progress, particularly in basic skills. Other strengths of the teaching are the consistent management of pupils' behaviour, the quality of ongoing assessment and the use of time, support staff and resources. In a little of the teaching, the style of questioning contains the answers and this hinders pupils' opportunities to think things out for themselves.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school offers a broad, well-balanced, clearly structured curriculum with an appropriate emphasis on literacy, numeracy and ICT. Extra-curricular provision, visits and visitors enhance and enrich learning. Statutory requirements are met.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Thoughtful and effective planning between teachers, learning support assistants and parent helpers ensure work is well matched to these pupils' needs and they make good progress and grow in self-esteem.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The few bilingual pupils are well integrated into their respective classes and provision for them is well matched to their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Pupils' personal development is very good; moral and social development are very good and their spiritual and cultural development are good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Teachers know their pupils very well. All adults carefully supervise them and give them much encouragement to achieve their best. Children and pupils feel happy, secure and grow in confidence.

Curriculum planning makes meaningful links between subjects where it is appropriate to do so. The school works closely with parents and tries to keep them well informed about the progress of their children.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership is very good and management is good. The committed leadership of the headteacher is effective in ensuring very good teamwork between staff and governors in the management of the school's provision for its pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Exceptionally well in both strategic management and day-to-day governance. The policy to promote race equality is effective.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Overall, this leads to effective action for improvements in teaching, learning and standards. It lacks systematic tracking of pupils' progress through school.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Finances are managed and controlled effectively and efficiently for the benefit of the pupils. The large carry-over is held to buy resources as older pupils are phased into the school.

Many aspects of management and organisation are strong, clear and effective. The commitment to high standards is evident in all that the school does. All staff work hard together as a team. Learning support assistants are a strong feature of this teamwork. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are good and are analysed for trends and specific weaknesses that require attention. The school does much to apply the principles of best value in all that it does. Its policy ensures competition in securing the best prices for resources and labour; it challenges its practices in, for example, insurance to cover the costs of staff absence. It does much to consult about improvement and to compare its performance with similar schools. The buildings and site are not yet complete but should offer good provision for teaching and learning. They are well kept, clean, attractive and secure. Learning resources are very good.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The leadership and management of the school.</li> <li>• The quality of the teaching.</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• Their children enjoy coming to school.</li> <li>• The school helps children to become mature and responsible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

These views were expressed by the few parents who attended the meeting with inspectors or completed the questionnaire sent to all parents. The inspectors endorse the very positive views expressed by parents. They judge that the provision of the range of activities outside lessons is as good as can be expected in a school of this size and character and is better than in many similar schools.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. As a result of very good direct teaching throughout the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception classes) children make good progress. They are carefully assessed on entry to the Nursery and their attainment varies widely, but is below average overall. Subsequent teaching and learning are sharply focused on each child's particular needs. A strong emphasis is placed upon improving children's social development and upon the early skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and mathematics. At this late stage of the school year, most children of reception age achieve the expected standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development. Children are competent in the basic skills of using a computer.
2. In the national tests taken near the end of Year 2 in 2002, the proportion of pupils who achieved the yardstick of at least Level 2 was 82 per cent in reading and 85 per cent in both writing and mathematics. Nevertheless, the performance of these pupils was below the national average in reading and writing and well below in mathematics. About 25 per cent of the pupils were on the school's register of special educational needs. When the school's results are compared with those of similar schools (with similar numbers of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) using the average points scored by all pupils, they are below average in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics. This reflects a relatively large proportion of pupils who achieve the lower levels and are on the register of special educational needs. The number of pupils entering the school with special educational needs is fewer since it became a one form entry primary school in 2001. Unvalidated results for 2003 indicate an improvement, especially in those achieving the higher Level 3 in writing, a consequence of the strong emphasis placed on writing throughout the school.
3. As a result of very good teaching, standards of the work seen in English during the inspection are at the levels expected of pupils in this age range. Pupils listen, speak, read and write with increasing confidence and relevance in their use of words and in their growing love of language. From a low base on entry to the school, pupils make good progress and achieve as well as they can. This is because teachers link the key skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing coherently into their planning for both English lessons and in other subjects. Equally, good use is made of ICT to enhance pupils' learning of literacy and pupils with special educational needs receive consistent, good quality support.
4. Very good progress is made in speaking and listening from a low base. Pupils learn how to express ideas and feelings with increasing confidence because teachers plan and structure discussion into their lessons as a way of learning. A strong emphasis is placed upon using correct general and technical language. The use of 'talking partners' helps pupils to clarify their ideas with another before contributing to class discussion. Most pupils listen closely, with interest, during school assemblies, whole class and small group discussions. They listen attentively to music and both speak and sing well to a large audience, clearly evident during an assembly led by all pupils in Year 4.
5. Overall the standard of reading is average. A significant minority of pupils read fluently with understanding both for pleasure and in seeking information. More pupils could reach this standard. A larger proportion, however, struggle to become competent. They persevere and use the context, phonics and clues from illustrations well to help them gain fluency in their reading. As they become more confident they learn to enjoy books. Parents are positively encouraged to support their child's reading at home. By Year 2, pupils are aware of the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and use the glossaries and indexes of reference books to find information. Dictionaries and contents pages are also used effectively. Many pupils in Year 4 enjoy books, read with fluency and expression and read for interest or to gain knowledge in other subjects.
6. Overall the standard of writing is in line with that expected of pupils of this age range. A strong emphasis has been given to improving pupils' writing and a significant proportion of pupils achieve standards above what is expected of them. Pupils learn to become authors by the time they are in Year 4. Teaching of high quality enables pupils to become independent and confident writers who achieve well-presented, fluent writing in a range of styles. They write for different purposes, frequently

using ICT, to prepare instructions for a task, describe a sequence of events or tell a story, for example. Some of their poetry is of very high quality, arising from work in history, for instance. Handwriting is generally well formed and presented and pupils demonstrate a sound grasp of grammar, spelling and punctuation.

7. As a result of effective teaching, pupils make good progress in mathematics and achieve the standards expected of them at this age. By Year 2, most pupils have a good understanding of numbers to 100 and higher. They know the relative order of numbers and understand that the 2 in the number 127 means 20. They practise basic skills thoroughly and improve their swift recall of basic number facts and mental methods of calculation. Nevertheless, there remains a few too many pupils who are slow in finding the difference of pairs of single-digit numbers. By continuing the application of the teaching methods prescribed by the National Numeracy Strategy, teachers help pupils in Years 3-4 gain appropriate skills and knowledge of arithmetic, geometry and, to a limited extent, data handling. They increase their confidence and accuracy in tackling problems described in everyday contexts, using their skills of calculation and their knowledge of metric measures. Equally, they begin to understand basic properties of geometrical shapes in two and three dimensions. Pupils use their knowledge of mathematics confidently in other subjects, such as, measurement and shape in design and technology and simple graphs in science.
8. Standards in science are at the levels expected of pupils at this age. Pupils enjoy science lessons and tackle practical work with enthusiasm and an eagerness to learn. They gain the skills of observation, enquiry and prediction, for example and learn to collect and explain evidence clearly as they move through school. They engage with suitable work from the three main branches of the subject. For example, when faced with samples of exotic fruits, pupils in Year 2 used their knowledge of plants and how they grow to try to predict what they might find inside the fruits.
9. Pupils' attainment in ICT is at the levels expected of pupils of this age. In Years 1-4 pupils develop increasing confidence in using the equipment to explore computer programs. They gain speed and accuracy in using the mouse and keyboard to operate the computer. They learn to enter, edit, print, save and retrieve text. Older pupils learn well to combine text and pictures to produce work of high quality in other subjects. Equally, pupils learn that computers may be used to control events. For example, they devise sequences of precise instructions to control the movement of a programmable toy. They gain experience of selecting from a tool bar the various facilities of a paint program to design articles of their choice. They use programs that assist their learning in other subjects, such as, improving their speed and accuracy in mathematical calculations. Pupils know that computers are used to store and retrieve information and access the Internet to extract information under close supervision. Pupils use ICT well to enhance their learning in other subjects.
10. Attainment in religious education is above the standard expected of pupils of this age. They make good progress in the programme of work set out in the locally agreed syllabus. As a result of very good teaching, pupils deepen their understanding of Christianity and gain a good understanding of other major world religions, such as, Judaism and Hinduism. They gain a growing awareness that people across the world hold different beliefs, values and customs and that these traditions influence the way people live. The emphasis on personal education encourages pupils to reflect on important human values, such as, truthfulness, respect, sharing and caring.
11. Pupils generally make good progress in other subjects and their attainment is that expected of seven and nine year olds. In design and technology it is above that expected of them and in music pupils in Year 4 attain above the expected levels. Because of the consistently good teaching, pupils gain a broad base of knowledge and skills from their participation in a wide range of creative and physical activities and from their studies of people and places, past and present. High attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are broadly equally nourished and generally achieve their best. Those pupils with English as an additional language are thoughtfully integrated into the school's programmes of learning.

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

12. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, enjoy their time in school and are enthusiastic to learn. They respond well to the values and ethos of the school and, from their earliest

entry, quickly develop positive attitudes and behaviour. The behaviour of pupils in and around the school is very good; they are considerate of others and aware of the need to be sensible and kind. The quality of the relationships between staff and pupils is excellent, as is the tolerance and friendship between the pupils themselves. Parents confirm the school's role is enabling their children to become mature and sensible individuals, who are eager to attend, persevere with their work and enjoy time at school.

13. The very positive attitudes of the pupils contribute well to the life of the school community. They are keen to learn and are enthusiastic about many aspects of their lives in school, such as the practical nature of a geography field trip to study the local environment. Pupils are eager to contribute their ideas in lessons, encouraged by their teachers who consistently remind them of the need for courtesy and respect towards others. The school is committed to its policy of including all pupils in what it provides; the quality of support provided for pupils with special educational needs, for instance, enables them to take a full part in all the activities offered. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are handled tactfully and sympathetically by a well-trained staff who guide the personal development of those pupils very well. This knowledgeable assistance enables pupils with less positive attitudes to take their place in the school with confidence and to gain as much as possible from the educational and social opportunities provided by it. Oppressive behaviour is very well managed by teachers and other adults. Parents are very satisfied with standards of behaviour and feel the 'school does its best to develop young citizens'. All pupils have a clear understanding of their teachers' expectations with regard to behaviour and the boundaries which are set by the rules agreed with the pupils. They know the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and are motivated well by praise. Pupils speak with pride of their new school; they move about the building purposefully and sensibly. Behaviour in assembly and also during break times is very good; for example, pupils hold doors open for others to pass through and are thanked in return by their peers.
14. When working in groups or pairs, pupils are confident, happy and concentrate well on the task in hand. The very good personal development of the pupils, reinforced by the very good relationships in the school and the quality of the teaching, enables pupils to gain in self-esteem and confidence. This is a significant strength of the school; a calm and harmonious environment for study has been created, to which pupils respond well. There have been no exclusions and recorded bullying incidents are minimal.
15. The school has good procedures for promoting regular attendance and punctuality. Most parents are aware of the need to notify the school of their child's absence and the unauthorised absence figures are in line with those of similar schools. Attendance is broadly average but a few families choose to take their children on holidays during term time, thereby adversely affecting their learning. Most pupils arrive promptly and settle quickly into their classroom routines or go about their duties, such as the milk monitor arranging the daily supply for each class. Registration is efficient and lessons begin on time. Late arrivals are checked in and registers are marked appropriately.

