

INSPECTION REPORT

EPWORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Epworth

LEA area: North Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 117917

Headteacher: Mrs Pat Ward

Lead inspector: Dr Alan Jarvis

Dates of inspection: 8 – 11 March 2004

Inspection number: 256007

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	312
School address:	Birchfield Road Epworth Doncaster South Yorkshire
Postcode:	DN9 1DL
Telephone number:	01427 872345
Fax number:	01427 872123
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Alan Holgate
Date of previous inspection:	8 June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Epworth Primary School is larger than most primary schools. It is the only primary school in the town. Numbers on roll are stable but are expected to grow. There are slightly more boys than girls overall with boys outnumbering girls in the current Years R, 1, 2 and 3 and girls outnumbering boys in Year 5. Overall the pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are broadly average but they range from disadvantaged to fairly affluent. Nearly all pupils are from white British backgrounds. Two pupils are from minority ethnic families, which is very low. No pupils speak English as their second language. The percentage of pupils claiming free school meals is around the national average, although some parents who might claim do not do so. The proportion of pupils designated as having a special educational need is above average. Most of these pupils have needs such as moderate learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and hearing problems which can be tackled with in-class support. Eighteen pupils have been identified as being dyslexic. Four pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need which is also an above average proportion. The percentage of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the normal time is above average, with just under one third of the current Year 6 pupils being in this position. Attainment on entry to the reception class is broadly average, although pupils' mathematical skills are a little weaker. The school achieved the "Healthy Schools", "Basic Skills Quality Mark" and "Investor in People" awards in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2711	Dr Alan Jarvis	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology
13459	Marvyn Moore	Lay inspector	
25623	Mary Marriot	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics
19120	David Townsend	Team inspector	English Religious education Music Special educational needs English as an additional language

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page	
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6	
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS		
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8	
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses		
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities		
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11	
Teaching and learning		
The curriculum		
Care, guidance and support		
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community		
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16	
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES		1748
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE		
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2		
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	28	

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is **not sufficiently effective** and does not give enough value for money. It has been going through a difficult period due to staff illness and changes in staff. Despite many satisfactory and some good features there are serious weaknesses in two major aspects of its work. Firstly, average and more able pupils are not doing as well as they should in Years 3 to 6. Achievement is particularly patchy in mathematics but also to lesser extents in science and English. Not enough teaching is good and some is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6 because of weak planning. Secondly, the senior management team are ineffective despite most other key staff leading their areas well.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The recently appointed, experienced headteacher has brought a breath of fresh air to the school and is effectively tackling the backlog of work that needs to be done.
- The school custodian and the administrative officer make an outstanding contribution to the smooth running of the school and in aiding its development.
- Staff who lead English, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and special educational needs give a strong sense of direction to their work. However, other staff in key roles are not facing up to some important challenges facing the school.
- Inconsistent planning and ineffective setting arrangements in Years 3 to 6 are resulting in teaching being unsatisfactory and too many average and more able pupils underachieving.
- Systems to formally monitor the progress of all pupils and set annual targets are not in place and so not all pupils get the guidance and advice they need to improve.
- Very good procedures are in place to ensure that each pupil works in a safe and healthy environment, feels secure and learns with confidence.
- Children make a good start to the school in the reception classes and achieve well.
- Pupils achieve well in ICT throughout the school because there are very good facilities, including an ICT suite, and the subject is taught and assessed well.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, despite reduced levels of classroom support assistants this year, because work is individually tailored to their needs.
- Good links have been forged with the community and local schools.

The school's improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. With the exception of ICT, standards have not kept pace with those nationally. Signs of underachievement have not been addressed at an early enough stage. The quality of teaching has declined, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Although some positive steps have recently been taken the development of teaching, planning, assessment and the role of subject co-ordinators have received too little attention.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Achievement is unsatisfactory overall. Children in the reception classes are achieving well. They are on course to exceed the goals children are expected to reach in most areas of learning. Pupils achieve satisfactorily by the end of Year 2 but do well in English. Standards in Year 2 are above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Achievement is unsatisfactory by the

end of Year 6, and varies too much in different classes. Standards are on course to be above average in English and are average in all other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. However, many average and more able pupils are underachieving or coasting.

