

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BOSTON WEST PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Boston, South Lincolnshire

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120426

Headteacher: Mr Mike Schofield

Lead inspector: R Peter J McGregor

Dates of inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> July 2004

Inspection number: 255562

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 264

School address: Sussex Avenue  
Boston  
Lincolnshire  
Postcode: PE21 7QG

Telephone number: 01205 366013  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Mr S Elwood

Date of previous inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> June 2002

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Boston West is on the outskirts of the market town of Boston. It is an average sized primary school with 264 pupils on role. Ninety-six percent of pupils come from white British backgrounds; others are from a range of other backgrounds. Very few pupils are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language. The number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is above the national average, although the number with statements is below average. The needs of these pupils range across specific learning, moderate learning difficulties, severe learning, profound and multiple learning, speech and communication, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and physical disability. The socio-economic circumstances of the school are broadly average. When they enter school, pupils have skills and knowledge that are a little below expectation overall, although entry into the school is changing as its popularity continues to grow. In the year 2002-3, approaching twenty percent of pupils either joined the school other than at the usual time of admission or left other than at the usual time of transfer. This was a high figure of pupil mobility. In the current year, 2003-4, the figure is much lower at about six percent. Boston West has Eco School status, recognising how it promotes pupils' understanding of their responsibility for the environment.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3525	Peter McGregor	Lead inspector	Science, information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology
	Sally Hall	Lay inspector	
	Savi Ramnath	Team inspector	English, English as an additional language, geography, history, religious education
	Sheila Wilding	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, art and music
	Nick Butt	Team inspector	Maths, physical education, special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Boston West is a very good school** that has made excellent progress over the past four years. The quality of teaching is very good overall which results in very good learning and achievement. Pupils' standards are well above average by the age of eleven in English and science, and above average in maths. Pupils are very happy to come to school, they work hard and behave very well. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding and management systems are clear and very effective. The headteacher is ably and consistently supported by his staff and governors. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths are

- The very high expectations and the vision for the school, clearly stated and implemented by the headteacher, have resulted in all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieving very well
- Results in English, maths and science, in national tests taken at the age of eleven, were well above average in 2003; they were very good compared with similar schools
- Standards and pupils' achievements are exceptionally high in art
- The very good relationships between staff and pupils, teachers' high expectations and very well structured and prepared lessons result in very enjoyable and successful learning
- Pupils are valued highly and treated with great respect; they respond with positive attitudes and a strong motivation to learn
- The school works very hard to educate pupils to appreciate their environment

**Improvement since the last report in June 2002 has been very good.** The areas of concern at that time have been resolved. Standards have been raised and pupils' achievements are good or better in almost all subjects. The more able now achieve very well and pupils' skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are better. Investigative work and problem solving in maths and science are now very good, with a strong focus on developing pupils' skills across all subjects. The quality of teaching is now much better.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	B	A	A
mathematics	E	A	A	A
science	E	B	A	A

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

The table shows that the standards pupils attained improved greatly between 2001 and 2003. Pupils were very successful in 2003, and 2004 results are similarly good in English and science, a little lower in maths. In Year 2 national assessments in 2003, reading and writing standards were above average, and maths below average. In 2004, results are similar in spite of the year group having quite a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. **Achievement is very good overall.** In relation to pupils' capabilities and starting points, current achievement is good in Reception and Years 1 and 2, and very good in Years 3 to 6. Most pupils are likely to achieve the goals children are expected to reach by the end of Reception. By the time pupils are seven, they have reached average standards and by the age of eleven well above average standards. Those with special educational needs and the very small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language, achieve as well as their

peers. Achievement is good in ICT and excellent in art, where standards are extremely high. Pupils' work is of the expected standard in religious education and they achieve satisfactorily. **Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good.** Their attitudes are very positive. The school's strong moral code helps pupils to behave very well. Staff are successful in encouraging pupils to show respect for others and for their environment. Attendance is very good and punctuality is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a very good quality of education. Teaching is very good overall.**

The quality is best in Reception and Years 3 to 6. Though good overall in Years 1 and 2, occasionally teaching does not have quite such high expectations of what pupils can do as in the other years. Teachers' subject expertise and the quality of relationships between adults and pupils are key elements in the success. Pupils become very good independent learners. Teaching of English, maths and science is very good in Years 3 to 6 and good in Years 1 and 2, except for science where it is sound. Assessment is generally well carried out. The school provides a good, well-planned curriculum complemented by very good visits, visitors and events that bring the curriculum alive, and a good range of clubs and activities. Levels of staffing are very good. The accommodation and resources for learning are good overall although the outdoor learning area for Reception age children is not as good as it could be, and this does impact on what children are able to achieve. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school takes good care of its pupils, with very good arrangements for settling them into school routines when they start. Pupils receive very good support and guidance in their earliest years and in core subjects; there are some inconsistencies in the keeping of records of progress in other subjects. Pupils are very well involved in the school's work and development. A very good partnership has been established with parents and the community. Links with other schools are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are very good overall**, focusing on improving all pupils' enjoyment through learning and their achievements. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and inspirational. The leadership provided by other key staff is very good overall; they are empowered to lead by the headteacher, and work very effectively as a team. Self-evaluation is rigorous with a very strong focus on improvement. Management systems are well thought out and highly effective. Governance is very effective, being both supportive and challenging. The governors meet all their statutory requirements

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents expressed great satisfaction with the school and raised no concerns at their pre-inspection meeting. In their questionnaire responses, the following parental comment summarises their overwhelmingly positive views: *"My child is moving on to (secondary school), a well educated, confident and well-rounded person, undoubtedly enriched by her experience of Boston West Primary School"*. Pupils' views echoed those of their parents. They believe they work hard, behave well and are very well supported by all the staff. Inspectors agree with the pupils' and parents' positive views.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The school has no areas where major improvements are needed. A number of points are made in the text, however, across a range of aspects where some development would be helpful in improving pupils' achievements further.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is very good overall. Most pupils' standards are at the level expected for their ages by the end of Reception and the end of Year 2. They are well above average by age eleven. In relation to their starting points, pupils achieve well up to Year 2 and very well in Years 3 to 6.

#### Main strengths

- Results in national tests at the age of eleven are very good; pupils attain well above average standards and achieve very well compared with similar schools
- Pupils' achievements in art are excellent and standards are very high
- Pupils' investigative and problem solving skills are very good
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress
- Achievement in Reception is good rather than very good due to some restrictions in accommodation

#### Commentary

##### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003*

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.4 (28.4)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.6 (28.7)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.5 (29.6)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

1. Pupils' standards in the national assessments at age eleven in English, maths and science improved greatly between 2001 and 2003. Results were well above average in all three subjects in 2003 and very good compared with results of other similar schools, that is schools where pupils achieved similar results when they were seven. A high proportion of pupils attained the higher level 5 in all three subjects, indicating that average and high attaining pupils do particularly well. The trend of improvement in test results is well above the national trend. Boys' achievements are better in maths and science than in English, as is the case nationally. The school exceeded its targets in English but did not quite meet them in maths. Results in 2004 are similarly good in English and science, although a little lower in maths.

##### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003*

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.6 (16.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.3 (14.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.0 (17.8)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 38 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. In Year 2 national assessments in 2003, reading and writing standards were judged to be above average, and maths below average. Compared with national figures, a higher proportion attained the higher level 3 in reading and writing than in maths. The overall trend of improvement in English and maths over the past five years is higher than the national trend. Teacher assessments of science in 2003 indicate that standards were very high, with all pupils attaining the expected level 2. In 2004, the schools' test results and teacher assessments are

similar to those of 2003, although the year group had quite a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, mainly at the first level of 'school action'.