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

16. The quality of teaching is good or very good in about equal proportions and is very good overall. A little is excellent and no teaching is unsatisfactory. The governors have built a strong and committed team of teachers, learning support assistants and parent helpers. Good training opportunities for both teachers and assistants help them to plan for the needs of pupils during the current stage of transition to a full primary school. These factors ensure most pupils receive much high quality teaching that enables them to achieve as well as they can. Some impressive teaching is to be found in each class and notably in Year 4 and one of the Year 2 classes. Teachers tackle the school's priorities effectively. For example, the quality of pupils' writing has improved considerably.
17. Pupils' rate of learning is good overall. During one lesson in three it is very good. As they move through school, most pupils acquire relevant skills and knowledge in all subjects. Pupils generally work productively on tasks set for them and learn well many of the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. The small proportion of pupils having emotional and behavioural problems, however, pulls down the overall attainment expected by the ages of seven and nine, despite their teachers' best efforts.

18. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. Frequently, the quality of the questioning and discussion with pupils is very high because of teachers' insights into subjects. A strong emphasis is placed on subject-specific vocabulary in order to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and whose home language is not English, understand essential ideas and information. Sometimes questions are too prescriptive and almost provide the answer before the question is asked, thereby limiting pupils' opportunities to think things out for themselves. In contrast, pupils are frequently asked to explain their thinking which helps them gain both confidence and increased understanding. In an ICT lesson for pupils in Year 4, for example, during which the pupils were to learn how to use computers to generate repeating patterns, excellent questions flowed from the teacher's very good subject knowledge. Pupils extended their knowledge and skills, they were required to think hard and became highly motivated by such questions as: "Who can predict what happens next?", "Tell me why you said that".
19. Basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well. Teachers encourage discussion and expect pupils to explain their views, feelings and reasoning. Speaking, listening, reading and writing are developed very effectively in a range of other subjects. They discuss very well the people and places they visit or read about. Indeed one class of pupils missed the bell at the end of the day through excited and searching discussion of the samples of water life they had just collected. Teachers help pupils to structure their writing carefully and work hard to make sure that work is both neatly presented and clearly written. Pupils often use ICT to enhance the quality of their writing. In numeracy lessons, pupils practise and consolidate basic skills, especially mental methods of calculation. A suitable emphasis is placed upon reading for understanding in all subjects.
20. The well planned lessons have clear and effective structures, often based on the three-part lesson of introduction, main area of learning and a thorough review at the end; a style recommended by the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. Effective use is made of the national guidance for other subjects. The planning often includes extra provision to challenge higher attaining pupils in subjects, such as mathematics and science. In subjects such as art and design, ICT, design and technology, English and history the needs of such pupils are well met by their teachers' high expectations of the quality of their final product arising from a common task for the whole class. For example, in history lessons, higher attaining pupils in Year 4 wrote poetry of high quality arising from their empathy with children who suffered bombing during World War 2. Equally, lesson plans take account of those with special educational needs, either by planning to give them the extra support of a learning support assistant or other helper, or adapting the common task to their specific needs by breaking it down into manageable steps.
21. Lesson plans, the high quality of many introductions to lessons and teachers' questioning often reflect high expectations of what pupils can achieve. In the best lessons, the starter activity or the introduction inspired pupils to want to know more. In a literacy lesson for pupils in Year 2, for example, they began by investigating words that have the same pattern of spelling but sound different (for instance, the 'ea' in 'weather' and 'wheat'). The teacher's excellent planning, her management of discussion of an 'ea' crossword, challenging pupils with well-targeted questions and the use of ICT to illustrate particular points, all combined to motivate pupils into enthusiastic participation in learning, an attitude that ran through the whole lesson.
22. Practical work and the practise of skills and routines are used very well to extend and consolidate pupils' understanding and are especially productive in the teaching of younger pupils and those with special educational needs or whose home language is not English. These methods of teaching are used particularly effectively in mathematics. In another class of pupils in Year 2, for example, pupils learned well aspects of metric measures. During a well-staged starter activity, pupils consolidated their knowledge of metric measures, with correct abbreviations, using sets of cards containing quantities such as, 30ml, 2m, 5kg. They used such measures in practical situations to gain understanding of them. One pupil said, "A quarter of that large cola bottle (two litres) holds half a litre".
23. Problem solving, investigation and extended research as methods of learning are taught well over time, especially in mathematics, science, ICT, design and technology, history and religious education. For example, in a design and technology lesson for a class of pupils in Year 2, they

developed well their 'design and make' skills because of their teacher's skilful introduction and development of the lesson. Design ideas for 'Joseph's dreamcoat' were thoroughly explored and the skills of making them were discussed, developed and improved. Equally, during a history lesson for pupils in Year 3, very good questioning and discussion, led by the teacher, helped pupils to investigate the available evidence of the life of Baudicca and appreciate why there may be conflicting views of it.

24. All teachers consistently apply the school's behaviour policy and their judicious use of the agreed range of strategies for managing pupils' behaviour is very effective. Normally the combination of teaching methods, the quality of interesting activities and teachers' high expectations that pupils will behave well ensure lessons flow smoothly. Despite this, a few pupils are prepared to challenge their teacher's authority. Such misdemeanours are dealt with calmly and assertively and often unobtrusively. Praise, encouragement and humour are used effectively to sustain pupils' involvement in lessons. As a result lessons are well managed and the atmosphere is purposeful, productive and enjoyable. These factors are a great strength of the teaching in the school.
25. Time is used well. Lessons are conducted at a good pace, with variations to suit circumstances. Resources are of good quality and invite interest. ICT resources are used particularly well to enhance pupils' learning in other subjects as well as in the subject itself. For example, pupils include photographs taken by a digital camera in their final product giving it an accomplished finish and, in contrast, pupils in Year 1 eagerly used a mathematics program to help them learn number facts very effectively. Teachers assess pupils' work thoroughly during lessons. Marking is a little variable but much is done carefully; it is not, however, always followed through sufficiently with pupils. Homework is set with reasonable frequency and sufficiency; it draws parents into pupils' learning by encouraging them to help their children to read or write and to consolidate aspects of numeracy.

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

26. The curriculum makes a good contribution to the achievement of pupils of all abilities. It is broad, balanced and relevant, meets all statutory requirements and is particularly good in engaging those pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties. There is a strong emphasis on improving skills in literacy and numeracy and time in the school day is used well to allow all other subjects to be taught thoroughly. National guidance and the local agreed syllabus for religious education are used effectively. Such guidance is reviewed and adapted where appropriate to better meet the needs of these pupils. There is very good forward planning to make sure that the curriculum, with appropriate resources, is ready for the next year group as the school works towards becoming a primary school for pupils aged 3-11. Planning is clear, detailed and shared with learning support assistants. Work is set to extend the learning of all pupils, including high attainers. Pupils know what is expected of them and are encouraged to do their best. In lessons, their literacy and ICT skills are enhanced and extended well in other subjects of the curriculum. Teachers attach considerable importance to developing pupils' personal development through specific lessons and through other subjects. This is one key to the success of the school and ensures that the significant number of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties gradually learn to overcome them.
27. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are used well. Much effort goes into improving pupils' speaking and listening and there are many opportunities for pupils to use their reading skills to find information for other subjects. Writing is given sufficient emphasis on skills to enable pupils to achieve their best. This is evident in some beautifully written poems and in the good level of handwriting and presentation of work. There is a good focus on basic number skills, but not enough attention is given to giving pupils opportunities to record information in different ways, for example, in the use of graphs and tables. Provision for science is also good with an emphasis placed on learning science through practical investigations. The religious education provided is good and also makes a valuable contribution to pupils' personal development.
28. The school provides very good opportunities to extend pupils' personal, social and health education, including sex education and drugs awareness. There is a very strong commitment to promoting citizenship through activities such as 'Circle Time', where pupils discuss issues openly and frankly. The school is working towards gaining the 'Healthy Schools' standard. Measures taken to include all

pupils in all activities have a very high profile and are very effective in beginning to combat those things that may hinder progress. For example, pupils with special educational needs benefit because the curriculum is adapted appropriately and they receive very good levels of support. Assessments made of pupils' learning are used to group pupils according to ability for many activities. More able pupils are identified to make sure they attain high standards. Pupils who find it difficult to attend or come on time are well supported. The school has very good access for wheelchairs.

29. The curriculum is enhanced in a number of ways. The use of displays supports and stimulates learning and sets a tone of high expectations by providing models of good quality work in many subjects. The provision of extra-curricular activities is very good and increasing as the age of pupils is extended year-on-year. The range is varied, interesting and includes activities such as sign language, hand bell ringing, art, choir, recorder, computer club and skills coaching in netball and football. Regular and effective enrichment provided through visits and visitors to and from the local community, for example, folk singing, brings subjects to life and provides starting points that interest pupils.
30. Good links are being forged with the local community, for example, with partners in reading and mathematics schemes and with the Church. Links with the secondary schools, including dance workshops, specific support in physical education and sport from the nearby grammar school, help to provide continuity as pupils move from one school to the next. The school also enjoys very good links with the local teacher training college in the training of new teachers.
31. The school's provision for and pupils' development of, spiritual, moral, social and cultural education are very good overall. Spiritual development is well promoted through the daily assemblies that include a prayer and songs that express faith and praise. Pupils learn and say the school prayer and pupils in Year 3 have written their own book of prayers. Regular acts of worship are led by a local vicar and representatives of local churches visit the school to talk about their own faith and religious practices. Although Christianity is the main emphasis, pupils also learn about other main faiths, such as, Hinduism. Experiences such as these help pupils to understand feelings of empathy, respect and care, for example and are reflected in the attitudes, values and beliefs they show in the excellent relationships enjoyed in the school. Equally, the school embraces teaching methods that value pupils' questions and contributions to discussions; in this way, teachers help pupils to develop respect for others and for themselves. Above all, pupils experience spirituality through their growing sense of self-esteem that they enjoy as a result of the school's very caring ethos where pupils receive sensitive individual attention.
32. Pupils' moral and social development is a strength of the school. The headteacher and all staff set very good examples of desirable conduct and courtesy. School rules are limited to three, which can very easily be remembered. Pupils are encouraged, however, to take responsibility for additional classroom rules. This helps them to distinguish right from wrong and to recognise the consequences for their own and others' actions. Pupils take part in and enjoy "circle time" in which they learn to take turns and to express positive opinions about the personalities and actions of their peers. Clear moral messages are given out in assemblies and in lessons, often through stories. In a literacy lesson, for instance, pupils with special educational needs acted out a story about bullying. This helped the pupils to think about reasons, such as jealousy and racism that might lead to such behaviour.
33. Social development is effective from the moment children join the Nursery. They respond very positively to the encouragement to work and talk with adults and other children as they engage with practical activities. Lessons for older pupils often include tasks that involve them in working with partners or groups. This was especially noticeable in a literacy lesson in which pupils in Year 2 were regularly invited to discuss in pairs questions and comments about characters in a story. Good provision is made for social activity at break and dinnertime. Pupils are well supervised and follow very orderly routines that enable them to enjoy meals and conversation in a socially acceptable manner. The extra-curricular activities and school visits enable pupils to meet new friends and behave appropriately in different situations.
34. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. They hear and take part in, a good range of music in lessons and assemblies. In art and design they learn about famous artists such as Picasso and in connection with geography they learn about Asian costume as a result of a visit by a Bangladeshi family. Pupils have benefited from the visit of a working author, an American folk singer and various

theatre groups. Experiences such as these enable pupils to relate to other peoples' skills and talents. The school includes a small number of pupils from ethnic minorities who, as a result of a good inclusion policy, make an important contribution to the tolerant and caring ethos to which all pupils respond positively.