Pupils' personal qualities are satisfactory. Their attitudes are good. Attendance, punctuality, behaviour and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **unsatisfactory**. Teaching and learning are **unsatisfactory**. This is because of weaknesses in planning in Years 3 to 6, particularly in mathematics but also in science and English. In addition, the arrangements for grouping pupils according to their ability (setting) are ineffective in improving standards. In the best lessons seen, teachers assessed pupils' needs well, had high expectations and drew well on the good attitudes of pupils to provide challenging work that was well matched to their individual needs. In the weakest lessons, pupils were engaged in mundane activities and the work was not challenging enough, particularly for the average and more able pupils. Teaching and learning are good in the reception classes and satisfactory by the end of Year 2. The curriculum is unsatisfactory as both mathematical and scientific enquiry need further strengthening. Provision for ICT is good and good, specialist music teaching is provided. Pupils participate well in sporting and artistic activities. Links with the local community, other schools and colleges are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The new headteacher is providing very good leadership. She is already having a positive impact on the leadership and management of the reception classes, English, science, ICT and special educational needs where there is a strong drive for improvement. This drive is lacking in other staff in key positions. In the time available this year less progress has been made in improving teaching, learning and the curriculum, especially for the older pupils. The governance of the school is satisfactory and improving. Statutory requirements are met apart from some missing information in the annual reports issued to parents on their child's achievements and progress. This is easily remedied and there are firm plans to do so.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are generally satisfied with nearly all aspects of the school. However some feel behaviour could be better and would like better information in the annual reports. Pupils feel that some lessons are not interesting or varied enough and that more teachers could show them how to make their work better. Inspectors agree.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Establish as a matter of urgency a better balanced and effective senior management team.
- Put in place more effective arrangements for organising teaching classes in Years 3 to 6 together with more rigorous planning by all teachers so that all groups of pupils achieve well.
- Improve achievement, particularly in mathematics, but also in science and English by improving the curriculum and teaching especially, but not exclusively, in Years 3 to 6.
- Implement a more robust assessment system that systematically sets challenging targets for pupils, regularly tracks their progress and ensure that they make good progress in their learning.

and to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that parents get the information they require on their children's progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is a measure of how well pupils are doing, taking their progress and their capability into account.

Achievement is unsatisfactory overall. Pupils reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6, from average standards on entry. Standards should be higher in the light of the pupils' good attitudes to school, the strong start made in the reception classes and their capabilities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The average and more able pupils underachieve in mathematics and to a lesser extent in science and English in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils make patchy progress in different classes in Years 3 to 6.
- All groups of pupils achieve well in ICT because of the very good facilities and good teaching.
- Children consistently achieve well in the reception classes in most areas of learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good support they receive.

Commentary

1. Achievement is unsatisfactory overall, although the headteacher has started to take some good steps to address the root causes of this. Not enough is expected of pupils in Years 3 to 6. The main reasons for this are that:
 - teachers' planning is inconsistent, insufficiently rigorous and does not ensure that challenging work is given to the average and more able pupils;
 - there is not enough good teaching in Years 3 to 6 with too much being just satisfactory, and so not enough learning proceeds at a good pace;
 - the setting arrangements for English, mathematics and science are not working well enough and having the positive impact that was intended, and;
 - not enough emphasis is given to mathematical investigations in Years 1 to 4 and pupils' scientific enquiry and literacy require lack systematic development through Years 3 to 6.
2. Achievement is also limited because assessment information is insufficiently used to tailor work to individual pupils and set clear targets for learning. This mostly affects the achievement of the average and more able pupils, who often coast or underachieve. In contrast, pupils with special educational needs, including those who are dyslexic, who do well because of the good support and well targeted work they receive. Achievement is also impaired by the greater than average proportion of pupils who join or leave the school during Years 3 to 6. Achievement is boosted by the very good information and communication (ICT) suite, consistently good teaching in this subject and assessment which is used to set well matched work to enable all groups of pupils to do well. The good attitudes of many pupils are a further positive factor, although these are not always capitalised upon.
3. Children achieve well in the reception classes because of the good and sometimes very good or excellent teaching and a rich curriculum. Most children start school with average standards in most areas of the curriculum. By the end of the reception class standards are above average in most areas of learning. They do very well in their creative development. Children do well in their mathematical development but reach average standards because their standards on entry are a little below average. They also do well in some areas of their physical development but overall reach average standards in this area because of limitations in the outdoor accommodation.

The tables shown in this section give average point scores for pupils. Each level in the National Curriculum is given a number of points. Pupils are expected to move on one point every term. So, if a school's points are one point above the national, their pupils are, typically, a term ahead.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.3 (17.1)	15.9 (15.8)
Writing	15.8 (16.6)	14.8 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.2 (17.7)	16.4 (16.5)

There were 50 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Standards have not been rising as fast as they have nationally by the end of Year 2. Over the last three years they have been falling in reading, writing and mathematics, although standards on entry have remained broadly the same. Even so, pupils did well last year in both reading and writing, reaching above average standards. Standards were average in mathematics. Girls have consistently reached high standards than the boys. Standards in the current Year 2 are average overall. The majority of pupils are achieving satisfactorily, but could learn at an even faster pace. Pupils continue to do well in reading and writing where standards remain above average. This is because teaching is good overall and generally planned well. Standards remain average in mathematics and science because of satisfactory teaching and a sound curriculum. Pupils do well in ICT because they use it frequently. A good focus is given to developing keyboard skills and they are reaching average standards. However, a small number of boys underachieve in Year 2 as their challenging behaviour is not always well managed.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.8 (26.9)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.1 (26.3)	27.0 (26.7)
Science	27.3 (28.2)	28.8 (28.3)