3. Most pupils are likely to achieve the expected goals in the six areas of learning by the end of their reception year. Standards are broadly average. Achievement is good, rather than very good, even with very effective teaching and positive attitudes of the children, because the classrooms are rather small and the outside play area is not as good as it could be. This restricts what can be achieved in areas such as personal, social and emotional development, physical development and creative development, although progress and achievement are good overall in the three areas. Children have good opportunities to read and write and oral work is a priority at all times, so progress in communication, language and literature is very good. In mathematical development, pupils count and learn about shapes and direction and here too progress is very good. In knowledge and understanding of the world, pupils make very good progress in several areas, but computer use is less than it should be.
4. By the time pupils are seven, they have attained broadly average standards and by the age of eleven, well above average standards. Achievement is good in English and maths in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in science. In English and maths, standards are broadly average, and in science they are a little below the level expected for pupils' ages. The less able do particularly well in maths and boys in writing (who now do as well as the girls) because work is focused on their needs. Achievement is very good in English, maths and science in Years 3 to 6 because of the high quality of teaching and the extremely positive attitudes of the pupils. They reach well above average levels in English and science, and above average in maths. In English, teaching strikes a very good balance between reading, writing and speaking and listening, and pupils practise these skills in all their other subjects. In maths and science, the focus on skill development in investigative work and problem solving is very helpful to the pupils. In Years 1 and 2, pupils do not record enough of their science work in books. Teachers have worked hard at providing equality of opportunity for boys and girls and no discernible difference in progress was apparent.
5. Standards in literacy and numeracy are average at the age of seven and well above average at the age of eleven. These skills are as a result of the strong focus on both areas in most subjects of the curriculum. ICT skills are about average - above in some areas and below in others. Pupils use computers with confidence and are well equipped with the skills they need to further their studies and to help them in their daily lives, with the exception of their slow keyboard skills.
6. Standards are broadly average and achievement satisfactory in religious education. Pupils have a good knowledge of religions but do not always consider the impact of them on their own lives. In art, standards are exceptionally high and pupils' achievements are excellent. In other subjects, where work was sampled, standards of work were generally above expectation and achievement good.
7. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good because teaching is of a consistently high quality. Planning takes account of their differing abilities and pupils are supported both within classes and in withdrawal groups. Pupils whose needs require specific funding are very well supported by well-trained and experienced assistants. The very small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language, achieve as well as others, because of the support they receive from staff and their peers.
8. Since the last report, two years ago very good progress has been made in improving standards and pupils' achievements.

#### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance is very good and punctuality is satisfactory. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is very good.

## Main strengths

- Pupils enjoy coming to school very much and absence rates are low
- The school's very good promotion of social development makes pupils feel part of the school community
- Pupils are very enthusiastic about their work and other activities
- The school's strong moral code helps pupils to behave very well
- Staff successfully encourage pupils to show respect for others and for their environment

## Commentary

9. Attendance rates are well above average, with very few unauthorised absences. This is because the pupils really want to come to school and are usually only absent if they are ill. The school's very positive ethos has a beneficial impact on attendance rates. Most pupils arrive at school promptly and settle quickly to their work. A few parents are not bringing their children to school on time, and these pupils are missing an important start to their school day.

## Attendance data

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year, 2002-2003 (%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

*The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

10. The school's provision for social development is very good and pupils are developing into mature and confident citizens. A very strong sense of community exists amongst staff, parents, governors and pupils. Pupils are proud of their school and know that this is because of the effort of everyone in fulfilling the school's aim of 'Working Together for Success'. Relationships are very good. Boys and girls work very well together in pairs and groups and they play very well together in the playground. Lunchtime is a very pleasant, social occasion and pupils chat and eat in a calm and friendly environment. There are some very good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility; Year 6 monitors, members of school council, buddies and 'eco-warriors' (who look after the environment) take their duties very seriously. School productions and residential visits enable pupils to develop their social skills through teamwork.
11. Many adults who work in school are skilled at developing the pupils' self-esteem. They create an atmosphere where pupils are willing to contribute their ideas and persevere with challenging tasks without fear of failure or ridicule. Pupils are very keen to participate in this stimulating learning environment. They listen carefully, are eager to answer questions, and work with sustained concentration. Their very good attitudes have a positive effect on their achievements. Pupils value the very good range of extra-curricular activities, and after-school clubs are very well attended.
12. The school's strong moral code works well because of the consistent and high expectation of good behaviour by adults working in the school. Pupils respond very well to the system of rewards, and sanctions are rarely needed. Successes are celebrated through displays, in lessons and through assemblies. Pupils say that isolated incidents of anti-social behaviour and bullying are dealt with well. Pupils can tell their teachers about their concerns through a note in the 'bubble box' and issues are debated sensitively in whole-class discussions. The behaviour and attitudes of pupils in the infants are good, but not as good as in the rest of the school. Pupils are not always as interested in their work as they could be and they sometimes take time to settle. This partly reflects the quality of teaching, which, although good, is not as stimulating as in the junior classes.

13. The school successfully promotes mutual respect for others and staff are very good role models. Through class discussions, lessons and assemblies, pupils learn to value others' feelings, cultures and beliefs. The school's promotion of looking after the environment has caught the pupils' imagination. This is reflected in the eco-warriors' successful campaigns to create wildlife areas, a willow classroom and a trim trail. They are justly proud of their Eco School status and particularly enjoyed talking about their achievements to the Princess Royal when she visited their stand at the county show.
14. Children's personal, emotional and social development in the Foundation Stage is good and they end their reception year with average standards, having started with below average. The quality of relationships and the very positive ethos in the school, apparent, for example in the assemblies and playground, do much to help pupils in their progress.
15. The behaviour, attitudes and personal development of pupils with special educational needs are very good. Support is appropriate and teachers make lessons interesting. Teaching assistants enable pupils to participate fully. In subjects such as physical education, the quality of teaching enables these pupils to improve their self-confidence.

### Exclusions data

#### *Ethnic background of pupils*

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Any other ethnic group

#### *Exclusions in the last school year*

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
254	3	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0
2	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

16. A small number of pupils in the academic year 2002-3 were excluded when their conduct was unacceptable. All procedures were followed appropriately. There have been no exclusions during the current year.
17. The pupils have maintained their very good attitudes and behaviour found at the time of the last inspection.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education provided is very good. Teaching and learning are very good overall and assessment is good. The curriculum is broad and balanced with very good enrichment. The care taken of pupils and links with other schools are good; links with the community are very good. Parents and pupils have very positive attitudes to the school.

#### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is very good overall. The quality is best in Reception and Years 3 to 6. Assessment is good overall, although much better in the Foundation Stage and English, maths and science than in some other subjects

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very effective in Years 3 to 6 which results in very good learning

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good
- Teachers are very knowledgeable about the subjects they teach, particularly in the three core subjects and art
- Teachers have high expectations and make learning enjoyable and fun
- Very good relationships and mutual respect between teachers and pupils often result in very good behaviour in lessons and positive attitudes to learning
- The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2, although good overall, is not as effective as in other years

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (6%)	14 (45%)	12 (39%)	3 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