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

35. The provision for support, guidance and pupils' welfare is very good overall. Pupils are valued and well known by their teachers and support staff, who identify their needs, both academic and social. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and their needs are clearly identified. The appropriate support given to them enables their full integration into the life of the school. External support agencies are used well and the individual education plans, known to teachers, offer challenges to meet their potential. Parents confirm these views and appreciate the commitment of all adults who work with and care for the pupils in the school. Most pupils have attended the nursery, where parents are made welcome and the progress of the children is monitored extremely carefully to ensure that any necessary support and guidance is provided promptly.
36. The procedures and practices to govern child protection within the school are very good. The school works closely with the whole family and appropriate outside agencies when necessary. The headteacher is the designated member of staff, she is fully trained and ensures staff have a good awareness of this aspect of care. Regular risk assessments are carried out; staff are aware of their own responsibilities and report any cause for concern. Routine health and safety issues are given a high priority and there is a whole-school commitment to raising the standards of health by the healthy school programme, in which parents are involved. First aid provision is very good and procedures are consistent and logged.
37. There are good procedures for monitoring attendance and follow-up procedures are rigorous. Most parents are supportive of the school's efforts to raise attendance and promote punctuality. Daily registration is prompt and registers are monitored and completed correctly, complying with legal requirements.
38. The school's ethos successfully promotes and supports good behaviour. The consistent use of clear strategies to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions is reflected in the calm, purposeful atmosphere in the school. Staff, both teaching and non-teaching, act as very good role models to encourage thoughtful, co-operative behaviour in the pupils. The school's procedures and actions contribute to the very good personal development of the pupils in a caring community which supports everyone in it. Midday supervisors provide good sympathetic supervision of lunch in the hall and in the play areas, enabling pupils to enjoy a comfortable, happy break time. Parents confirm pupils' views that bullying is not a problem because incidents are dealt with swiftly by the school. Because there is very good awareness of the needs of the pupils, any unkindness or potentially disruptive behaviour is met with by a well-trained staff using effective procedures to diffuse the situation. Pupils are encouraged to make choices and to reflect on the effect on others of their actions. Very young children and older pupils all comment that they are happy to talk to their teachers or a member of staff if they have a problem. They cheerfully acknowledge the help and support they receive.
39. The school has a clear assessment policy that explains the purpose and aims of the assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' attainments. Overall, the school's assessment procedures are good. In English, mathematics and science, the quality of day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is good. Teachers assess pupils' achievements in literacy and numeracy very well. In the other subjects, teachers have an agreed approach to evaluating pupils' work in accordance with nationally recommended schemes of work. Teachers make very good use of assessment data to help them modify these schemes or to revise work. For example, in mathematics extra work in three-dimensional shapes and in mental calculation is given as a result of tests that showed weaknesses in these areas.
40. In all subjects where it is appropriate, teachers relate assessments to National Curriculum levels but this process lacks portfolios of pupils' work that exemplify levels of attainment to ensure a common understanding of standards. Neither do teachers explain these criteria well enough to pupils so that



they know what they need to do to gain higher levels in particular learning tasks. Although the school has useful data from regular tests of attainment, there is no system that enables teachers and senior staff to track accurately the attainments of pupils and the progress they make year by year. This is a weakness in the current assessment procedures.

41. The ongoing assessment of progress made by pupils with special educational needs is very good overall. Teachers and learning assistants keep careful records that show how and when these pupils achieve particular learning targets. These targets, written in individual learning programmes (EPs) are well known to all staff and to the pupils themselves. The school does not have, however, a method of plotting and analysing the medium and long-term progress these pupils make.
42. Annual reports to parents on the attainment and progress of pupils are satisfactory overall. They are clearly written and presented in a common format. They are, however, variable in terms of the precision and detail that is required to tell parents exactly what standards their children are achieving and how well they are progressing. Some very good reporting is done in English and mathematics. Only a small number of the sample reports seen during the inspection showed clearly and exactly what the pupil needs to do to improve in particular aspects of subjects.

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

43. The school works in a strong partnership with the parents, carers and the local community. They feel they are actively encouraged to become involved in the school and appreciate the attitudes and values the school promotes. Parents feel they are welcomed into the school and are valued for the support they give to help their children to achieve. A small number of parents and volunteers assist teachers in the classroom or on out-of-school visits, such as a local environmental field study trip during a geography lesson. The majority of parents support pupils' work at home, often recording their comments in a 'dialogue' with the class teacher in the homework books. Parents of children with special educational needs are appropriately involved in reviews of their progress and acknowledge the support their children are given by the school staff. Extra-curricular activities organised by the school are better than in many similar schools and appeal to a wide range of pupils. Friends of the school are committed and work hard to raise funds through social events, such as discos and the summer fête, which attracts visitors from the surrounding community. The funds raised provide extra resources, such as games and equipment for use in the playground. This impacts directly on the quality of the pupils' lives in the school and adds to their overall enjoyment of their school.
44. Good quality information about the school is available to parents. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents contains useful and practical information. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date with activities taking place. Parents confirm that they are very well informed and find the annual reports on their child's achievements are useful. These reports cover each subject and generally point out pupils' strengths and weaknesses on what they know and can do. Each report is pertinent to the individual pupil but they do not provide a facility for parents or the pupil to comment. Parents praise the approachability of the teachers and headteacher and the ease with which they can discuss problems or just 'to have a chat' at the beginning or end of the day. During the inspection, a number of parents, grandparents and carers were seen to be exchanging information or enjoying a humorous moment with members of staff as they came to collect the pupils after school, thereby cementing further the quality of relationships in the school's community.
45. Pupils participate in charitable fund raising. Members of the local community visit to extend pupils' topic work or to assist with tasks, such as listening to readers. During the building of their new school, the construction company provided a useful resource in the quantities of building blocks which were used in mathematical calculations by the pupils. Parents appreciate the high value the school places on parental involvement and acknowledges the ongoing commitment to maintain and build on the good partnership between the majority of parents and the school. The school is doing all that can be expected to involve a significant number of parents and carers who find it difficult to actively participate in the work of the school.

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

46. The school has a very clear set of aims and values, positively stated, that reflect a strong emphasis on pupils achieving their best and on enrichment of their personal development. The ethos of the school is one of teamwork built on mutual respect for pupils and adults alike. Pupils receive a good all-round education and achieve as well as they can in English, mathematics, science and in other subjects, especially design and technology, religious education and music in Years 3-4. This is an effective school for children to learn and grow up in – a view fully shared by those parents who responded to the questionnaire and the meetings with inspectors.
47. The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff with responsibilities is very good. They share a clear vision and a purposeful direction that are firmly focused on children's learning. Their hard work in recent years has laid a firm foundation on which to plan for and extend the school's provision to the full junior age range. With the very committed support of the governing body, the school has ensured it has an effective team of teachers and learning support assistants. These employees, the non-teaching staff, pupils and many parents share, at this relatively early stage of its full development, a firm belief in the school. Very good relationships and a strong sense of pride in their new school are evident in all that the school does, both inside the gates and in the wider community. Pupils feel secure and happy to be there.
48. The management of the headteacher and other key staff is good. The school's self-evaluation of aspects of its work is good. In particular, it monitors pupils' attainment in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Analysis of pupils' answers in these assessments reveals underlying trends and identifies clearly strengths and weaknesses in teaching and in pupils' learning. For example, such analysis revealed weaknesses in the quality of pupils' writing and this aspect of their learning has significantly improved. Equally, the ready recall of basic number facts and pupils' accuracy of mental methods of calculation have improved. Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly, especially in English and mathematics during Year 2. Pupils' attainments at regular intervals in the school year in other year groups, however, are not systematically measured and recorded against National Curriculum levels to allow the tracking of each pupil's progress through school from the Foundation Stage. The current system of target setting provides pupils with a spur in Year 2. It does not provide them, their parents and teachers with a chart of each pupil's progress through school, nor governors a clear enough overview of how well the school is doing.
49. A good programme of monitoring the quality of teaching and its impact on learning, is becoming established. This programme embraces both performance management requirements and the school's expectation that curriculum subject leaders will monitor and improve the quality of teaching in their subject(s). Ensuing discussions of teaching methods and organisation are effective in honing teachers' skills and in setting appropriate targets. Such monitoring of science, for example, revealed that too much of the subject was being taught in a prescriptive way and not enough opportunities were provided for pupils to investigate basic principles and begin to think like scientists.
50. The governing body meets regularly and, together with its committees, supports the school very well both in the practicalities of the move into the new building and the transition to a 3-11 primary school. It has a very good view of the strategic management of this change and several governors have an equal commitment to the day-to-day activities. For example, each subject is linked to an interested governor and they work with the subject leaders to keep the governing body informed on standards and quality in each subject. Those governors whose work and employers permit, visit the school in session and provide the governing body with valuable insights into daily routines. Firm plans are in hand to match governors to a year group of pupils and monitor its progress through school.
51. The governors provide a strong steer to raising standards by monitoring the school's performance in the National Curriculum tests, seeking to analyse underlying trends or weaknesses. They monitor carefully the headteacher's performance, setting appropriate targets and criteria by which her success will be measured. Planning for school improvement is very good. It reflects a strong shared commitment to improvement and a determination to succeed. Much of it is appropriately aimed at preparing for older year groups. Priorities are generally clear; they are based on secure evaluation of what needs to be done and having the necessary income. Each objective is costed, where possible, either in monetary terms or staff time. Staff responsible and the role of governors are identified. Key objectives generally have sufficient specification to make the intended outcomes clear. A few lack

sufficient specification (usually what the benefit will be to pupils' learning) to indicate clearly how success will be measured and evaluated.