There were 53 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Standards in the end of Year 6 tests have also failed to keep pace with the rise in standards nationally and have also been in decline. A closer analysis of data shows that some average and more able pupils have underachieved. Last year, standards were average in both English and mathematics. They were also average when compared with schools which had a similar number of pupils on free school meals. However, they were below average overall because of a poor performance in science where standards continued the recent decline. This coincided with a change in the kind of questions that were set in the tests, which exposed the lack of emphasis given to scientific enquiry and developing pupils' scientific literacy skills during Years 3 to 6. Standards are average in all subjects, except English, where they are above average, as they were for these pupils in this subject at the end of Year 2.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are overall good and their behaviour is satisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good attitudes to school but their independent learning skills are not used to the full.
- Most pupils have good relationships with each other.
- Although attendance is satisfactory it has declined since the last inspection.
- The school's action to promote good attendance is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.8	School data:	0.0
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.

6. Overall, attendance at the school is satisfactory, as is punctuality. However, the action taken to promote good attendance is unsatisfactory. This is because attendance is not monitored on a first day of absence basis. As a result, several days can go by before the school is aware of the reasons for pupils' absence. Some parents do not understand that it is important for their children to attend regularly to achieve well.
7. Most pupils have a good interest in school life and the range of activities provided for them. They are willing to be enterprising and take responsibility, have good attitudes to their work and learn well when encouraged. This was the case in an ICT lesson for Year 3 and 4 pupils where they worked hard in pairs to identify and select computer produced music to link with differing scenarios and demonstrated maturity when discussing the various options open to them.
8. Behaviour in and out of lessons is satisfactory, and could be better. Most students are aware of the school rules and follow them well. However, the behaviour of a small minority of pupils, particularly boys, sometimes adversely affects the learning of others. Where teaching is directed and focused, pupils remain on task and learn well but in some lessons pupils do not concentrate and display silly behaviour. Pupils confirm that they felt that there was very little bullying at the school and parents are confident that the school deals appropriately with the rare instances that arise. There have been no recent exclusions.
9. Good relationships are promoted. Teachers, non-teaching staff and pupils relate very well to each other. This generally has a positive effect on teaching and the progress that pupils make in their learning. Sound procedures are in place to promote the principles to enable pupils to distinguish right and wrong. As a result, pupils have a good appreciation of the responsibilities of living within their community and of cultural traditions. However, they are not given enough opportunities to learn by finding out for themselves or become confident investigators, although they make a good start on this in the reception classes.
10. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to be enterprising and take responsibility. They enjoy membership of the school council, are appointed as school 'buddies', classroom monitors and act as office receptionists. They are pleased to raise money for local charities including "Jeans for genes", the "Royal Society for the Protection of Birds" and "Children in Need".
11. Themed assemblies are held, which are taken by local Methodist and Church of England clergy. Spirituality is also promoted through the sensory garden, which is tended by the pupils themselves and Christmas concerts given by pupils in local churches. There are plans to purchase small pets to give pupils the opportunity of looking after them. Pupils' moral development is promoted through a sound programme for personal, social and health education and time set aside during the school day for pupils to share experiences and

feelings. Some pupils are involved in the local lifestyle project and the whole school is involved in the county “Road Safety” and “Positive Solutions to Behaviour” projects. Pupils make many visits to increase their social awareness including residential visits to Whitby and farm trips. Visiting groups into school include theatre groups. In geography, pupils learn of the lives and cultures of people in other parts of the world and in history study work of Victorian England and the Tudors. Pupils’ cultural development is promoted satisfactorily in a variety of ways across the curriculum and in assemblies. For example, the school celebrates a bi-annual multi-cultural day involving the “Bi-lingual Support Service” of the North Lincolnshire Local Education Authority. In lessons, pupils study the work of Matisse and Picasso and music from a range of cultures is heard in assembly.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is unsatisfactory. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. The statutory curriculum is unsatisfactory. However, there is good enrichment of the curriculum and there are good links with the local community, other primary and secondary schools. Good care is also a strength.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good in the reception classes, satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and unsatisfactory by the end of Year 6; unsatisfactory overall. The quality of assessment of pupils’ work is unsatisfactory overall but good in the reception classes and ICT.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in mathematics and science are unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching is good in most areas of learning in the reception classes and in ICT in Years 1 to 6.
- Classroom support assistants (CSAs) effectively support pupils with special educational needs and this contributes to them achieving well.
- Not enough lessons really challenge pupils to learn at a good rate in Years 1 to 6.
- Sound assessment procedures are in place in most subjects but the information has not yet been consistently developed to give pupils learning targets and ownership of their learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	2 (7%)	10 (33%)	15 (50%)	2 (7%)	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.