- The very good quality of teaching in Reception and Years 3 to 6 results from teachers' high expectations of what the pupils can achieve, their detailed preparation and the fun they have whilst teaching. Relationships are very good indeed because teachers show respect for all pupils, whatever their abilities or backgrounds, and pupils in turn value and enjoy the company of their teachers. This mutual approach helps to maintain very high standards of behaviour, both within the classroom and around the school.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in art is quite outstanding and it results in excellent learning and achievement. When pupils ask for advice, practical techniques are modelled enabling them to make rapid and very effective progress in learning new skills, often advanced ones, well above the standards expected of the pupils' ages. The staff's very good knowledge of teaching and learning in English, maths and science has a similar positive impact on pupils' learning. The techniques advocated by the national strategies for literacy and numeracy are used by staff in most lessons in most subjects. Very good characteristics of many observed lessons were: good planning and structure, with clear 'beginnings, middles and ends'; sessions where work was carefully taught and matched to the needs of the pupils; and pupils' involvement in their own learning. The teaching quality was usually good or better, only dropping to a satisfactory quality in a few lessons.
- The overall quality of teaching in English, maths and science in Years 3 to 6 is very good. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is good in maths and English and satisfactory in science, where too little work is recorded.
- The fun and enjoyment noted in classes stems from the confidence staff have in what they are doing and their certainty that pupils will behave and participate in the various tasks they plan. Staff relax and enjoy their teaching and the pupils respond in a like manner in their learning. Teaching assistants and other supporting adults usually provide very good help in the classroom, teaching effectively. They are usually very well briefed and complement the teachers' work, for example, resolving any minor behaviour incidents that materialise when the teacher is occupied, or by teaching a group of pupils a specific point or approach.
- The setting system works very well for English and maths in Years 4, 5 and 6. This enables teachers to match work more easily to pupils' needs, so expectations are high and appropriate for high and low attainers alike. In science, the regrouping of pupils in Years 5 and 6 into single age classes, during the time when pupils are being prepared for national tests, has a positive effect on teaching and learning.

23. The result of such good teaching is that pupils are confident learners and show good independent learning skills. They apply themselves very effectively, questioning with confidence any points they fail to understand. They also work very well together in groups, accepting the need to develop good social interactions in whichever group they are placed.
24. An example of very good practice seen in a lower maths set involved pupils reflecting shapes in a mirror line in order to improve their knowledge of lines of symmetry. The pace of work was very rapid and, following the very effective teacher explanations and exemplification, pupils soon completed the first, second and third sets of problems set. The teacher always had a more interesting problem available, however, and time flew in the lesson. Pupils were unaware that the end of the lesson had arrived and had no wish to stop for lunch. They were very proud of their achievements and had experienced real success in their work.
25. Many examples of similarly good practice were observed, but not all lessons were equally successful. In Years 1 and 2, a higher proportion of sound and good lessons were observed and the quality of work in the pupils' books confirmed that the overall quality was good and not very good in these classes. Many of the strengths seen in Reception and Years 3 to 6 were apparent but also some minor weaknesses, such as the teacher talking for too long and keeping the pupils too long on the carpet merely listening. Teachers had lower expectations of some pupils during group work and they failed to get the full attention of the class when speaking to them. Pupils' ICT skills have improved greatly over recent years but class-based computers are not always used sufficiently. Teaching assistants were rather passive at times and insufficiently involved.
26. Pupils with special educational needs are very well taught. Teachers have high expectations of what they can achieve and monitor their progress very well. Staff work together with the special educational needs co-ordinator to ensure that individual education plans are relevant and targets are attainable. Teaching assistants provide very good support in lessons, and pupils know how well they are doing. Pupils learn very well because teaching is fun and work is well matched to their abilities.
27. The very few pupils for whom English is an additional language are very well supported because teachers are aware of their needs and work hard to meet them.
28. Teachers assess pupils' understanding very effectively in most lessons. They question boys and girls appropriately, challenging high and low attainers alike. Most work is well marked, but not all. In some cases, a few errors are missed and pupils are unsure as to how they can improve further. In the Foundation Stage, the formal stepping-stones criteria are used to identify individual children's achievements and standards, and work is carefully planned for the children in the light of this analysis. Assessment of pupils' work is very effective in English and maths, measured against small-step targets. In other subjects, progress is measured against identified key skills and the picture is inconsistent. In religious education, for example, pupils are not always clear about how they are doing or how to improve. Pupils, do, however, generally have a good idea about their relative success in subjects.
29. The quality of teaching has improved across the school since the time of the last inspection. The focus on developing pupils' skills has been very helpful in improving their learning, which is much better than two years ago.

### **The curriculum**

The school provides a good, well-planned curriculum complemented by very good enrichment opportunities. In the last four years, there has been a strong and very successful emphasis on the core subjects of English, maths and science, with a focus on skill development across all subjects. Levels of staffing are very good. The accommodation and resources for learning are good overall.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A focus on continuity in skill development, as well as statutory curriculum requirements, is helping pupils to appreciate links between subjects and to deepen their understanding of literacy and numeracy
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- The school makes very good provision for pupils to be included fully in all activities
- Very good use is made of visits, visitors and events to bring the curriculum alive, supported by a good range of out-of-lesson clubs and activities
- A very good outdoor environment surrounds the school, but classrooms where Reception age children are taught are small and their outside learning area is not as good as other school facilities.

## **Commentary**

30. Good planning, particularly in Years 3 to 6, ensures that the skills pupils learn in one subject are developed in others. In religious education, history and geography, for example, pupils' literacy skills are used well in stories, reports and instructions. In science, pupils use measuring skills in their experiments as they do in maths and design and technology, and record the findings by ordering their writing in a systematic way. Pupils throughout the school, particularly the older ones, confidently access the Internet to find information supporting their study units in subjects such as geography, history and science. Curriculum planning for English, maths and science is detailed and makes good use of materials available nationally, which help staff teach more effectively.
31. The school tries to help all pupils, regardless of ability, gender or ethnicity, to have equal access to the opportunities provided. Teachers' planning for coverage of the curriculum is good, taking into account the needs of the mixed aged classes. The more able pupils are challenged effectively through setting, booster groups and additional sessions in English, maths and science. Pupils with special educational needs are given full access to the curriculum and helped by additional resources to support their understanding. For much of the time they take part in class lessons, with work suited to their abilities. They are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities, which boosts their self-confidence.
32. Through circle time, and at many other times in subject lessons, a very good proportion of curriculum time is allocated to the pupils' personal, social and health education. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to discuss sex and relationships education, and the impact of drugs on people's lives.
33. Pupils receive a rich variety of learning experiences that cater very well for their interests and needs. Very good use is made of the locality, visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum. Much of the learning is based on first-hand experiences because of the numerous visits made to places of interest, for example Skegness and the city of Nottingham. There pupils learn that features of places and aspects of life may be similar to, or different from, those of their own locality. The school taps into local expertise, for example a costume maker and local sculptor. The outcome of this breadth of curriculum planning is seen in the way pupils have produced Tudor costumes of a very high quality, and the wooden sculpture of a phoenix, the school emblem, which is on permanent display in the entrance hall. A trans-Pacific rower visited the school before embarking on his journey, and now pupils are following his progress through e-mails. Pupils are given the opportunity to participate in a good range of after-school clubs, inter-school sports and a variety of music groups, including a woodwind band. These activities contribute significantly to pupils' learning and to their social development.
34. The school is very well staffed with skilled teachers and learning support assistants, who make an important contribution to pupils' learning and their very good achievement. The school's accommodation is good; the building is well maintained and classrooms are attractively

presented to form an interesting and stimulating learning environment. Reception classrooms are small, however, which makes teaching and learning more difficult, despite the best efforts of staff. The outdoor accommodation and grounds are great assets. A good play space has a mix of hard and grass areas. Older pupils enjoy large play apparatus for balancing and climbing and learn from the very good pond and natural areas. Plans are in hand to remedy the one area with shortcomings - the outdoor learning environment for Reception. Overall, good equipment and resources are enabling lessons to proceed at pace and for pupils to enjoy learning.