52. The number, experience and qualifications of teachers are well matched to the needs of children in the Nursery and Reception classes and for pupils in Years 1-4. Staff have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities expected of them and much good support and guidance is given to less experienced teachers. The learning support assistants and parent helpers are appropriately qualified and experienced and work closely with teachers in helping pupils to learn, especially those with special educational needs. Children in the Nursery and Reception Years benefit well from suitably qualified support. Teachers and learning support assistants attend appropriate courses of training, both external and in-house, to help them improve pupils' learning. For example, training in literacy, numeracy and ICT is preparing staff well for teaching these subjects to older pupils and to use ICT resources effectively in pupils' learning. The school is actively involved in the training of new teachers; the benefit of this is the thorough discussion and evaluation of successful teaching methods. Administrative support staff are efficient in assisting the headteacher in the daily management of the school and provide a very friendly welcome to pupils, parents and visitors. The caretaker and cleaning staff work hard and successfully to ensure a clean and tidy environment within the building and, as far as they can, while the old building is cleared from the site, in the school grounds.
53. The buildings generally offer good provision for the teaching of the curriculum. Space is well used to provide good learning opportunities and classrooms are of sufficient size and appropriate design for the number and ages of the pupils. For different reasons, neither the Nursery nor Reception class has easy access for children to the outdoor learning opportunities. The hall is used purposefully for PE, assemblies and dining. Dining is well supervised. The library and the computer suite are used very fruitfully to enhance learning. Learning resources are good and the quality of many is very good; they are used effectively during lessons.
54. Governors and the headteacher effectively and efficiently manage and monitor the school's finances. They are well informed on matters of income and expenditure. A member of the school office staff efficiently tracks day-to-day expenditure and provides governors with up-to-date information aligned to the school's priorities for improvement. The relatively large carry forward from last year's income into the current financial year is to allow the school to purchase resources for new year groups as they are phased in. The school's policy for obtaining best value addresses the four principles of challenge, comparison, consultation and competition. These principles were thoroughly tested during the planning and building of the new school under the Private Finance Initiative. Although not quite complete, the building has used the combined professional expertise of the governors, the builders, the LEA and the building managers to try to ensure best value. These factors are evident in, for example, the quality of internal fittings, such as doors and the use of new technology in the security measures. Within the remit of the governors alone, best value principles were applied in agreeing a sensible insurance for staff cover by challenging previous practices, comparison with other schools and obtaining competitive quotations. Specific grants are used well for their intended purposes. For example, one such grant enables the school to provide good support for pupils with special educational needs. Overall, taking account of the high quality of provision, the very good personal development of pupils and that they generally achieve their best, the school serves its community effectively and provides good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. The school already has strengths in many aspects of its work. In order to further improve the good procedures for target setting and forecasting individual pupils' attainment, governors and senior staff should establish assessment systems that will ensure that the progress of both individual pupils and groups of them is systematically tracked, year on year, in literacy and numeracy in the first instance, from entry into the school, by:
- i. ensuring that the observations and assessments of each child's progress in the Foundation Stage are matched to their acquisition of the 'stepping stones' leading towards the early learning goals defined in the national guidance for children of this age;
  - ii. developing a staff consensus of pupils' work, assessed at levels defined by National Curriculum criteria and statements of attainment, to help staff track the progress of each pupil;
  - iii. sharing learning targets with each pupil so that they are aware of what they know, understand and can do and how to improve their work;
  - iv. linking homework to pupils' targets so that parents are clear on how they might help their child;
  - v. allowing pupils time to benefit from the often very good marking of their work in order to help them improve;
  - vi. recognising the very good work done in personal, social and health education and noting pupils' personal development against characteristics, such as confidence, self-esteem and consideration of others; and
  - vii. developing ways of analysing records of pupils' progress so that governors may track over time the progress of groups of pupils, for example, year groups, boys, girls, high attainers, those with special educational needs and those having English as an additional language.

*(Paragraphs referring to these issues: 25, 39, 40, 41, 48 and 59)*

56. In addition to the key issues above, other less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the school's future plans for action. In particular, governors may wish to consider how best to provide better access to the outdoor provision for children in the Foundation Stage. These are indicated in paragraphs: 5, 7, 18, 38, 42, 44, 51, 53, 59 and in subject sections.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	3	20	19	6	0	0	0
Percentage	6	42	40	13	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	182
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	40

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	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	42	32	74

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	32	33
	Girls	29	31	30
	Total	61	63	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (89)	85 (80)	85 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	32	35
	Girls	31	29	30
	Total	61	61	65
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (85)	82 (88)	88 (90)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

## Ethnic background of pupils

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

## Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
147	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0

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

## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.2
Average class size	26

### Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	105.5

### Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

## Financial information

Financial year	2002/03
	£
Total income	493,132
Total expenditure	515,699
Expenditure per pupil	2,421
Balance brought forward from previous year	105,426
Balance carried forward to next year	82,859



*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	208
Number of questionnaires returned	10

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	30	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	40	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	60	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	60	10	0	0
The teaching is good.	80	20	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	40	10	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	10	10	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	30	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	40	50	10	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	100	0	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	40	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	20	20	0	30

None of the replies to the questionnaire had additional comments. Where the responses do not add up to 100 per cent, some parents did not answer the question.

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

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

57. Fifty-two children attend part time in the Nursery and 30 children attend full time in the Reception class. They have been in their new school since January 2003. Great effort was taken to ensure that the move to the new building was stress free for these young children and they have settled in very well. When the children start in the Nursery their knowledge, skills and understanding are lower than expected for their age. Around a quarter of the children have learning, social and behavioural difficulties. In addition, three children have specific special educational needs in speech and three pupils are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. On entry to the Nursery more than half the children took some time to begin to achieve the first steps towards reaching the expected levels by the end of the Reception Year. Overall, children achieve well from their low levels of attainment on entry. By the end of their time in Nursery, around three quarters have caught up and similarly around three quarters of the children achieve very well to reach the expected levels in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and physical development. More able children are equally encouraged and achieve very well in working at the first level of the National Curriculum.
58. Children make good progress from a low base of attainment because the direct teaching is very good in almost all of the areas of learning. The team of teachers and assistants show a good understanding of the topics and focus of the curriculum for children of this age and ensure that individuals and groups have work matched to their needs. They have a clear understanding of how children of this age learn. Teaching is very good when it involves the whole class, small groups or when working with individual children. The curriculum includes all the six areas of learning, available indoors and outdoors. Although there is a good range of activities that are always available and made easy for children to select, not enough attention is given to enhancing these to allow children to make gains in learning without adult support, for example, by structuring the play activities to help children increase their language and mathematical understanding. Children of different ages and abilities have equal access to activities and so an equal chance to make progress. Currently, the design of the building does not make it possible for children to select activities outdoors unless adults take them out in groups. Support assistants are effective in their support of all pupils and in particular, those with special educational needs. In group and class times, no opportunity is missed to help children acquire language and social skills. The co-ordination of this stage is good. The curriculum is well planned and resourced.
59. The school gives high priority to developing personal, social, communication, literacy and language skills, involving parents and carers. By the end of Reception Year, reports of high quality and update newsletters give comprehensive information to parents about what their children are learning and how they can help. The systematic assessment and tracking of children's progress, matched to the areas of learning, from entry into the Nursery to the end of the Reception Year are, however, unsatisfactory. The provision of activities from which children select learning opportunities for themselves is not sufficiently well planned for children to gain the best learning from them.

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

60. Much thought and effort is put into developing children's personal and social skills. Children are warmly welcomed at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. Daily routines are established which the children quickly settle into. They feel safe and secure. For example, most children in the Nursery remember to put their name in the 'post box', so that staff can quickly check which children are in that day. Adults set excellent examples of how children should treat each other and most children, some with significant behaviour or emotional difficulties, follow this example and behave well. This is a testament to the care shown by all adults. Children know what is expected of them and are supported to achieve this. They join in with class rhymes and work well in literacy and mathematics but many children still need a great deal of adult support to maintain their concentration at these times. Children in the Nursery often play on their own or next to other children but not with them. Adults patiently encourage children to take care of their own needs, to take turns, to listen to each

other, to join in and to persevere with activities. Because of this warm supportive environment, children feel safe and secure and most respond well.

61. By the time they join the Reception class they are much more independent and confident. They persevere with activities. Most know the difference between right and wrong in a variety of situations, love praise and cope with correction. Children enjoy their whole class times and know it is for listening and sharing what they know. Most have gained the confidence to do both.

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

62. Many children have difficulties expressing themselves when they start in the Nursery. From this low starting point, children achieve well because of the high quality teaching. A rich range of experiences is provided, for instance, puppets, role-play, walks into the town and visiting the local library. Stories, action songs and rhymes are used extensively to support the whole curriculum. For example, 'Big books', 'Story Sacks' and puppets are carefully selected to link to a theme, such as 'Animals'. By the end of the Reception Year, most children are likely to achieve the early learning goals; a few are already at that stage.
63. In the Nursery, children learn to listen carefully and begin to discriminate between the sounds of different percussion instruments while singing rhymes such as, 'Mrs Bear lives in a Cave'. Gregory Bear helps them by going to each child in turn asking for a word that rhymes with, for instance, 'hot'. When children in Reception use the large puppet theatre, they talk confidently, asking and answering questions about their puppets to the class through their puppets, which have magnificent moving mouths. They enjoy this hugely and show a good sense of fun. For example, the swift answer to one puppet's question, "What's your favourite food Dan?" was "Children!" Equally, they listen carefully to their teacher saying goodbye in French at the end of the day and try to copy.
64. Children make good progress in learning to read. In the Nursery, many children recognise their own name. They enjoy stories and nursery rhymes and some hear different sounds and recognise letters that are the same as those that start their name. They 'read' books, turning pages and tell the story to themselves. Children in Reception know the title page and back cover and that print carries meaning. They can recount simple stories, know the sounds of letters in the alphabet, read familiar words and simple sentences, understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction and the main elements of a story such as the characters and the sequence of events in 'Who Sank the Boat?' In Reception, writing without help is still a struggle for a few children, but they make good progress. Others consistently form letters correctly and write simple sentences accurately, such as, "We went for a walk by the river." Spelling is attempted well and phonically plausible, for example, " I threw sum bred for the ducx". They use the computer to write in what they think animals might be saying and know how to use the space bar to make 'finger spaces' to separate words. Key words for the week, such as, 'away' and 'day' are shared with parents in the Reception class weekly newsletter with suggestions of how they may help their child. Children are further helped to see the links between reading, writing speaking and listening by, for instance, having their stories and illustrations of 'Aliens' displayed as a 'Patchwork' of stories from Nursery (scribed by the teacher) to Year 2.