- Teaching and learning are not as good as at the last inspection. The recently appointed headteacher has monitored all teachers and has a clear idea of where improvements are needed and some positive steps are now being taken. However, too little attention has been paid to improving planning and assessment over recent years and the senior management team have had too little influence on bringing about improvements.
- Children in the reception classes are provided with a stimulating learning environment in which they can flourish and achieve well. Well established daily routines, thorough planning and assessment of each pupil’s learning needs are collectively used to provide activities which are in tune with pupils’ learning needs and provide good levels of challenge. One excellent lesson was seen in creative development and most other teaching was consistently good.

14. By the end of Year 2, teaching is satisfactory, overall. Most teachers plan thoroughly and have established a positive climate for learning in their classrooms. Pupils enjoy the good relationships that exist. In most lessons seen tasks had sufficient challenge for pupils to learn co-operatively and independently and the pupils enjoyed a varied range of activities. However, not enough teaching really extends pupils thinking and exploits their good attitudes to work.
15. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory by the end of Year 6. A key factor is that planning is not up to scratch as was the case at the last inspection. Teachers have not incorporated national guidance as much as they could have done, especially in literacy and numeracy. Although the school has set out a common system for planning this is not consistently followed. The impact of this is that average and the more able pupils are underachieving because their learning has insufficient pace and challenge and activities are not finely tuned to their level of development. Around one half of teachers do plan well. These use the school's framework and produce well thought out, rigorous plans which results in their teaching being focused on providing varied and interesting lessons with a variety of activities which enable different pupils within their classes to give of their best. Other planning caters much less well for pupils' individual needs and opportunities for pupils to learn independently are frequently missed.
16. Planning in mathematics and science is particularly weak. This is the main reason why teaching and learning in these subjects are unsatisfactory as was evident in the two unsatisfactory lessons seen, in Years 3 to 6. In addition, too little attention is paid to systematically developing investigations in both of these subjects. In contrast, teaching and learning are consistently good in ICT and good specialist music teaching is also provided.
17. Around one half of pupils, mostly the older pupils, say that their lessons lack interest and fun. Around one in five says that they do not have to work hard enough. The pupils say they enjoy lessons which are "hands on", where they do things and where they work as a team. They would like more of these opportunities. The inspectors agree with them. Their main concerns are that too many lessons do not have enough interesting or varied activities, teachers spend too much time talking and they do not always have a clear idea of what they need to do to do well in the lesson. Pupils say their learning in mathematics, suffers most in these respects.
18. Teachers and CSAs make sure pupils with special educational needs are clear about what to do in lessons and they monitor their progress carefully. Close and detailed assessments are made of pupils with specific literacy needs. These learners are supported through the involvement of a local education authority support teacher. Good support is given to those who are dyslexic.
19. Around one in five parents expressed concerns about homework. The pattern of homework set is satisfactory for a primary school of this nature. Teachers are generally following the school's homework policy. Early on, a focus is given to reading and spellings. As pupils get older more homework is progressively set, especially in literacy, numeracy and topic work in other subjects. The headteacher has recently introduced homework books in which pupils set out the work to be done and parents can record any comments they have and so establish a two way communication with teachers. This positive initiative is also helping the headteacher to monitor the homework that is set and ensure the homework policy is being consistently adhered to.
20. Pupils say not enough teachers show them how to make their work better. Inspectors agree. Sound and improving information is now available in all subjects. However, the procedures have not been in place long enough for the data to be consistently used to effectively fine tune activities and set challenging work for all groups of pupils. Some teachers do provide pupils with learning targets, especially in English, through oral discussion. However, there is no formal target setting to identify the level each pupil is expected to reach by the end of each year. Furthermore, there are no formal reviews to ensure that pupils are on track to meet their targets and identify where teachers need to intervene to boost progress. Consequently, pupils do not yet have a consistently clear view of what they need to focus on to achieve well. However, good systems operate in the reception classes and ICT. Here teachers regularly collect, record and

analyse information about what the pupils have achieved and use it effectively to set work that is well matched to their capabilities. Marking is regularly undertaken but this too is inconsistent and insufficiently pinpoints areas where pupils can improve.

The curriculum

The curriculum is unsatisfactory overall, although it is good in the reception classes. Opportunities for enrichment, including extra-curricular activities, are good. The accommodation and resources adequately meet the needs of the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is well planned and provides a rich range of learning activities suitable for this age group.
- The current setting arrangements fragment the learning experience for all pupils and are a cause of underachievement.
- The curriculum provides well for pupils with special educational needs and, despite reduced numbers of CSAs, pupils are effectively included in all activities.
- The good curriculum and very good facilities in ICT ensure pupils achieve well but there are weaknesses in the outdoor area for reception classes and playground environment.
- The school organises a good range of extra-curricular activities especially in sport and music which enrich pupils' experiences.