35. Since the last inspection there has been very good improvement. The ICT curriculum is secure, and opportunities for investigative work in both science and maths are now very good. The curriculum is planned to meet the needs of high attaining pupils as well as others.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school provides good care, support and guidance for pupils. It involves pupils very well in the school's work and development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Academic support and guidance is provided very effectively in maths and English
- Induction arrangements for pupils are very good
- The school council makes a significant contribution to school life
- Records of pupils' progress in some subjects are not clear enough

### **Commentary**

36. The school's procedures for ensuring that pupils learn in a healthy and safe environment are good. The medical room is well resourced and staff are suitably qualified. Detailed records of treatment are kept. Regular health and safety checks take place. The school recognises the need to ensure that written records of these are kept in the building.
37. The headteacher is the responsible officer for child protection and staff know to go to him with any concerns. On-going training is provided for all staff, for example an in-service day at the start of the new academic year, to ensure all are conversant with the latest requirements. There are good working relationships with all relevant support agencies. Appropriate pastoral records are kept.
38. Pupils are very well involved in the life of the school and their views are sought through the well-established school council. They also seek the views of their peers through class councils. School councillors are proud of their role and work hard to involve all pupils in decisions. Recent developments have included improvements to the decoration of the school hall and a quiet area in the playground. The school encourages pupils to have a sense of responsibility. This is realised in many ways, not least through the imaginative school grounds and eco-friendly environment.
39. In all lessons, learning intentions are clearly stated and at the end of sessions pupils often discuss their achievements and how to progress further. They all have helpful targets for literacy and maths. Detailed procedures are in place to assess pupils' progress in English, maths and science. Setting in maths and English has helped standards to improve. Tracking in the Foundation Stage using the stepping-stones criteria is effective, but in some non-core subjects, records of assessment against key skills are not always clear or transferred from one class teacher to the next at the end of a year. The caring ethos of the school means that relationships are very good and pupils are treated with respect. Pupils are happy to ask for help when they need it and value guidance.
40. Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Rigorous and effective school procedures are administered efficiently. All staff contribute to identification of pupils' needs as early as possible. Individual education plans are detailed and well written. The views of pupils and parents are sought every term when progress is reviewed. Pupils know what their targets are, and how well

they are doing. They enjoy coming to school and work hard. Those with specific funding are very well cared for by their named helpers.

41. Children are very well prepared for starting school in Reception. Procedures for transfer to Year 1 are also well established. Pupils have prepared their own very helpful leaflet for newcomers. Good use is made of the "buddy" system to introduce pupils to the school and to help them to make friends.
42. Insufficient evidence is available in the last report to indicate the overall improvement in care, guidance and support since June 2002. Records of progress are better than at that time, however, and targets in English and maths are now more effective as they are related to individual pupils.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

Links with parents and the community are very good. Links with other schools are good.

### **Main strengths**

- The parents feel welcome in school and support its work
- The school provides parents with good information
- Very good partnerships have been established within the local community
- Links with other schools improve teachers' knowledge and contribute to pupils' achievement

### **Commentary**

43. The school works hard to reach out to parents and encourages them to become involved in the life of the school. The headteacher is always around at the start and end of the day and this gives parents good opportunities to talk with him informally as well as make appointments. Nearly all parents feel that teachers are very approachable and can discuss any concerns with them at the end of the school day. The school consults parents through annual surveys and a suggestion box in the foyer. The school is very popular in the local area and parents are very supportive of the school. The parental responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very positive and parents had no significant concerns. Nearly all parents attend the consultation sessions and families are keen to support events such as school productions. The active friends association works hard to raise funds and organise social events. Parents also provide valuable support in the classrooms and on visits. The school appreciates the support parents have given through the working parties that have enhanced and maintain the extensive grounds.
44. Parents receive good information about how their children are getting on. Pupils' annual reports are good and contain useful information about how well the pupils are doing and how they can improve their work. Twice yearly consultations give parents good opportunities to discuss their children's progress with staff. New parents are provided with very helpful information about the school and how to help their children at home. Pupils help to produce attractive newsletters that celebrate the school's successes and the school gives parents relevant and timely information about future events. Parents are interested in their children's education and are keen to attend curriculum events, for example on numeracy, so that they can support their children's work at home. The school also sends parents very helpful information each term about the topics their children will be studying. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents paint a detailed picture of school life.

45. The school's very good links with the community enrich the curriculum and have a positive impact on pupils' personal development and academic achievement. Local residents are happy to share their expertise and enthusiasm, for example the costume maker who worked with pupils studying the Tudors and the trans-Pacific rower. The school works very closely with wildlife and environmental groups to support the work of the eco-warriors. Visits to local amenities such as churches, the theatre and museums deepen pupils' understanding of the curriculum. The pupils gain confidence and social skills through taking part in events such as Rotary 'Young Musicians', reaching the national final of 'Arts and Minds' competition and singing at community events.
46. The school is an active member of the Boston networked learning community and staff are able to meet with colleagues to share expertise and offer mutual support. Good links with the adjacent pre-school group help children to settle quickly into school routines. Year 6 pupils transfer to several local secondary schools, which makes curriculum links difficult. However the transfer arrangements are good. Through sensitive class discussions, visits and joint workbooks, the school endeavours to make the transfer to secondary school as smooth as possible.
47. No judgement can be made in the extent of improvement since the last report in 2002, as the last report did not give a judgement about this area of school life.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and that provided by other key members of staff is very good overall. Governance is very effective.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher's leadership is inspirational
- Staff are empowered to lead and work very effectively as a team
- Self-evaluation is rigorous with a very strong focus on improvement in standards; further monitoring of teaching and learning in some non-core subjects is needed
- Management systems are well thought out and highly effective, although some staff do not have an appropriate work/life balance
- Governors play a full role in driving the school forward, providing both challenge and support

### **Commentary**

48. The headteacher's drive and vision have ensured that the school has moved rapidly to become a very good school. His very high expectations and attention to school self-evaluation demonstrate a total commitment to achieving the highest possible standards. The senior staff work as a team to make decisions and are empowered by the headteacher to undertake their responsibilities. Delegation is very effective. All understand their roles and carry them out to the best of their ability. The appointment of a senior teaching assistant is a very effective addition to the team, with a very important and evolving role. Staff expertise has been used very well to support the development of teaching skills and subject expertise. Rigorous planned monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning by senior staff and external consultants has led to very good improvements, particularly in core subjects. Subject leaders are developing their role effectively and becoming more involved in monitoring their subjects. Differences in the quality of teaching and learning remain, however, and subject leaders carry out insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning in some subjects.
49. The school improvement plan has a clear focus on maximising achievement with key priorities identified. It is linked to the professional development of staff to help with meeting targets. The

headteacher is very aware of the need for staff to have a work/life balance and has been taking steps to address this. At present this is not reflected in the headteacher's excessive workload, or that of some other staff, particularly senior managers. This could be unhelpful in making further improvements. New staff are well supported by managers and colleagues and through the staff handbook, which is a user-friendly document and clearly sets out procedures and expectations.

50. Senior managers, governors and all staff have responded very effectively to the issues identified in the last inspection report. The issues of improving standards, particularly in investigative work in maths and science, in ICT and writing, and responding to the needs of more able pupils, are all resolved. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 has improved and is now good, although not as effective as in Years 3 to 6. Learning throughout the school is as good as teaching.
51. The needs of children with special educational needs are very well managed, through the combined work of senior managers and the co-ordinator. The school provides strong leadership. Effective systems identify and monitor pupils very well, and they make rapid progress. All members of staff play an active role in ensuring pupils are included and that work is appropriate for them. A senior teaching assistant supervises the work of support staff and links with the school's management team. This arrangement works very well. Finances are well managed and spent appropriately for the benefit of pupils with special educational needs. There is very good liaison with any receiving secondary school, and strong links with other agencies such as speech therapy.
52. Governors fulfil their statutory duties very well. They understand and support the school's vision and aims. They know the school very well and are fully aware of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses. Governors have a very good range of expertise and experience, which they use to support the school, although staff governors do not always have appropriate responsibilities on the governing body. Governors are very involved in school improvement planning and monitor and evaluate progress made. They are not afraid to ask questions about standards and work as a team with the headteacher to make decisions. They are fully involved in budgetary matters and expenditure is planned with great care. Very good systems ensure that finance is effectively and efficiently used. The high carry forward this year is due to unexpected funds being credited to the school account and governors have in hand plans for its expenditure on classroom furniture, ICT hardware, additional support staff and improving outside facilities for Reception.
53. Governors are in the process of ratifying a number of policies, such as those for sex and relationships education, and on race equality, and monitoring their implementation, but these policies are embedded very effectively in the existing work of the school. In these areas in practice, and all others, statutory requirements are met.

***Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004***

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	577,790	Balance from previous year	48,754
Total expenditure	540,600	Balance carried forward to the next	85,944
Expenditure per pupil	2,407		

54. A number of factors aid the school in its drive for improvement. These are demonstrated in the excellent leadership of the headteacher, the very good role models of senior staff, very good planning and monitoring systems and the constructive support and criticism of the governing body. Further improvement has been held back by the small classrooms for the Reception children and their restricted outside area.

55. Since the last inspection in June 2002, the quality of leadership, management and governance has improved substantially. This is seen in the very good achievement of the pupils, much improved ICT provision, better teaching and the very positive attitudes of staff, pupils and parents.

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

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

56. Provision for children in Reception is good. Children make good progress during their first year at school so that, by the time they enter Year 1, most will have reached the expected goals for children's learning. About a third will exceed them. This represents good or very good achievement in all areas as a number of children enter the school with below average skills. Teachers and teaching assistants work very hard as a team to ensure that some children's weaker social and language skills do not prevent them from learning effectively. The very good progress the children make in these two areas helps them in reaching the standards they attain in the other Early Learning Goals.
57. The school has a very good induction process for the children as they start school. Teaching is very good. Teachers show children very carefully what they need to do and use assessment very well to plan for their learning. The children's achievements are not as good overall as the quality of teaching because the outdoor play environment and the small classrooms restrict what can be achieved, for example in developing independence and physical skills. The curriculum is broad and balanced. The shortcomings of the outside play area do not prevent the children from receiving an appropriate curriculum, but its further development would enable activities to be extended. Resources are good overall and the Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Progress since the last inspection cannot be judged, as specific judgements were not made in this area in the last report.

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

Provision in this area is good.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers' high expectations lead to very good development of pupils' social skills
- Children are given regular opportunities to reflect on their learning
- Children are not involved enough in planning and reviewing their own learning

#### **Commentary**

58. Children are happy and confident to come to school. They have secure and regular routines, which help them to learn. They have formed very good relationships with each other, play sensibly together and take turns to speak to each other. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and praise pupils for their efforts and contributions. Children particularly enjoy thinking about what they have learnt at the end of teacher-led sessions. They work independently and put away their own resources. There are, however, few opportunities for children to plan their own learning and review what they have done so that they know how to improve. Progress in this area is good overall.

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

Provision in this area is very good.

#### **Main strengths**

- Teachers take every opportunity to teach language skills through activities
- Children listen well and are very willing to make oral contributions
- Children's descriptive language is being developed well

#### **Commentary**

59. Children are given the opportunity to read and write using a variety of different materials. They enjoyed reading a poem about sand that explored rhyme and rhythm. Activities linked to the poem enabled the children to use descriptive words very well and the children enjoyed walking in the sand in bare feet and using their senses to describe interesting and unusual large shells. Children are beginning to read confidently and the development of reading is well supported through the use of guided reading, story reading and the use of headphones for children to listen to stories independently. Writing is being developed by the use of writing tables. Children practise their letter formation in sand and are beginning to write their own sentences independently using simple, common words and phonic strategies. Children achieve very good improvement in their language skills, which is very helpful to other areas.

### **Mathematical development**

Provision in this area is very good.

### **Main strengths**

- Children are given good opportunities to use problem solving techniques
- Very effective teaching strategies lead to children's very good achievement
- The outside area is used well to support practical mathematical activities

### **Commentary**

60. Children count and use addition to twenty with some children working with numbers to a hundred. They explore patterns, two- and three-dimensional shapes, money and measurement. Children enjoyed learning about directions using the bikes and trikes to follow a trail in the outside area. Hands-on displays in the classroom encourage the children to solve practical problems using area, shape and number. Teachers use mental and oral starters very well to enable children to solve number problems orally. They help children to record their work in an organised way, which helps them go on to more difficult tasks.

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

Provision in this area is good.

### **Main strength and weakness**

- The children are provided with a wide range of opportunities to explore the world around them
- Children make very good progress in some aspects, though computers in classrooms are underused

### **Commentary**

61. Children have a good variety of opportunities to find out about the world through growing plants, using their senses and visits to local towns. Interactive displays in the classroom celebrate and support well the learning in this area, contributing to the good overall achievement. The children are able to compare themselves to when they were babies and contrast the seaside today to what it was like in the past. Their trip to Skegness brought this to life. Children are able to program a toy to reach a destination but little use of the computers in the classrooms was seen during the inspection. Children have been developing thinking skills very well and this is evident in their work about exploring the concept of God.

### **Physical development**

Provision in this area is good.

### **Main strength and weakness**

- Good resources enable children to develop a range of co-ordination skills

- The restricted outside area limits children's activity and what they are able to achieve; teachers do their best with the facilities available

### **Commentary**

62. No formal physical education lessons were seen during the inspection. Children, however, develop their physical skills well by using a good range of resources. These include pedal and push vehicles, climbing apparatus, the tunnel and large and small construction toys. Space in the outdoor area is limited so it is not always possible for children to use large apparatus outside when children are involved in other activities. Careful planning at present ensures that children receive fair access to the area but all children's learning would benefit from a better facility.

## **Creative development**

Provision in this area is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good teaching combines creative activity with opportunities for children to practise key skills in other areas
- Children enjoy acting out situations in the role-play areas
- Development of the outside area could support this area of learning more effectively

### **Commentary**

63. Role-play activities help to create effective links between areas of learning. Children practise reading and writing skills and find out more about the world about them in the 'travel agent'. They use small world toys to act out stories and a range of paint, materials and artistic techniques to produce interesting works of art. The children enjoyed singing together as they packed away their equipment. Their progress in creative skills is good but the outside area has the potential to be used more effectively to broaden children's range of creative activities.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve very well in Year 6 and standards are well above expectations
- Overall, teaching is very good, particularly in Years 5 and 6
- Literacy is promoted very effectively in other subjects
- Marking is inconsistent and does not always guide pupils on how to improve
- The subject is very well led and managed

### **Commentary**

#### **Standards in national tests**

64. Results in the National Curriculum tests for 2003 showed that standards attained by Year 2 pupils were above average in reading and writing. When compared with similar schools (for this age group, comparisons are with schools that have a similar proportion of pupils taking free school meals), results were average in reading and below average in writing largely because a few pupils did not attain the expected level 2. At the end of Year 6, standards were well above average when compared with all schools, and the schools where Year 2 assessments had been similar in 1999. Results in 2004 were similar to those of 2003.

#### **Standards and achievement currently**

65. Inspection evidence shows pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. Their attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and well above expectations at the end of Year 6. When pupils joined the school in the past their standards, overall, have been below average. The current Year 2 has a higher proportion of lower attaining pupils than in previous years which has resulted, with the good achievement, in broadly average standards overall.
66. In Year 2, most pupils demonstrate good listening skills. They are provided with many high-quality opportunities to develop their speaking and listening. Most speak clearly and audibly, using correct diction and pronunciation. Lower attaining pupils sometimes lack the vocabulary to express themselves. As pupils move through the school, their skills improve significantly and by Year 6, nearly all are confident and articulate speakers, clearly stating their points of view.