### **Mathematical development**

65. Teaching is very good and so children make good progress from a low level. By the end of the Reception Year, most children reach the standard expected of them. In the Nursery, good and varied opportunities are provided for children to practise counting. For example, they count the number of children present each day, check the day and say the days of the week in order and sing number songs and rhymes. They begin to learn positional language by helping the teacher place favourite toys on shelves in her special box. They concentrate very hard to put them at 'the bottom', 'below', 'at the top', 'above' and 'next to'. In counting, recognising numbers and simple practical addition, almost all the children in the Reception class are close to achieving the levels expected, but although some children do not have enough technical language to explain what they know and understand. In the Reception class the story 'Who Sank the boat?' gives children opportunities to discuss this question and develop mathematical vocabulary, such as, 'how many' when using water play to find out how many animals it takes to sink different sized boats.

66. Children gain an understanding of capacity by using different sizes and shapes of containers to fill and empty them using water or rice; parents are encouraged to help with this at home. They learn about length and estimation by making sensible guesses, estimating, for instance, the distance two programmable toys will move. Children count to ten confidently and most beyond this. They use tallying to record, for example, how many animals will sink the boat. Children recognise regular shapes such as square, triangle, circle and rectangle and can use these to make repeating patterns. One child wrote that his 'alien' was symmetrical. They add accurately by counting on. They know with confidence and sort objects as to 'long', 'short', 'more' and 'less'. They begin to understand mass, for example, the smallest animal is not necessarily the lightest. When buying animal stamps most children recognise 1p, 2p, 5p, 10p and £1 coins and prices from 1p to 5p and change the accurate addition of  $4+3=7$ , to  $5+2$  in order to match the price of stamps.

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

67. Many children coming into the Nursery have had very limited experience of the world around them. By the end of the Reception Year, they have made good progress and are beginning to have a firm foundation on which to build the later subjects of science, design and technology, information and communication technology, geography and history. This is because teachers plan a range of interesting activities to enable the children to explore and widen their experience. For example, they use all their senses in everyday activities such as listening carefully to different sounds using rhymes and percussion instruments and feeling different textures such as water, sand and dough and guessing by touch 'what is in the box'. Healthy snacks and baking activities provide interesting tastes. They investigate and think about why some objects sink and others float. At appropriate times of the year they plant seeds and note how they grow. In Nursery they watch with wonder as bubbles float in the wind. Children begin to develop fine control skills when cutting and sticking or using construction kits to make recognisable models, puppets or collages. Reception age children make useable percussion instruments from a variety of materials and fasten and fill them to make different sounds. All children have good access to computers and know how to make a programmable toy move as they direct. Reception age children confidently use the mouse to operate computer programs and use the keyboard to write – with great pride. They gain a sense of place by walking in Sleaford and can later write about the different features. When talking about birthdays and in 'news' times they use words such as 'today', 'yesterday' and 'then'. In this way they begin to differentiate between past and present.

### **Physical development**

68. Teaching is very good and children make good progress in this area of learning. Most children achieve what is expected by the end of the Reception Year. The outdoor areas for the Nursery and reception classes are small and are not possible for children to access at will. Because of the commitment of staff, however, they not only provide rich opportunities for physical development, but also for the whole curriculum. Reception children additionally make use of the facilities in the main school hall. Children show good control as they steer, ride, push and pull wheeled 'vehicles' and avoid obstacles or stop according to 'traffic lights'. They move in a variety of ways at different speeds going up, over and under different obstacles. Every day the children have valuable opportunities to use classroom equipment that helps them to improve their control of the finer movements needed to use, for instance, scissors, pens, pencils, paintbrushes and glue with increasing dexterity.

### **Creative development**

69. Children start from a low level of creative skills. Satisfactory teaching and provision of activities ensure that children make good progress so that, by the Reception Year, most children reach the levels expected. In the Nursery, children enjoy drawing, painting, making collages, pictures, printing and experimenting with textures and techniques such as curling paper to make pictures of owls. The teaching in this aspect too often restricts the learning by doing too much for the children. For example, the pre-selection of shapes of paper, the materials and colours to use by the teacher prevents children making their own choices based on the materials and techniques they know about. In turn this hinders their imagination – and their creativity. Children make shapes in dough by pulling, pinching and rolling.

70. In the Nursery, children need adult support to play imaginatively in role-play areas. They rarely extend the play with talk unless an adult is alongside. One more able child, however, spoke very competently and imaginatively when playing on his own in the 'hairdressers'. He used the 'phone' to hold a conversation ending, "Yes come at 11.30", he 'wrote' in the appointment book and carried on talking through his own story. "Here's another customer... You've GOT to put your head back", he said with authority. Teaching of music is good. Children in the Nursery have already built a large repertoire of songs and recognise the sounds of different percussion instruments. Reception age children use such instruments to create loud and soft sound effects representing animals seen in their walk in Sleaford. They use both bought and their own home-made instruments and know how to scrape, rattle, tap, rub, shake and bang to make sounds with the different instruments.

## ENGLISH

71. By Year 2 and Year 4, standards in English match national expectations in reading, writing, speaking and listening. The school has taken action to improve standards, particularly in writing and they have been successful. High attaining pupils are given work that interests and challenges them and, as a result, they exceed the standards that are expected. Most pupils of all abilities achieve well from when they first enter the school with low language and communication skills and become effective communicators. They speak and write with increasing accuracy and relevance. This is because of the high level of consistency in the quality of planning and teaching that motivates and sustains pupils' interest. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and they respond by trying hard. The school does well in linking the key skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing and thus makes learning both productive and purposeful for pupils. ICT is used very successfully to develop skills of literacy. Work in other subjects reinforces learning in English. The quality of support for pupils with special educational needs is high. What the school could do better lies in maintaining the standards now seen in writing whilst improving the individual reading skills of the high attaining pupils and developing a manageable system to monitor the progress of pupils as they move through school.
72. Pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening and attain the skills expected of them by Year 2 and Year 4. They learn to become active listeners, asking questions and sharing ideas. Pupils express their ideas confidently and grow in their command of spoken English as they learn how to express feelings and ideas in 'Circle Time'. For instance, in a religious education lesson, pupils in Year 2 shared their ideas about God. They listened carefully to others and shared ideas openly. Most pupils listen closely and with sustained interest to all staff and other pupils in assemblies, whole class and small group sessions. The use of 'talking partners' in the teaching and learning of every subject means that all pupils know and understand the idea of a conversation, how to share ideas rapidly and concisely and feed them back to the whole class. In all classes there are a significant number of pupils with behavioural and learning difficulties and these speaking and listening skills, along with firm management, contribute to the good standards of behaviour. A good grasp of both general and technical vocabulary helps pupils' achievement. For example in a history lesson, Year 4 pupils' immediate response, when asked to give an 'antonym' for 'poor', was 'rich'.
73. Overall, pupils achieve average standards in reading. Those who struggle to become fluent readers have confidence and persevere; they help themselves by using the context, phonics and taking clues from illustrations. A variety of reading schemes is used to make sure pupils' abilities, tastes and growing confidence are met. Pupils practise their reading regularly by reading with teachers, support staff, voluntary helpers and taking books home to share. Guided group reading, along with shared texts during the literacy hour, give pupils very well planned daily and weekly opportunities to extend their confidence. In addition, pupils have extra time for guided reading and spelling linked to phonic awareness. In Year 1, pupils were so impressed with the teacher's reading they improved from 'robot style' to reading with expression almost immediately. They began to understand the cues in the text such as bold print, capital letters and exclamation marks "that help you know *how* to read". Pupils enjoy a very good range of books and find stories, poetry and non-fiction equally interesting. In Year 2 they know and understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction and describe well the features of non-fiction books, such as, contents, glossaries and indexes. One pupil explained that, "A glossary is like a dictionary but it's only about the words in that book". They make good use of dictionaries and thesaurus and use each appropriately to aid their learning.

74. Pupils explain well their preferences for enjoying the stories. In Year 3, they read two books by the same author and then wrote author and book reviews talking about similarities and differences. Pupils in Year 2 know how to evaluate books by reading carefully to understand the main storyline and write brief sentences about the beginning, middle and end. They describe clearly their favourite parts and what the author could have done to make it better, for instance, to make the setting or the characters more interesting. One pupil, listening to a review said, "It sounds boring - it just says he got up, got dressed and went downstairs. It doesn't give detail even, like he tip-toed or went quickly". In this way, reading becomes purposeful and pupils learn to make reasoned choices.
75. The school has a good stock of fiction and non-fiction books. They are of very good quality and very well organised. The system to identify how to find information is very clearly laid out and is understood by most pupils in Years 3 and 4 and was quickly learned by pupils in Year 2. Literacy hour 'Big Books', both fiction and non-fiction, are used exceptionally well and the texts often provide a very good link for other subjects. For example, in Year 3 'Farmer Duck' led to work in design and technology and art and design.
76. Standards in writing are average overall. High attaining pupils often exceed what is expected of pupils in Year 2 and Year 4. Pupils learn to become authors and see the purpose for writing in many different forms. Very good and occasionally excellent teaching has enabled pupils to achieve well-presented, fluent writing across a comprehensive range of styles and to become independent and confident writers. Most pupils spell common words well and quickly self-correct when prompted. They have the confidence and phonetic understanding to make good attempts at less common words. Handwriting is generally well presented and letters well formed. Most pupils in Year 2 already write using a clear, fluent cursive script and many develop their own style. They understand the structure of a sentence and understand that adjectives and adverbs make writing more interesting to read. For example, in describing a polar bear, a pupil wrote, " his fur is sparkly, shiny white". They write sequential 'to do' lists to support their work making puppets in design and technology and instructions, for example "How to play Snakes and Ladders". They have a good understanding of rhyme and understand how to take notes, for instance, about the human body in science.
77. From Year 2 onwards, many pupils competently and consistently use capital letters, full stops, commas, speech, question and exclamation marks accurately and understand how stories are structured. Often stories and poems flow as they develop their ideas imaginatively. A pupil in Year 4, following work on World War 2, for example, used her high level of skills in English and ICT to publish and illustrate a poem entitled 'Where are you Brother?' The last two verses of the poem, next to a photograph of children sitting amongst the rubble of their bombed home, reads:

*I tried to write a letter but  
Mum says "NO"  
He is gone, maybe not forever  
His room is empty  
Where is my brother?*

*I have one photo of him  
I do still miss him  
In bed I cry  
Just tell me Mum  
Where is my brother?*

78. Such high achievements are the result of very good teaching. Teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can do. Their detailed planning makes learning purposeful and clear to pupils. It gives pupils work that is progressively more demanding whilst taking due consideration of the very wide range of ability in all classes. Very good, often excellent, questioning checks learning and prompts the very best response from pupils of all abilities. Lessons are interesting, conducted at a brisk pace and instances of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with firmly and promptly. The end of literacy lessons always has a clear recap of what was to be learned and checks what the pupils understand. Homework is well used to extend and practise reading and spelling skills. Diaries provide a link with parents and are sometimes used well to communicate with the school and share their children's learning. The support for pupils with special educational needs is very good and so

they make good progress. The few pupils who enter school at different times with English as an additional language receive specific support.