Commentary

21. Although broad and balanced, the curriculum is unsatisfactory because there are weaknesses in continuity in Years 3 to 6. Further reasons are that investigations in mathematics and science also require further strengthening and the organisation of sets in English, mathematics and science is not working well enough. However, there is a good curriculum in the reception classes. This is because due emphasis is given to the different areas of learning and there is an effective balance between teacher directed and pupil initiated activities. Consequently, children take part in a wide range of planned and carefully structured activities and experiences, which allows them to give of their best. The curriculum is also good in music because of the specialist provision that is provided. The school prepares pupils well for the transition between the reception classes and the start of Year 1 but the underachievement in mathematics and to a lesser extent science and English is impeding them making a good start when they start secondary school.
22. Pupils are placed into sets in English, mathematics and science, especially in Years 3 to 6. Whilst they enable more homogenous teaching groups, there is too much change around for both teachers and pupils and consequently pupils' learning is too fragmented. Teachers have to plan for and know the needs of up to three teaching groups of pupils. The achievement of most pupils who are taught through these arrangements varies too much and there is underachievement particularly in mathematics, but also in science. Overall, the disadvantages of this system outweigh the benefits to learners, particularly the average and more able pupils.
23. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is effectively planned and so pupils are effectively included. These pupils are mostly taught in class and effectively supported by CSAs. However, there is also a very well thought-through pattern of withdrawing groups of pupils, particularly those with specific literacy needs, so that they can follow carefully tailored programmes of learning together. Expertise among the learning support staff team and the involvement of teaching and advice from outside agencies ensure that these programmes are well related to other learning. Individual education plans (IEPS) are well prepared with clear and measurable targets, activities and resources that enable these pupils to achieve their best.
24. The accommodation has improved since the last inspection. There is a very good suite of computers in the school's ICT area, which enables all pupils to gain access to an enriched

curriculum in the subject. Pupils are able to use a wide range of software during the regular timetabled 'hands on' sessions in this room. A computer club is run weekly, further extending pupils' opportunities to improve their individual skills. However, the small size of some classrooms, underdeveloped outdoor accommodation and uneven classroom displays have a negative impact on learning opportunities and the standards achieved.

25. The school organises a good range of extra-curricular activities especially in sport and music which enrich pupils' experiences. Visits to the theatre and places of special interest are organised regularly and provide invaluable experiences of learning at first hand for the pupils. Regular visitors to the school include the road safety team and touring theatre production groups. As well as offering music tuition in several instruments, the school runs a mini-orchestra which includes pupils playing brass, woodwind, percussion and strings. There are frequent performance opportunities for pupils, who are often asked to take part in plays, musicals and shows both in Epworth and at the South Axholme secondary school. Pupils participate in local sports leagues as well as 'sports days' with local primary schools.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides good care for pupils. Very good procedures are in place to ensure pupils work in a healthy and safe environment. The provision of support and guidance based on monitoring is unsatisfactory overall. The school's arrangements for involving pupils in its work are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment data is not used rigorously enough to set individual targets and to give pupils the guidance they need to improve.
- Induction arrangements for pupils are good and very good in the reception classes.
- The school is pro-active in seeking pupils' views and taking action.

Commentary

26. Staff are successful in providing a safe and caring environment for all pupils. Child protection procedures are good. The child protection co-ordinator is up to date in her training and has ensured that all other members of staff follow the correct procedures. There are good arrangements for the recording of accidents and incidents. Most teaching staff are qualified in basic first aid and a number of support staff have more specialist training.
27. Regular inspections are made of the school premises and the health and safety committee ensures that risk assessment is carried out in all school departments and for all school visits. The fire alarm is tested on a weekly basis and regular fire drills are held. The school has good liaison with external agencies including the Education Welfare Service.
28. Overall, the support and guidance for pupils' academic and personal development is not good enough. Assessment arrangements are not consistently applied across the school and most pupils do not receive well targeted support to help them improve their work. Staff know pupils well and use their knowledge to guide their personal development but this is only monitored informally. The headteacher has identified both these areas as a priority for development.
29. Induction arrangements for pupils are very good in the reception classes and good in the rest of the school. Home visits are carried out by reception teachers and nursery nurses and pre-school groups are visited by staff. Children come into school for two visits prior to starting school and a phased start has been arranged where pupils attend mornings only for a short time. A starter pack is provided for parents of new pupils including a useful information booklet and parents are free to stay with their children in the first few days of their school life. Good links with local nurseries and playgroups are also established.