They make good use of an extensive vocabulary and responses to questioning are often extended and interesting.

67. By Year 2, most pupils read aloud fluently and interpret stories well through lively expression. More able pupils are clear about the differences between an author and illustrator and fiction and non-fiction texts. In Year 6, pupils confidently discuss characters in detail and justify their preferences for both books and authors. In all classes, pupils are taught the skills of reading and have a daily opportunity to practise in a group. Pupils benefit from very good help provided by support assistants during the early morning guided reading sessions. Books are taken home regularly and records are systematically maintained and shared with parents. The school has done much to overcome the problem of boys' lack of interest in reading and during the inspection there were no perceptible differences between boys and girls in this respect.
68. Standards in writing have improved significantly as a result of the school's emphasis on this. Throughout the school, writing targets are clearly identified and constantly referred to during lessons. Regular spelling homework and testing has raised spelling standards throughout the school. In Year 2, most pupils write in complete sentences, using full stops and capital letters accurately. The more able made good use of descriptive words when writing an evaluation of the *'Lighthousekeeper's Lunch'*. However in their enthusiasm to get their ideas on paper, pupils do not always take care with their writing. In Year 6, pupils adapt writing successfully for different audiences and know that there is the need for short simple sentences when writing for a younger audience. They enthusiastically analyse poetry, looking at the use of similes and metaphors and whether each line rhymes before writing a poem to convey their feelings of sadness:

*Why was I feeling so low?  
Sad and depressed and grey  
The long day stretches out in front of me.*

### **Teaching and learning**

69. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2, very good overall in Years 3 to 6 and consistently very good for the oldest pupils. Particular strengths include highly effective planning to accommodate particular needs of different groups of pupils, such as higher attainers, increased emphasis on literacy across the curriculum and strong teamwork between teachers and learning support assistants. Where teaching is very good or excellent, teachers focus on specific objectives and make very good use of previously acquired skills such as the use of rhyming words and 'powerful' vocabulary. For example in a Year 5/6 lesson on writing poems in the style of *'Four o'clock Friday'*, teaching successfully helped pupils to include these elements. Most teachers make good use of probing questions, which helps to extend learning. They ask questions that vary in difficulty and opportunities are provided for both boys and girls to answer questions. Pupils spoke confidently about what they need to do to improve their work and work is regularly marked. However, written comments are limited and do not always provide pupils with enough guidance as to how their work might be improved.

### **Leadership and management**

70. Very good leadership supports the strong team of committed teachers and assistants, and provides very good induction for teachers who are new to the school. The management of the subject is also very good. Monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress, especially in writing, and the use of assessment data to plan for overall targets is very good, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum is very well planned, making effective use of nationally available documentation to ensure good coverage of all areas of language development.
71. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good.

## **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

72. Pupils' literacy skills are being improved continually through other subjects. Skills at the age of eleven are well above those expected overall as few pupils struggle with language. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas and share opinions and these support the development of pupils' oral skills. They teach pupils to use the specialist vocabulary for each subject. For example, in design and technology in Year 5, pupils' evaluation of their costumes drew well on the technical language involved. Year 6 pupils wrote extensively in history about wealth and poverty during Tudor times; in religious education, their written explanations of the importance of the Gurdwara as a special place of worship to Sikhs were most effective.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is very good.

### **Main strengths**

- Very good teaching in Years 3 to 6 enables pupils to make rapid progress
- Pupils' investigative work and thinking skills are very well developed
- Tracking systems are used very effectively to set learning targets for pupils
- Leadership and management of the subject are very effective

### **Commentary**

#### **Standards in national tests**

73. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were below the national average and well below average in comparison with similar schools. Higher attaining pupils did less well than in other schools. At the end of Year 6, results in national tests were well above average and also well above similar schools. Higher attaining pupils did particularly well. Early indications are of a similar picture in 2004, with some variations due to the profile of the year group.

#### **Standards and achievement currently**

74. Pupils currently enter the school with below average standards. Standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with the national average and achievement is good. The attainment of pupils in Year 6 was below average when they entered Year 3 four years ago. Current standards are above average and the achievement of pupils in the lessons seen was very good. Very good emphasis is placed on investigations and basic skills, and those pupils of below average ability make particularly good progress.

### **Teaching and learning**

75. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 with some very good features. In Years 3 to 6 it is very good. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are set according to their previous learning and ability. This enables teachers to plan more effectively and has been successful in raising standards. Teachers make learning fun for pupils, who enjoy lessons and take part with great enthusiasm. There are high expectations of work and behaviour. Tasks are interesting and challenging and fire pupils' imaginations. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils stuck their names on a class Carroll diagram to show whether they liked egg and cheese. They were able to ask questions about the results and understood clearly how information can be organised efficiently. When the teacher asked what might have happened if they had merely talked amongst themselves to find out the answers one pupil said, "It would be chaos!" Year 2 pupils threw combinations of dice to practise multiple addition and sort numbers into odd and even. The teacher skilfully asked them to explain their working out. Mental arithmetic is well taught throughout the school, with snappy starts to lessons. The time at the end of some sessions is not always best used to find out what pupils have understood. Sometimes new information is introduced too soon when pupils have not fully grasped what they are learning.

### **Leadership and management**

76. Leadership is very good and has a clear vision for raising achievement, particularly for groups of pupils who could do better. Leadership is knowledgeable about teaching and knows the areas for

development. A useful termly action plan runs alongside a strategic plan for improvement. Management is very good. Pupils' performance data is tracked and those who are underachieving are identified and supported. Their progress is closely monitored. Pupils know what their targets are and work hard to achieve them. Marking in books follows a clear system with an easily understood series of symbols. It is not always clear to pupils how they might improve their work. The use of ICT in whole class lessons is effective; useful training is provided for teachers and assistants. Monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous and effective.

77. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good, with standards rising dramatically and provision improving from satisfactory then to very good now.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

78. Opportunities for developing mathematical skills across the curriculum are very good and pupils' skills are well above average by the age of eleven. Classrooms have lively interactive displays that stimulate pupils. There are especially strong links with science, design and technology and ICT. For example in science, Year 4 pupils drew graphs to show the rate of cooling of liquids, and block graphs to show the size of shadows over time. Computers are used to design repeating and symmetrical patterns and to record data. In design and technology, measuring skills are used effectively when planning and making models.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement is very good overall and well above average standards are reached by the age of eleven
- Work is both interesting and challenging as a result of the very good quality teaching in Years 3 to 6, with a strong focus on investigative work
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good
- Preparation for the National Curriculum assessments at age eleven is rigorous, worthwhile and successful
- There is too little written work in science in some Year 1 and 2 classes

### **Commentary**

#### **Standards in national tests**

79. In the tests taken by eleven-year-olds in 2003 the proportion of pupils attaining level 4, that expected for their age, was well above the national average, as was the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 5. Comparing the pupils' results with those of similar schools, attainment is well above average. In the teacher assessments made at the age of seven in 2003, attainment was judged to be very high with all of the pupils attaining the expected level 2. The trend of improvement in these assessments over the past five years has been very good and boys' and girls' results have been similar. Test scores at age eleven in 2004 are as good as in 2003.

#### **Standards and achievement currently**

80. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' achievements are broadly satisfactory. Standards are average or a little below average overall at the age of seven. With little teaching of science taking place during the brief inspection period, and little written work available, it proved difficult to assess achievement and standards, except through discussion with pupils. At the age of eleven, standards are well above average and achievement is very good across Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 showed they had a sound understanding of healthy eating and their work indicated an appreciation of movement, forces and materials. In Years 3 to 6, work is reinforced year on year to ensure good coverage in mixed age classes. By Year 6, with a strong focus on learning by thinking, planning and then doing experiments, pupils have a very good grounding in investigative skills as well as knowledge of scientific ideas and principles. Appropriate units are used such as newtons when measuring forces and results are tabulated and interpreted very well, often using bar or line graphs. Virtually all pupils understand fair testing in Year 6 and they can use accurately technical terms such as air resistance, gravity, condensation and evaporation.