79. Because teachers know their pupils very well and relationships and management are very good, their high expectations are fully repaid – pupils work hard, very productively, take pride in their achievements and are growing in a love of language and improving standards. The ongoing assessment of pupils' learning in literacy is good. The best marking of written work praises effort and helps pupils to know where they have done well and why and how they could improve, although the impact of this is not always seen in later work.
80. Overall leadership is very good, showing a good understanding, knowledge and love of the subject and a commitment to improve standards. Performance in tests and tasks is carefully analysed and used successfully to inform plans for improvement. The co-ordinator effectively monitors lessons, teaching plans and pupils' work.

## **MATHEMATICS**

81. As a result of effective teaching, pupils make good progress throughout Years 1-2 so that, by Year 2, most pupils achieve the basic standard expected of seven year olds and a significant number of them achieve above it. Samples of pupils' work and the few lessons seen, indicate the majority has a good understanding of numbers to 100 and higher. They practise basic skills thoroughly, especially during the starter activities of lessons. Most pupils develop successful methods of mental calculation, an aspect given more prominence following teachers' identification that this was a weakness and have a growing confidence in their ready recall of basic number facts. Nevertheless, during a lesson, a few pupils were slow in finding the difference between three and nine. Most pupils, however, use the 100 square to help them mentally add or subtract two-digit numbers and use it well to learn multiplication by two, three, five and ten.
82. Pupils in Year 2 learn to solve appropriate problems in everyday contexts involving money and measures with success. They learn to collect and record data in tally charts and represent it on simple graphs. More could be done, however, to increase the range of ways of recording and interpreting data in both tabular and graphical forms. High attaining pupils are suitably challenged by problems that have several answers, such as, finding all the arrangements of a number of squares where each square must touch at least one other along at least one edge. Such problems help pupils to think mathematically but they have too few opportunities to tackle this kind of work.
83. Pupils in Year 1 make good progress from a low baseline overall. By working through carefully structured practical activities and frequent, well-paced discussions most of them effectively build on what they learned in the Reception class. Systematic and thorough teaching enables most pupils to acquire confidence in counting and ordering appropriate ranges of numbers. Higher attaining pupils become increasingly confident with numbers to 100. Pupils use ICT to help them practise number skills. For example, during a lesson in which they learned to recognise the value of coins and choose which to use in the purchase of priced articles, pupils used computers to increase their speed and confidence in handling such transactions. The program allowed them to experience different levels of difficulty and this enabled the teacher to ensure all pupils were suitably challenged. With good support from three other adults, pupils with special educational needs made good progress in honing their skills in handling money. All pupils were well motivated and enjoyed their learning.
84. Pupils make good progress in Years 3-4 and by Year 4 their overall attainment is in line with the standard expected of nine year olds. A significant number of pupils achieve above the expected standard of Level 3 and several of the many with special educational needs achieve at least the basic standard of Level 2. Good lesson planning with effective application of the teaching methods prescribed by the National Numeracy Strategy enable teachers to provide work suited to the needs of pupils. Learning is systematic and pupils acquire appropriate skills and knowledge of relevant arithmetical processes, geometry and, to a limited extent, data handling. For example, pupils develop effective ways of extending their knowledge of the effect of adding 10 repeatedly to a number in order to work out  $49 + 19$ , for instance, by working  $49 + 20 - 1$  or  $49 + 10 + 10 - 1$ , depending upon their confidence. Higher attaining pupils extend these principles to find ways of evaluating  $267 - 197$ , for instance. Equally, in learning basic concepts of fractions, such pupils are also challenged to



extend their learning by using diagrams to demonstrate that  $\frac{4}{5} > \frac{1}{2}$ , for example. Pupils gain a firm understanding of metric measures and of basic geometrical ideas, such as, how a tetrahedron is made from four equilateral triangles. Pupils learn to solve problems in everyday contexts. They investigate, for instance, what they could buy with £5 from a set of priced items. Pupils find many solutions to such problems, but lack systematic ways of recording their findings to ensure they have found all possible answers. In contrast, a large proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 3 spend much time consolidating and gaining confidence in applying the ideas they met in Year 2. Their success is due to thoughtful and well planned support from their teacher and learning support assistants.

85. Pupils' response to the teaching they receive is very good. They have very positive attitudes; they join in the learning activities willingly and are prepared to answer questions. Many present their written work neatly and are prepared to explain their thinking, such as, the way they worked out certain calculations. Behaviour in lessons is good overall and is frequently very good. Pupils form very constructive relationships with their teachers and, generally, with their peers. They willingly help one another and enjoy sharing humour.
86. Teaching is good overall and is very good in Years 1-2. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do and their planning for lessons reflect a secure knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons are clearly divided into the recommended three parts and appropriate activities are included. Teachers give clear starts to lessons explaining their purpose and their expectations of pupils. Introductory activities successfully include those designed to improve pupils' confident recall of number facts and increase their strategies for mental calculation. Occasionally, the pace is too slow and teachers do not ask pupils to explain how they arrived at their answers sufficiently often.
87. The stage where pupils work in groups or independently at the main task is conducted effectively. Tasks are well matched to pupils' level and rate of learning. Occasionally the pace of lessons could be raised by giving pupils specific times by which to complete tasks. Plenary sessions are generally used well to allow pupils to explain their work to the class or to consolidate the learning. Pupils' behaviour is effectively controlled by teachers' calm and consistent strategies for re-engaging pupils in the learning. Teachers assess pupils' understanding and competence regularly and use this information to guide the targets set for pupils. ICT is used well to enhance learning, notably in reinforcing basic number skills. Homework helpfully improves pupils' learning of basic number facts, in particular. Pupils use mathematics well in other subjects such as in science and in design and technology, especially in measurements and handling data. For example, information collected by Year 4 pupils on 'healthy eating' was usefully displayed in block graphs, pie charts, Venn diagrams and Carroll diagrams, using ICT to good effect.
88. Leadership and management of the subject is very good. Teaching and the standard of pupils' achievements are appropriately monitored. The evaluation of these factors reveals valuable areas for improvement, for example, pupils' difficulties in understanding diagrams of three-dimensional shapes led to a re-appraisal of methods of teaching geometry. The teaching methods and subject knowledge needed to guide pupils' learning in Years 5 and 6 are being carefully prepared. A manageable system of tracking pupils' progress through school, matched to National Curriculum levels, needs improvement.

## SCIENCE

89. As a result of good teaching, pupils make good progress throughout Years 1-4 and most of them achieve the standard expected of pupils in Year 2 and Year 4. Pupils with special educational needs and whose home language is not English make equally good progress. Their learning is enhanced by well planned guidance from learning support assistants and other helpers.
90. Only two science lessons were seen during the inspection (both in Year 2) but these, together with samples of pupils' work and teachers' planning, indicate that pupils in Years 1-4 make good gains in the knowledge, skills and understanding of appropriate aspects of the main areas of study: life and living processes, materials and their properties and physical processes. They learn how to enquire, plan, ask scientific questions, predict, make careful observations and to collect and explain evidence clearly. In short, they learn to think scientifically as they progress through the school.

91. For example, during the lesson for pupils in Year 2, both classes learned the life cycle of plants, considering, for instance, the apple, tomato and dandelion. Samples of blossom, coloured photographs and diagrams were used by pupils very effectively to discuss, predict, observe, ask questions and make comparisons in order to arrange their materials into the appropriate cycles. In contrast, work displayed in the Year 4 classroom illustrated well pupils' study of living organisms by the careful classification and listing of items under headings such as vertebrates and invertebrates, with sub-classification of, for example reptiles, mammals, amphibian. During a short discussion following Year 4 pupils' visit to a nearby river, their skills of thinking scientifically were clearly evident as they excitedly sought to explain why a slug left a trail as it moved.
92. Pupils enjoy science lessons. Their attitudes are very good; their behaviour is good. Most tackle practical work with enthusiasm and an eagerness to learn. They are keen to offer ideas and to respond to challenging ideas put to them. They concentrate well and co-operate sensibly in carrying out practical investigations. These attitudes have a positive impact on the quality of their learning.
93. Teachers' planning, pupils' work and the teaching observed indicate that overall the quality of teaching is good and some is very good. A good knowledge of science and its methods of teaching are evident. Occasionally, however, the questioning and discussions are too prescriptive; the form of questions points clearly to the answer and the discussions deny pupils opportunities to predict outcomes and to plan fair tests. In short, they are told what and how they will 'find out'. Teachers usually plan lessons carefully and thoughtfully, often taking trouble to gather resources to arouse pupils' interest. In the two lessons observed, for example, both teachers had brought samples of exotic fruits for their pupils to investigate. The subject is very well led and managed. Standards are monitored and evaluated and lead to improvement. For example, aspects of the teaching of scientific investigation were made more effective by encouraging pupils to make hypotheses and design fair tests.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

94. Only two art and design lessons were seen during the inspection. The school provided, however, a fair selection of pupils' work and a good photographic record of the work of different year groups from which, together with teachers' planning, it is possible to make firm judgements on standards achieved. The lessons seen concentrated on the processes of art making. Displays of pupils' work in the school are rather limited, due to some restrictions on the use of the walls of the new building.
95. By the time pupils reach Year 2, they have made satisfactory progress and their overall attainment is broadly in line with the level expected for this age group. They produce interesting pictures on the computer using an art package. They link their art to natural forms of life when, for example, they draw fruit using a good blend of colours and when using crayons to fill in a prepared outline of a butterfly. They draw and colour pictures of flowers, using pastel on black paper and make delicate pictures of trees with pencil and crayon.
96. Pupils make good progress in Years 3-4 and their attainment by Year 4 is in line with what is expected of nine year olds. At this stage, they are encouraged to be more adventurous, using polystyrene in order to make prints, water colour for landscapes and montage with "mosaic" shapes. They also model in clay, using artefacts from nature, for example, preserved exotic insects and spiders and a tree stump, (as observed in a very good lesson in Year 4). They learn to control a variety of tools – pencil, charcoal, water paint and cutting tools.
97. The quality of learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall. Pupils enter Year 1 with a limited range of experiences in using tools and working with different media. They use poster paint, watercolour and sugar paper to contribute to a seaside frieze in Year 1 and they use a similar range of media in their pictures of the local church. They weave designs in card and wool and make good use of the computer to create pictures of animals and faces. In these year groups there was a limited range of media represented in the work seen during the inspection.
98. In Years 3-4 pupils learn well and make good progress. They draw self-portraits and make pictures using montage. In their sketch books they use actual leaves from trees as templates for their

designs; these develop into creative pieces consisting of string that is coloured and glued onto card to suggest the “veins” in leaves. Still-life drawing is connected with their designing a chair. Some pupils show very good drawing skills in this connection. At this stage, pupils also use the computer well to make pictures. Also, they make very good use of images from ancient civilisations – Greece and Rome – in their own picture making.