30. Staff are pro-active in involving pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views. Pupils are able to give their views on various aspects of school life through regular discussions with their teachers. The recently formed "school council", to which pupils from each year group are elected, is proving a useful vehicle for obtaining pupils' views.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links and partnerships with parents are satisfactory. Links with the community and other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Some parents are rightly concerned about lack of communication about pupils' progress.
- Any concerns or complaints are dealt with effectively.
- The school's good links with the community and other schools and colleges are used well to promote learning.

Commentary

31. Links with parents and home-school partnerships are satisfactory. The majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire thought were comfortable in approaching the school with any questions, problems or complaints. A significant minority thought that they were not kept well informed about how their children were getting on. The inspection team agrees with the positive views expressed and also agrees in part with parents' concerns about communication about their children's progress.
32. The school provides three parent evenings per annum where parents can see either the class or headteacher. One of the three meetings recently introduced is structured in an informal way. In addition private meetings can be arranged for parents to see all teachers if they wish to discuss their children's progress further. These are more than is required. Annual reports on pupils' progress are issued but the information on the last set of reports issued before the current headteacher took up post, did not give a clear indication of what pupils had studied, the progress made and targets for improvements. The headteacher has firm plans to improve the quality of reports in the coming year. Regular newsletters are sent to parents giving informative information about events which the school is promoting. The school brochure and annual governors' report to parents are well prepared and contain all the required information.
33. A small number of parents come into school to support pupils' reading, help with music, school trips and sports days and where they do so, their help is much valued by the school. A weekly paired reading scheme, where parents come into school to read with their children, is particularly successful and is effective in promoting the pupils' reading skills. The parent-teachers association is an enthusiastic body of parents who hold regular social functions and raise much appreciated funds for school use.
34. Good procedures are in place for the transfer of pupils to the next stage of their education. Good induction arrangements are made where Year 6 pupils visit the secondary school to meet staff and meetings are held in the summer term between the staff and secondary teachers to discuss transfer arrangements. Secondary dance and music teachers visit to give lessons and the secondary special education needs co-ordinator attends the annual review of Year 6 pupils who have statements of special educational needs. A good example of the good links which have been developed is the "able pupils" programme where a number of pupils in Years 3 to 6 undertake a range of extended activities with similar pupils from other local primary schools.
35. Links with the community are good and the school uses the community as a resource to extend pupils learning. Pupils perform maypole dancing in the community and regularly sing in the local Wesleyan Church. Visitors into school include the local police, fire and rescue service, church ministers and a wide variety of local speakers including artists and theatre groups.

Pupils raise money for local charities such as the local Hospice and provide harvest festival gifts for senior citizens. They also perform at the local community "strawberry tea" and each year a pupil is selected to switch on the "Epworth Christmas lights".

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall, despite serious weaknesses in the effectiveness of the senior management team and leadership in mathematics. The governance of the school is satisfactory and improving. All statutory requirements are met apart from some missing, but easily remedied, information in the annual reports issued on children's achievements and progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new headteacher is providing very good leadership and tackling the backlog of work that needs to be done to tackle weaknesses and drive standards forward.
- There are serious weaknesses in the composition and effectiveness of the senior management team.
- The school custodian and administrative officer make an outstanding contribution to the smooth running of the school and in aiding its development.
- Some subject leaders are giving a good lead to their subjects but the leadership and management of mathematics is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

36. The school has been through a difficult period due to illness of the previous headteacher, the retirement of an experienced deputy headteacher and other staff changes. These have markedly restricted the pace of developments. As a result, pupils have not been doing as well as they should have been. The new, very experienced headteacher has extremely wisely spent some time during her first term formulating a good plan for further development. As a result of a thorough review of the school she knows what needs to be done to arrest and reverse the decline of recent years and move the school forward. Her analysis of the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to move the school forward are closely aligned to the judgements of this inspection. However, a number of positive changes have been introduced. Staff and governors have been empowered to undertake their work more effectively and have secured the commitment of most to the changes that are needed. A well thought out school development plan is now in place, data is being analysed much more effectively, a clear staff development programme has been established and targets for staff are much more aligned to the priorities of the school. However, the headteacher has not yet had the time to make the necessary impact on the curriculum and teaching. As one governor said: "She has brought a much needed breath of fresh air and we are fully behind her!"
37. The senior management team is ineffective. There are several reasons for this. The acting deputy headteacher has been unable to be in school for a number of months. The other members of the team have not had the training they need to have the necessary influence in developments. They also have a too rosy a picture of how well the school is doing which clouds their view of what really needs to be done to move the school forward. The headteacher has inherited a structure which does not include representation from important areas such as the Foundation Stage or special educational needs and therefore discussions within the team are more limited than they need to be. The roles and responsibilities of the team, although developing, lack clarity and purpose. This aspect of leadership and management is a key barrier to pupils realising their full potential.
38. The governing body are in transition. However, there is a good core of experienced and new governors who are providing the support and challenge needed by the new headteacher to move the school forward. Their work is improving. Roles have been clarified and all governors now have a clear link to members of staff. They have thoroughly debated performance data and

are closely involved in formulating the school development plan. Policies are up to date, reflect the school's needs and are enacted. Through their committee work, visits and reports governors are increasingly holding the school to account for the standards achieved. New governors have been inducted well and are getting the training they need to play a full role.