#### **Teaching and learning**

81. The quality of teaching is sound in Years 1 and 2, very good indeed in Years 3 to 6, and very good overall. The teaching quality apparent in the very good written work in the junior classes

was of a higher standard than that observed. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, relate well to the pupils and have high expectations of work rate and behaviour. Other adults in classrooms, including parent helpers and teaching assistants, usually provide very good help to pupils. Work is well matched to individual needs. In an example of a very good lesson for Years 5 and 6, with excellent aspects, on the impact of microbes on the decay of food, learning intentions for the session were clearly stated and so pupils knew exactly what was required of them. The groups all worked very hard and were very well supported by adults. Pupils showed very good independent learning skills. High and low attainers alike made very good progress. Pupils carried out an experiment using yeast and looked at decaying fruit, using a microscope connected to the class computer. The teacher's subject knowledge ensured that pupils' questions were answered accurately and in depth. Variables were carefully controlled during the experiment, so pupils' investigations made sense and they could draw justifiable conclusions. All lessons seen were satisfactory or better and written work in Years 3 to 6 has a very good balance of knowledge and skills. Teachers enable pupils to learn through practical experimentation and discussion. In Years 1 and 2 insufficient work is written down in some classes and so pupils do not remember the detail of their work. The few minor weaknesses in teaching were some inaccurate marking, a fall in the pace of work at times and occasional unclear explanations. Assessment is used effectively in helping pupils to learn.

### **Leadership and management**

82. The subject is very effectively led and managed, with very good outcomes for the pupils. Resources are sufficient and well organised. Previous years' test papers are used to assess where the pupils might have gaps in their knowledge and excellent support is then provided to help pupils improve in identified areas of weakness. Revision and preparation for the Year 6 tests is carefully planned and helps pupils to attain the high results. Curriculum planning is monitored well. The diary showing how the subject is evolving is a very useful management technique. Monitoring of teaching and learning, although organised and efficient, is not yet proving fully effective in improving sound teaching and learning, particularly in the younger classes.
83. Standards and achievement have improved substantially since the last inspection, showing very good progress.

### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is good.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good use is made of ICT in a range of subjects, particularly in the classes of older pupils
- Some teaching is very effective; very good use is made of the suite of computers
- The ICT curriculum is well planned to meet the needs of all pupils
- Class based computers are not used sufficiently in a number of lessons
- Most pupils' speed in using computer keyboards is too slow

#### **Commentary**

##### **Standards and achievement currently**

84. Pupils' achievements are good for their capabilities overall, and by the age of eleven they reach broadly average standards, although above average in some areas and below in others. Computers are used very effectively in art throughout the school. For example, some of the youngest pupils generated very good interpretations of Paul Klee's work. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 combined different images to produce their own designs for vehicles. Older pupils use the Internet with confidence. For example, they proceeded to research animal groups after previously classifying pictures of various animal skulls into sets, through looking at the teeth.

They have also researched the local area and presented their findings using a laptop and Powerpoint software. Pupils can use simulations, know a sound range of key strokes for word-processing, spreadsheets and databases, but their speed in using keyboards is slow which restricts what they can achieve. Their knowledge of the use of sensors and data logging is below average.

### **Teaching and learning**

85. The one specific ICT lesson observed during the inspection, where older pupils used the computer suite, was of very good quality. A combination of expert knowledge, skilled teaching and the use of some very good software, resulted in captivated pupils who worked very hard throughout the lesson. The pupils were designing their own classrooms, placing desks, windows, doors etc in the room, trying to provide the best facility they could. Items were priced and the room had to be equipped within the budget. Occasionally one pupil in each pair working at a computer tended to dominate proceedings but over the period of the lesson all pupils learnt very well.
86. Older pupils referred to using computers several times each week to help with learning, such as colour printing interesting microscope images and researching the Tudors using the Internet. Examples of pupils' work in several subjects show that recently very good use has been made of the ICT suite. The school is monitoring the progress of the man rowing across the Pacific. The pupils are very fortunate to be able to contact him each week via e-mail, to learn about his successes and difficulties as he copes with the sea and weather conditions. The pupils have an excellent understanding of the value of modern electronic communication as a result of this opportunity. Younger pupils use class-based computers less than their older colleagues and these machines lay idle at times, when they could have been used. Questioning of pupils is effective and sound records are kept of the success of each class in key skill areas of ICT.

### **Leadership and management**

87. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Curriculum planning is effective in helping pupils to have a balanced range of experiences as they progress through the school. Assessment is sound, although better information could be transferred from teacher to teacher on individual pupils' achievements. The computer suite provides a good, well-used facility, although Internet access is currently rather slow. Class-based computers, which vary in quality as well as in how well they are used, need to be managed rather better than they are currently. Curriculum planning is monitored effectively. Better evaluation of individual pupils' achievements would help in improving standards further. Pupils' achievements are much better than at the time of the last inspection two years ago, when ICT was a weakness; very good progress has been made.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

88. Pupils' skills in using ICT across the curriculum are broadly average. In art they are well above average, with extensive use of computers to enhance individual pupils' work. Good use is made of ICT in a range of contexts but this is inconsistent between classes, and much more frequent for the older pupils than the younger.

## **HUMANITIES**

Work was sampled in history and geography. In religious education sufficient evidence was gathered to make a full set of judgements about provision and the pupils' achievements.

### **History**

89. One lesson was observed, discussions took place with the subject leader and pupils, and a sample of work was seen.
90. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to understand why things happened in the way they did and how household objects and modes of transport have changed over time. In Year 6, pupils develop good research skills and use secondary sources effectively to look for specific information on the period they are studying, for example, *'The Tudors'*. They learn about the many wives of Henry VIII and make good use of literacy skills when they write about wealth and poverty during Tudor times. Their accounts draw on the information they have studied, to recount events and to write imaginatively. This has contributed to the rise in standards in writing in English. The quality of teaching in the lesson observed was very good indeed. Teacher's knowledge of Tudor wealth and poverty was very good and enabled questions to be answered in depth, which motivated the pupils to learn more. Expectations were very high with the outcome that pupils' achievements in the lesson were very good.

### **Geography**

91. One lesson was observed, discussions took place with the subject leader and pupils, and a sample of work was seen.
92. The school tries to provide pupils with as much first-hand experience as possible. Topics are based on national guidance. Activities involve pupils finding out about their own locality and then comparing their findings with studies of places further away. In Year 2, good use is made of the local area. Pupils complete a survey of the local traffic and then construct a block graph to represent the results. Learning gained from a visit to the seaside town of Skegness earlier in the term was followed up successfully during the inspection, when the focus was on the key features of the seaside. In Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge about the physical and human features of the local area. They understand the use of keys and symbols on maps and successfully use secondary sources such as books, atlases and the Internet to compare the small town of Boston with the large city of Nottingham. There are good links with numeracy, when pupils calculate the distance between different towns in the United Kingdom, and with literacy, when they evaluate and present their findings about the features that give contrasting locations their particular characteristics.
93. The lesson observed was well taught and resulted in good learning and achievement. The pupils were expected to work hard and enjoy the lesson and they did. Some good marking is helping pupils to focus on areas they need to improve.