99. Throughout the school pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good. They take great interest in their lessons, behave very well and form very good relationships as a result of the enjoyment of success which all experience. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy the same level of success as their peers and make good progress. All pupils respond very well to questions and challenges. Almost all pupils concentrate well for the whole lesson and persist well with their work.
100. Teaching is good overall and sometimes very good. Teachers are generally confident in using their own skills to demonstrate ideas and techniques to pupils. They ensure that they have appropriate and ample resources to enable pupils to make progress. Good attention is paid to the correct use of vocabulary when introducing lessons and when discussing and evaluating pupils' work. Lessons are prepared in fine detail and often include revision of work done previously. Teachers expect that pupils will work hard and achieve their best. The movement and conduct of pupils in class and as they move around the school are managed very well. Teachers pay good regard to the particular problems of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.
101. Art and design is coordinated well by a teacher who has continued to develop a fair range of resources and ideas for colleagues to use. These include a file of materials, photographs of past work and a small collection of work samples to serve as moderation for assessment. A strong feature of the provision is an annual art exhibition that displays framed pictures done by all pupils.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

102. By the ages of seven and nine pupils exceed the standards expected of them. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. They reach these good standards because, from Year 1, the teaching effectively builds on the necessary skills in designing and making and they go on to use their knowledge in projects that interest and excite them. They understand fully, the design, make and evaluate sequence that is the key to success in this subject and produce work of high quality.
103. In Year 4, pupils worked in teams to design and make chairs. They produced a very good range of creative, inventive designs for a specific person, for example, a one year old or a pop star. The quality of the finish and decoration was high. They learned about strength of materials using rolled up newspaper and were surprised how this material could be made strong enough to hold their weight. They made good design drawings, could sequence what to do next and on completion showed great pride in evaluating their efforts. “We didn't get on very well at the beginning, the legs were wobbly and different lengths but with a little help they were great!” Year 3 pupils, given a ‘design challenge’ to make Easter chicks with moving wings that nursery children may like, produced a variety of well made ideas. For example, a chick that could flap its wings and get a worm out of a hole. The use of papier-mâché and balloons to produce the form and the movement extended their knowledge of materials and their use.
104. Pupils in Year 2 designed and made a variety of good quality moving vehicles using card and wood. They know how they might improve on their designs and what worked well. They understand why and how to use a template to design a coat for Joseph. Their knowledge of repeating patterns is used well to make designs, with an awareness of the differences for the front and back of the garment. They spend time trying designs using drawing, fabric, paints, appliqué and later use ICT to develop their ideas further. Pupils cut carefully, knowing this is essential for the quality of the finished design. In Year 1, pupils make moving pictures showing their knowledge and understanding of mechanisms such as the technique of sliding levers and using split pins to make wings move. Because the work was linked very well to the ‘Farmer Duck’ story being used in literacy, pupils were interested and knew the purpose. They were well motivated by knowing they would together produce a moving book as a class. They explain their designs enthusiastically, make them successfully and talk through, with great delight, what is happening. For example, one pupil said, “The farmer is coming out and

saying ‘ How is the work going?’ The duck (with a spade attached to his moving wing) is cross because he’s doing all the work and the farmer stays in bed all day”.

105. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers show very good subject knowledge and, through very clear planning, they ensure that pupils build effectively on their previous learning. Very good questioning extends pupils’ thinking and direct teaching extends pupils’ skills. Lessons are very well organised, safe, well resourced and pupils are clear of the expectations. This ensures that pupils sustain interest and concentration, persevere with tasks and take pride in the results. Pupils with special educational needs are well-supported by the planning and by learning support assistants and make good progress. Very good management and high quality relationships characterise all lessons. The use of ICT is very effective at the design stage.
106. Leadership in the subject is very good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, committed and has ensured the successful implementation of initiatives to improve provision in the subject. Teachers are aware of expected standards and have high expectations. There is, however, insufficient attention paid to monitoring pupils’ development and progress in terms of what they know, understand and can do over their time at school.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

107. Three lessons were seen during the inspection and these, together with teachers’ planning, samples and displays of pupils’ work indicate that, overall, the provision for geography is good. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and by Year 2, most of them broadly achieve the standard expected of seven year olds. They have an awareness of localities beyond their own and begin to identify human and physical features in their own locality and, for example, the fictitious Isle of Struay. Their writing on ‘An Island Home’ contrasts well life on Struay with life in Sleaford and ‘What I would enjoy on Struay’ brings out similarities and differences between these contrasting localities very clearly. Pupils describe appropriately the different modes of transport, for example and they attempt sound explanations of why there are no buses on Struay. They begin to realise the differences between physical and human features, such as river and lighthouse.
108. Pupils make good progress in Years 3 and 4 and by Year 4 they achieve the standard expected of nine year olds. They gain a wider understanding of the world, its continents and the lives of people in them. For example, the work of a high attaining pupil in Year 4 revealed a detailed knowledge of life in a village in the southern tip of India, marked clearly on appropriate maps. The contrast made between her life and that of a resident of the Indian village was both detailed and sensitive. Good use is made of the locality to compare and contrast how people live and have an impact on their environment.
109. In Year 3, pupils begin to develop their knowledge of the British Isles and Europe; they name countries accurately and begin to place capital cities. They gain a sense of the main directions of the compass and note the position of towns in Lincolnshire relative to Sleaford. They begin to understand the concept of ‘climate’. During a good discussion on this concept, pupils identified accurately places having cold and very hot climates. They have some understanding of tropical climate. Their contributions to places having dry climates, for example, included Africa, India and deserts.
110. Pupils’ attitudes to geography are positive. They enjoy learning about other places and people who live there. During a lesson for pupils in Year 2, for example, they gained a good understanding of the human and physical features of Sleaford. They recognised places and buildings on photographs taken by their teacher and described well their uses. Some could locate their positions on a map of the town. Pupils in Year 1 gain an early understanding of maps of the near locality on which they draw physical and human features such as trees and buildings. The quality of teaching is at least good overall. The planning reveals good knowledge of the subject. The national guidance is used thoughtfully and resources are used very well to help pupils’ learning; in particular, the local environment is studied carefully through well-planned visits. Significant parts of pupils’ work are enhanced by the judicious inclusion of ICT.
111. The subject is well led and managed. Planning is monitored carefully. Teaching is monitored and samples of pupils’ work are evaluated for progression and provision for the different needs of pupils.

Teachers and pupils are encouraged to use the Internet for finding information. Priorities for improvement, such as reading maps, are carefully identified.

## HISTORY

112. Pupils reach the standards expected of them at the ages of seven and nine. All pupils benefit from the emphasis on teaching the skills of historical enquiry. More able pupils often exceed expectations in this aspect. Pupils of all abilities achieve well from a low starting point and make good progress in historical skills and knowledge of main events and people.
113. In Year 4, pupils learn about changes in Britain by studying Romans, Anglo Saxons, Victorians and World War 2. In this way they increase their understanding of the passage of time. They learn how changes effect people and how they live. In one lesson, pupils recalled what they knew about children in Victorian times. One pupil confidently reported that, "Children then had to work 24 hours a day!" The teacher then led a whole class debate about the difference between *fact* and what we may *think*. After some early difficulties, they succeeded in extending their understanding of the nature of historical evidence to a very sophisticated level. Following a visit to an activity based museum, pupils used ICT to word-process reports. Through talking with 'soldiers' and 'shopkeepers' they gained a great deal of knowledge about the impact of World War 2, how it must have felt to go to war, the rationing of food at home and evacuation.
114. In Year 3, pupils study the Tudors and the Romans and learn about some important people in those times, such as Henry V111 and Boudicca. At this age, they again get to grips with the nature of different evidence by using images and written descriptions and come to understand that there are conflicting points of view and why that may happen. Very skilled teaching consolidated this by describing one pupil to the class accurately but from a different viewpoint.
115. Pupils in Year 2 study events and people such as 'Remembrance Day' and Florence Nightingale. When visiting Sleaford war memorial they carefully answered questions helping them to understand the impact of war on a local community. They confidently map different events and when people lived, on a time line. Very interesting work using pupils' ideas of modern famous people, for example, David Beckham, Robbie Williams and the Queen, helped them to a secure understanding of the nature of fame over time.
116. Pupils in Year 1 note similarities and differences by comparing seaside holidays past and present. They use correct vocabulary to denote the passage of time, for instance, "before, then, now, old, new and long ago". They use their knowledge to learn more by asking thoughtful questions, such as, "Why couldn't they have hot dog stands then?"
117. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teachers are confident and enthusiastic. The practical approach, using artefacts, visits and good quality books, photographs and videos engages pupils of all abilities. Questioning is very good, probing and checking learning and teaching pupils to ask questions and find answers. Different tasks are given to make sure that all pupils understand what they have learned. Those with special educational needs are very well supported to confidently share their ideas. The teaching helps pupils improve their literacy and ICT skills and this also enhances pupils' learning in history. For example, pupils learn to write in note form after studying Victorian children. They are later expected to write a report using word processing in the computer suite. Correct vocabulary is taught well. The marking of pupils' work and assessment through the course of lessons are both used well to check understanding. Homework often involves parents in the collection of artefacts and their recall of events, for example, in the study of World War 2.
118. Pupils enjoy learning about history and so maintain high levels of interest and sustained effort in lessons. They learn to be historians, sift evidence and present their work carefully with pride. The subject also has a positive impact on their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, for example, the different moral standards in Victorian times.
119. Subject co-ordination is good. Pupils' work is checked carefully over time to ensure that they are building on what they have learnt earlier. Assessment at the end of units of work does not, however, give a real flavour of what pupils actually know, understand and can do.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