Example of outstanding practice

The contribution made to the smooth running of the school and its development by the school custodian and administrative officer is excellent.

The roles and contributions of the school custodian and administrative officer extend far beyond their normal duties. For example, the school custodian also acts as the ICT technician and, helps co-ordinate the subject and has ensured considerable developments have taken place in ICT since the last inspection. In addition, he has been at the centre of overseeing the recent addition of two new classrooms, new administrative areas, the new library and extending the playground. The administrative officer works also works very closely with the headteacher and with extreme efficiency manages many day-to-day matters and ensures the school runs very smoothly. She also works extremely closely with the friends of the school, manages the music peripatetic staff and organises the annual summer concert. The administrative officer has ensured that finances are scrupulously maintained and there are many examples of her securing the very best value in all expenditure. Both are governors and are on the finance committee. Their contribution has resulted in a deficit budget being turned around and the finances now being on an even footing. They make an extremely important contribution to governors' meetings and have an extremely clear view of where improvements are needed. They are backing the new headteacher to the hilt.

39. Provision for special educational needs is effectively led and managed. Although the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is relatively new to his role, he liaises closely with the visiting support teacher to ensure provision for these pupils is well organised and implemented by staff with good expertise. Consequently, pupils access the full curriculum and are becoming more confident learners. Over recent years relatively little has been done to develop the effectiveness of subject co-ordinators, even though it was identified as a weakness at the last inspection. There has been a sea change in the priority given to this in the last two terms. More responsibility has been delegated to these key staff. The headteacher is empowering them to undertake their roles and more training is in place to enable to increase their effectiveness. Most staff have responded very positively and those who lead the reception classes, English, science and ICT are showing a good lead and starting to manage their areas with more rigour. Leadership and management of other subjects are satisfactory and gradually being strengthened. However, both the leadership and management of mathematics remain unsatisfactory as too little is being done to improve teachers' planning or the curriculum.
40. Financial control is very good and diligent attention is paid to ensuring that the school's purchases of goods and services represent good value. Money related to special grants such as building improvements and upgrading of ICT facilities is spent very well. The governors have now ensured a balanced budget is in place. However, the school does not give enough value for money because it is insufficiently effective on below average expenditure.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	686,944	Balance from previous year	11,522
Total expenditure	699,747	Balance carried forward to the next	-1,281
Expenditure per pupil	2,286		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the reception classes is good overall. Consequently, children make a strong start to school life. The area is well led and managed. Standards and quality have improved since the

last inspection. Children enter the reception classes with attainment that is average in most areas of learning, although their mathematical skills are a little weaker. They achieve well in most areas of learning because there is an effective curriculum and teaching and learning are consistently good and sometimes very good or excellent. There is a good blend of child initiated and teacher directed activities. In addition the different areas of learning are integrated and therefore reinforce each other. A good system of assessment is in place which is effectively used to give each child work that interests and challenges them. During the inspection week all areas of learning were developed around the theme of nursery rhymes and traditional stories. Children enter the reception classes in September in the year in which they are five years old. Before then, most children have attended local play groups and private nursery provision. Children are inducted very well into the reception classes. They make regular visits to the school before they start full time in September. This helps them to get to know where they are going and who their teachers are and to settle quickly into school life.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for personal, social and emotional education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are on course to reach above average standards by the end of the reception classes and achieve well because teaching is consistently good.
- There are very positive relationships in both reception classes.
- All adults provide very good role models which helps to set a positive tone.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to develop independence in their work.

Commentary

41. The effective teaching and learning in this area of learning are based on adults' very high expectations of politeness and good behaviour that are constantly reinforced. The children feel safe and secure. They very quickly learn to abide by class rules and follow routines. Children's independence moves forward very well, as does their confidence and ability to work and play alongside others. The teachers and other adults have created a warm, welcoming and stimulating atmosphere in which young children respond quickly when gathered together on the carpet. When they set off on their tasks, they show interest and share resources. Children play happily with the stimulating activities in the classrooms, and are careful to change activities for themselves. They learn to tidy away the things that they have used with a minimum of fuss.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching ensures the children learn through well structured learning activities and reach above average standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing.
- Creative play areas are used well to promote learning.
- Many parents help their children to read at school and at home.