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is satisfactory.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have a good basic knowledge and understanding of the religions covered, though they do not always understand that religion can affect how people live
- The subject plays an important part in pupils' understanding of other cultures
- Very good links with literacy and the development of writing skills were seen in the work of Years 3 to 6; opportunities to develop writing are sometimes missed in Years 1 and 2
- Teaching and learning are not monitored closely enough to help bring about improvements in pupils' achievement

#### **Commentary**

##### **Standards and achievement currently**

94. Pupils attain standards broadly in line with expectations of the Locally Agreed syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve

satisfactorily across the school. In Year 2, pupils know that Jesus is a special person for Christians. They visit the local church and learn about some of the main features and, through a mock baptism, develop their understanding of the symbolism of this occasion. Pupils are beginning to learn about the major world religions and know some of the customs and practices of Hinduism and Judaism, such as the relevance of the festival of 'Sukkot' to Jews and differences between Hindu and Christian weddings. By Year 6, pupils have a good basic knowledge of these religions as well as Sikhism. They learn about the life of Guru Nanak, through their research, and explore how Sikhs meditate. Pupils' literacy skills are used effectively in written work and vocabulary is developed well. However, earlier work indicates that pupils do not apply what they have learnt sufficiently or discuss how their knowledge of religions may have an impact on their own lives. The school is aware of this shortcoming and is exploring ways of tackling the issue.

### **Teaching and learning**

95. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Across the school, teachers have sufficient subject knowledge and confidence to enable them to interpret and deliver the curriculum. Learning intentions are clearly explained so that pupils understand the purpose of their activities. Skilful questioning extends pupils' knowledge and understanding as well as developing their oral skills. Good use is made of ICT to support learning. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and this enables them to be fully included in both discussions and activities. Recorded work in Years 3 to 6 effectively broadens pupils' experiences of writing. However, in Years 1 and 2 much of the learning is based on discussion and insufficient emphasis is placed on recording to enable pupils to consolidate their thoughts and learning through applying literacy skills.

### **Leadership and management**

96. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has organised a system to monitor coverage of specified topics and the quality of pupils' work, but has not organised opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms, in order to improve learning and pupils' achievement. Throughout the school, teachers mark pupils' work regularly. However, comments do not always provide guidance to pupils on what they need to improve further. Good quality displays make a positive contribution to the school's ethos, and the subject enhances pupils' cultural development. Visits enrich pupils' learning successfully.

### **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

Sufficient evidence was obtained to make a full set of judgements about art. The three subjects of design and technology, music and physical education were all sampled. Insufficient evidence was gathered in these sampled subjects to make judgements about overall provision.

#### **Art**

The provision in art is excellent.

#### **Main strengths**

- Pupils' achievements are excellent and standards are very high across the school
- Excellent use is made of the good resources available
- Pupils experience a very wide breadth of study using a wealth of artistic techniques
- Excellent use is made of staff subject expertise to support pupils' learning throughout the school

#### **Commentary**

#### **Standards and achievement currently**

97. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection but it is evident, from the extensive high quality displays throughout the school and work seen in books, that the standards reached at the ages of seven and eleven are very high in comparison to national expectations. Achievement is excellent. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to use oil pastels, charcoal, colour washes, collage and colour mixing. By the time that they have reached the end of Year 6, pupils are able to compare and contrast the work of famous artists and experiment with a range of artistic techniques for themselves.

### **Teaching and learning**

98. In the one lesson seen, the quality of teaching and learning was excellent. This is best exemplified by the following. As the teacher revealed that the painting he was using to demonstrate techniques to create a "sense of place" was his own work, the pupils gasped in amazement. Pupils discussed mood and atmosphere evoked by the painting before creating their own high quality designs. Expectations of the pupils were very high and through modelling examples personally, the teacher enabled pupils to achieve at levels well beyond those they expected to attain. Questioning was rigorous and in-depth and pupils were given time to reflect on their own work. Technical language was used accurately and frequently, giving pupils a very good basis to develop their knowledge of the subject.

### **Leadership and management**

99. The subject is very well led and managed and excellent use is made of expert knowledge on the school staff. There is great excitement around when work in art is taking place, with a resulting enthusiasm for learning. Resources are very good. The curriculum is innovative and exciting, with a strong focus on developing skills as pupils progress through the school. Assessment is detailed and constructive, although information is not always effectively transferred from one year to the next. Some of the pupils' artwork has been entered for a major national competition, and having won the area heats, the work is going forward to the national finals. This success reflects the in-depth standard of work in the school.
100. The school has made excellent progress in art since the last inspection.

### **Design and technology**

101. One lesson was observed, curriculum planning reviewed, a discussion held with the subject co-ordinator and evidence of pupils' work in the subject was evaluated. In the lesson seen, a group of older pupils making biscuits to their own recipes and designs made very good progress, achieving very well. Resources were very well organised and health and safety issues were given an appropriately high priority. Pupils had learnt mixing techniques well and all successfully completed their tasks. Those pupils designing a health and safety pamphlet for younger pupils, whilst waiting for their turn to carry out the practical work thought hard about the language they should use and the messages they should give. The pace of their work was slower, however, because expectations of what they should complete and of the quality were lower. The very small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language are very well integrated into school life. They make good progress in their language development as well as in design and technology. Pupils relate very well to one another and take the time to explain points to each other.
102. Pupils' work on display indicates that a good range of design and technology activity takes place throughout the school, following the agreed curriculum plan. The use of card, cardboard, paper and junk materials by younger pupils enables them to learn about mechanisms when making opening windows and doors on houses and rotating wheels on vehicles. Older pupils use 'logiblocks' to learn how electronic systems can be made to work, as well as working with food and textiles. They also design and make model fairground rides and shelters.

## **Music**

103. No music lessons were seen during the inspection but during assembly pupils sang well and a group of pupils played flutes and clarinets fluently and to a high standard for their ages. The school has done much to develop music since the last inspection with groups of pupils singing and performing with musical instruments to the local community, and by using visiting musicians. Well-organised musical tuition allows pupils to learn a range of instruments and teacher expertise is used to support music across the school. All classes have timetabled music lessons.

## **Physical education**

104. Planning was examined, and discussions held with pupils and teachers. One very good lesson was observed where the teacher had excellent expertise, tasks were very well graduated, and all pupils were included. This contributed to very good attitudes to learning. Pupils made considerable gains in their bat and ball skills over the course of the lesson. A sports afternoon for the younger pupils was also seen - a very well organised occasion, well supported by parents. The pupils showed good levels of skill for their ages and had very good attitudes to physical education activities. The headteacher's enthusiasm was infectious and everybody enjoyed themselves immensely. A particular feature was a winners' podium after each race, which celebrated success and made the result clear to parents.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE) AND CITIZENSHIP**

105. This curriculum area was sampled through specific lessons in personal, social and health education, and through assemblies and discussions with pupils. The school has ensured that pupils have opportunities to be taught about sex, relationships and how substances, such as drugs, can affect people's lives.
106. In the lessons seen, several pupils were not confident initially, but all participated in the activities and grew in self-esteem. In a very good Year 6 session, pupils learnt how to cope with new friendship groups, preparing them well for their new secondary schools. They learnt to listen carefully and to appreciate others' points of view. In another session, where younger pupils discussed their feelings when they felt safe and unsafe, speaking and listening skills were very well developed. Sensitive questioning led to pupils learning from each other. Well-managed group work supported pupils in developing their social skills.
107. Pupils are involved in their assemblies through responding to questions and by acting out various roles. In an example of very good practice, a group of pupils carried out a short play that showed how working as a team enabled problems to be resolved. The school's mission statement of 'Working together for Success' was apparent in the actions of staff and pupils alike. The work seen showed clearly that much that takes place in the school, in formal lessons and through incidental work, is intended to develop pupils' understanding of citizenship and how important relationships are. They learn to be reflective and to think about what is right and wrong.
108. The involvement of many of the pupils and their parents, as well as staff, in promoting environmentally friendly approaches to work and leisure, and the focus on healthy eating and living, are key elements in the very good citizenship programme the pupils experience.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).*