120. Teachers' planning, samples of pupils' work and the few lessons observed indicate that by Year 2 and Year 4 most pupils achieve what is expected of seven and nine year olds. Pupils make good progress throughout the school, including those with special educational needs and whose home language is not English and gain confidence in their skills of using computers and associated technology in a variety of contexts. In particular, pupils' use of ICT in other subjects both enhances the learning of these subjects and of ICT and leads to pride in the high quality of presentation in their work. For example, the evocative poems written by pupils in Year 4, based upon their studies in history of the blitz in World War 2, were made all the more poignant by their high quality presentation using ICT, combining text, graphics and photographs.
121. By Year 2, pupils gain a good range of ICT skills in handling text and data. For example, they are competent in using a word processing package to write stories. They edit, save and retrieve such text in a variety of contexts and combine captions and pictures with their text to good effect. Higher attaining pupils achieve high standards in these activities, such as, adding pictures to their work in science to illustrate their explanations of 'How does it move?'
122. Equally, their work in controlling a programmable toy indicates a clear understanding of the need for precise instructions in a particular format to control a sequence of the toy's movements. Pupils have good control of the mouse and use it appropriately when selecting a program from the list of screen icons. During two lessons observed, pupils demonstrated confident control of the mouse, particularly the 'drag' facility, while using a paint program. They selected appropriate tools from lists, shapes from a box and colours from the palette on the screen to design and make, for example, Joseph's coat of many colours (linked to their design and technology project). The outline of the coat was drawn with good control; its patterns and colours were added to good effect.
123. Pupils in Year 1 enjoy working with computers. During one such lesson they learned to enter and store data they had collected earlier under the title 'how we came to school'. Despite a few pupils who experienced frustration in managing to point a very sensitive mouse at an icon on the screen and double-click on it, pupils generally completed the task well and produced graphs of their data. They show a good understanding of the log-on and log-off procedures.
124. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 extend and refine the skills learned earlier in a similar range of applications. In particular, they learn to access information from the Internet. The ready access to such resources is exploited well. For example, in their contrast of life in Sleaford with that of a small town in India, much detailed information was gathered from books and the Internet to enrich the comparison of life styles. Similarly they learn to generate and control repeating patterns on the screen. By careful consideration of repeating patterns on a piece of wrapping paper, pupils in Year 4 were enthused into using computers to design and generate their own wrapping paper. Excellent questioning drew out their previous knowledge and built up the skills required for this task. Using an art package, pupils designed their basic pattern and used correctly the computer's art 'tool box' to generate some very attractive 'wrapping paper'. High attaining pupils responded well to the challenge to make their patterns 'less boring'. The learning support assistant provided suitable prompts to pupils with special educational needs to enable them to enjoy success without them feeling they were being told 'how to do it'.
125. Pupils' attitudes to learning when using computers is very good. They handle equipment sensibly and generally work eagerly. A pupil in Year 2, for instance, often easily distracted from his task, worked frantically to complete his improved attempt at Joseph's coat of many colours before the lesson ended. Pupils ask and answer questions willingly and readily help one another. Behaviour is good and often very good as pupils become absorbed in their work. They work well together in pairs when required.
126. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teachers and learning support assistants have good levels of knowledge of the subject which enables them to support pupils' learning effectively. Basic operational skills are taught thoroughly and demonstrations of particular skills are clear, often calling upon pupils to think things out for themselves, particularly in Year 4. Good use is made of the ICT suite and the clusters of computers at other points in the school. Teachers are at an early stage of

using the smart board (electronic whiteboard linked to a computer). Behaviour is very well managed largely by providing interesting learning activities for pupils to engage with. Good ongoing assessment is made of pupils' progress. Overall, pupils achieve as well as they can.

127. The subject is well led and managed. Resources and the organisation of the subject are very good. Teachers are encouraged to use the resources to enhance learning in other subjects as well as for timetabled ICT lessons. The systematic tracking of pupils' progress through school is recognised as an area for development. The governing body has a well-prepared policy to try to ensure pupils do not gain access to inappropriate material when using the Internet.

## MUSIC

128. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 2, their overall attainment is in line with the level expected for this age group. Most pupils know the names of the percussion instruments and use them with reasonable control. Most of them keep a steady pulse, for example, when playing expressive sounds to "illustrate" a song. They sing in tune and with energy. They use their imagination well, for example, to suggest percussive sounds to represent tools used in the song *Gonna build a house*. Pupils understand how music can be notated and how an ensemble plays with various shades of expression.
129. Overall, attainment by the end of Year 4 is above the expected level. Pupils understand how music is notated on a grid, when for example they compose a short piece using three different pitches. They show further understanding of pitch in their performances with handbells – usually 12 notes (diatonic). A good number of pupils at this stage sing in the choir, which produces a lively sound that is well tuned. Pupils can hold their tune in a three part round.
130. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and the quality of their learning is good. In a lesson on musical symbols, pupils in Year 1 used a variety of drawn shapes – blocks, circles and zig-zag lines – to represent expressiveness. They played percussion instruments on cue from their 'conductor' showing a good understanding of loud, soft, diminuendo and crescendo. Pupils respond well to the discipline of playing on cue and waiting correctly for their turn to play their sound.
131. In Years 3-4, pupils also make good progress. Overall, they demonstrate good discipline when playing in an ensemble. In their handbell playing, they attend very well to the score and to the pointer. Almost all pupils at this stage discriminate well between different pitches; in a few cases they hear fine differences of less than a semitone. In one lesson, they were asked to classify the pitched sound made by tapping plastic tubes. They then had to choose from high, middle and low-pitched tubes that they used to make a simple composition which they scored on a grid.
132. Overall, pupils' attitudes to music lessons are very good. They approach lessons already expecting to work seriously. They behave very well maintain good concentration and retain a fair amount of what they are taught. Most of the oldest pupils show increasing maturity in the way they work in lessons and in their responses to questions. Those who are in the choir and handbell group retain knowledge very well, and develop very good skills in co-ordinating hand, eye and ear. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language take part in all lessons on equal terms with their peers, concentrate hard and make similar progress.
133. Teaching is good overall. A significant amount of teaching, however, goes on in the extra-curricular activities. This teaching is consistently good and contributes to the good attainment of the oldest pupils. Teachers are confident in using their voices and in approaching musical tasks in which they themselves may not be skilled. Lessons are thoroughly prepared and skillfully organised. In most classes pupils are managed well; even the youngest pupils exercise good self-control when using the instruments. Where appropriate, teachers deliberately use correct musical terminology with the pupils, or use music to elicit imaginative language from them. The use of ICT was not included in any of the lessons observed.
134. Music is coordinated by an enthusiastic specialist who uses her good knowledge and skills well to organise resources for the whole staff. Two non-specialist teachers take recorder groups outside lessons. Their pupils make a good sound and play with accuracy and expression. Music is used

very well and regularly in assemblies, not only to support the worship, but also to introduce pupils to a wide and unusual range of recorded music. Pupils have benefited from the visits of an American folk singer.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

135. Overall, the provision for physical education is good. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection, both of which were in Year 2 classes and were based upon a mixture of gymnastic and games activities. These good lessons, teachers' planning and the generally high quality of teaching in the school indicate that pupils make good progress and achieve the standards expected by Year 2 and Year 4, particularly in co-ordination and control as they perform a sequence of skills. The development planning indicates that pupils will experience the full range of physical education activities required by the National Curriculum. Pupils are taught swimming during Years 3 and 4 about a third of Year 4 pupils swim at least 25 metres. Firm plans are in hand for older pupils in Years 3-6 to use the facilities of the nearby boys' grammar school.
136. Pupils in Year 2 tackle warm-up exercises with measured control. They demonstrate well sequences of movements and abrupt stops, using space to good advantage and showing a considerate awareness of others. They work energetically and enthusiastically on the whole at such movements as hop, jump, sideways step, stop and balance. Pupils show a developing co-ordination and control in games activities. For example, in moving and controlling a plastic ball with a hockey stick around several obstacles, pupils concentrated hard and improved their skills of co-ordination of eyes, hands and feet. Equally, they learn competently to pass the ball to a partner and to control its arrival.
137. Teaching and learning are good. An energetic pace is sustained throughout the lessons. Teachers provide a good balance of physical effort by pupils, direct teaching of skills and pupil demonstrations. The management of behaviour is very good. Praise and encouragement are used generously to bring out the best in pupils. Teachers provide good demonstrations of particular skills to be used and intervene appropriately to help individual pupils improve their work. As a result, pupils develop their skills successfully, enjoy physical exercise, perform cooling down activities sensibly and store equipment properly. The school provides a good range of physical activities outside lessons, such as volleyball and netball. The subject is well led and managed. The hall is adequately resourced for indoor activities and plans for outdoor areas are appropriate. The commitment to the 'Healthy Schools' initiative offers good opportunities for the school to further develop physical education activities.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

138. By the ages of seven and nine, pupils reach and many exceed the standards outlined by the locally agreed syllabus for schools in the Lincolnshire area. Pupils learn about religion and they gain a good grounding in different world religions and faiths, such as Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. They begin to understand the significance and preciousness of sacred books, such as The Torah and The Bible. The emphasis on personal education that encourages pupils to reflect on important human values, such as truthfulness, respect, sharing, caring and valuing, is very appropriate for the nature and needs of pupils in this school. Pupils learn to think in lessons, to reflect on and share their ideas. In this way the subject makes a very effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
139. Pupils of all abilities achieve well and make good progress. By the end of Year 4, pupils have deepened their understanding of Christianity and some of the major religions of the world. They know that people have different beliefs and values that affect the way they live their life. For example, pupils know that Hindus worship God in many forms. They offer interesting ideas and explanations about faith. "If you are faithful you never question that person". Year 3 pupils explore the Beatitudes and give personal responses to the rules for example, "to follow this rule, I could try to be friends with people I don't like". Pupils in Year 2 know many stories told by Jesus and that they are called parables. They know that The Bible and The Torah both contain the story of the creation. In Year 1, pupils extend their knowledge about the distinctive features of religious buildings by discussing the rites, traditions, symbolism and activities held in church. Pupils understand the reasons for prayer



and respond well during daily collective worship. Those in Year 3 have written their own set of prayers about thanks, being sorry and asking for help.

140. Teaching and learning are very good overall. Lessons are well prepared and resources are used effectively. The introductory part of lessons is often particularly effective because teachers' imaginative approaches immediately capture pupils' interest and help them to understand important ideas. Very clear explanations, the use of correct terminology, real artefacts and very good questioning effectively deepen pupils' understanding. Another very good feature of the teaching is that pupils know that teachers are very interested in what they say. This encourages them to ask questions and share their ideas. For example, in a Year 2 class pupils had a lively and thoughtful debate about their ideas of God. "I think he's invisible," and "I think he put a lot of effort into the world and he loves us very much," were but two of the contributions. Later, when writing letters, putting questions to God, one child wrote, "I respect you, do you respect me?" They knew that some questions could not be answered, but immediately said they could go to The Bible or The Torah to find some answers. Learning support assistants effectively help pupils with special educational needs to speak confidently and give help with writing. In Year 3 pupils learned a great deal about Hindu worship by building a shrine and know that the incense, flowers and the special sound 'Aum' is to help meditation. "Its to help you relax and focus" said a pupil.
141. The high quality of teaching leads to pupils generally having very good attitudes to learning. They often become absorbed and produce very thoughtful work and respond particularly well during discussions. Pupils respond very well to the teachers' very high expectations of their effort, pace, behaviour and presentation of work in books.
142. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has effectively planned what pupils should learn in each year group, taking account of their different learning needs. Assessment of pupils' progress is not thorough enough in showing what pupils know and understand. Resources, such as pictures, books and artefacts, support teaching and learning very well. They are well organised, match units of work and are of good quality. Visits to the nearby church, visitors, for example, from the United Reform Church and the local vicar conducting weekly assemblies, enhance pupils' learning of the subject.