Commentary

42. Children achieve well in this areas of learning. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and organise very exciting activities that motivate them. Children listen attentively to stories and join in excitedly when their teachers ask them to. The use of the traditional story of "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" stimulates their imagination and this develops their speaking and listening skills well. Adults devote time to encouraging children's speaking and listening skills and to develop and extend their vocabulary. Children

practise the sounds of words well and this helps them to write new words. Adults take time and care to provide children with many opportunities to learn to write. The development of reading skills has a high priority. This is well supported by parents as they come into school to take part in "paired reading sessions" with their child. Children become confident in handling books and have a different sound to learn each week. Some children have already embarked on a systematic reading scheme and are making good progress with their reading.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good planning ensures that children have many activities to support their learning.
- Children achieve well in this area of learning because of good teaching and most are on course to reach average standards from a slightly lower point on entry to the school.

Commentary

43. Children develop their counting and ordering skills well. The use of traditional stories, such as "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" reinforces children's learning skills well. To reinforce counting skills children sing "When Goldilocks went to the house of the Bears". They learn to put sets of teddies into order of size and this effectively reinforces their mathematical vocabulary. Other children set out a picnic table with appropriate size of bowl, spoon and cup for the three bears to use. Children extend and develop their skills well as they investigate making a bed for the three bears using a range of small construction equipment. The very good links with creative development helped children to see the links in their learning. Group activities relate well to number work as well as to a range of activities children can choose from. Mathematical language is emphasised and is well woven into everyday activities as adults support children in their learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good balance of teacher led and child initiated activities which enrich the curriculum and children's learning experiences and enable the children to achieve well.

Commentary

44. Teaching is good in this area of learning and the curriculum is very good. Children are on course to reach above average standards. In one excellent lesson seen children used their senses as they 'tasted' the porridge that they made and the teacher had cooked for them. As they tasted they decided whether or not they liked the porridge. The activity also developed children's speaking, listening and thinking skills well as they discussed with the teacher the ingredients used to make the porridge and how it can be cooked. Sequencing skills were enhanced as children helped to measure the ingredients in the correct order, as they helped to make it. The teacher talked about safety and helped the children to begin to understand the changes that occur during cooking. This activity was supported in the classroom as many other related activities took place, for example children could choose from making porridge in the water bath using dry porridge oats. They used water and spoons to investigate the dry porridge oats and looked at the changes that occurred when water is added to them. Other children used "small, medium and large" bowls, spoons and pans as they made porridge for the three bears.

45. Children are starting to use a computer independently with increasing confidence as they develop their skills using the mouse, arrow keys and space bar. A programmable toy which children can instruct to move in various ways is well used to develop a sequence of movement and direction. This also helps children with their development of mathematical skills. They learn to draw a picture of a bear and build a house-tent using the arrow keys.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children acquire the skills needed for writing, painting and using small tools correctly.
- Children make larger movements with increasing confidence and control.
- The outdoor area is small, is not covered and children are unable to use it all of the time.

Commentary

46. Teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory overall. However, children's achievement in the use of small tools is good. They use skills appropriately when they paint, and join objects together. By using pencils and crayons regularly children improve their ability to form letters and numerals. Adults do not intervene too quickly when children have difficulty in manipulating materials but guide them to practise their skills and enhance their learning. In the hall, children use space well and develop their skills of travelling with a bean bag on their head, foot and elbow. They develop skills further as they control their aim as they throw the bean bag to a marker on the floor as they play the 'planets' game. The sound teaching here helps children build on their skills and use space well as they move their bodies. They extend as develop these skills as they use the wheeled toys outside. However, outdoor activities- cannot be provided all through the year, which limits the time available for pupils' physical development. Standards are therefore average overall but most children will attain the expected goals in this area.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because of very good teaching.
- There is a very good range of exciting learning activities provided.
- Adults are very involved in well-structured role-play.

Commentary

47. Children develop their skills very well and make very good progress. The very good and some excellent teaching by all adults ensured that children have a very good understanding of their learning. Children express their feelings through a range of very good materials, media, music and movement and story making and imaginative play. In the reception classes, children are surrounded by a wealth of stimulating display of their work. The use of colour and different textures stimulates children to produce high quality painting and collage work. The range of activities is excellent, centred around the traditional story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Children happily 'hunt the bear' in an exciting collage representing the story of 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt'. There are construction toys to enable them to make a bed for the bears, sand to make porridge, and a three bears' cottage so that they can engage in imaginative play in which they take on different roles, and their play is sustained by good quality props. Adults expect

children to look carefully at anything they are going to draw and children used their observational skills very effectively to draw and paint their teddy bears. These activities are very well planned and adults are skilled at stepping in at just the right moment to extend children's ideas and spoken language. Children join in enthusiastically with traditional rhymes and songs with actions; they enjoy listening to music and respond well.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 6 but achievement is satisfactory overall.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and achieve well.
- Levels of challenge and support in lessons need to be improved to better reflect the different levels of ability within classes.
- Leadership of the subject has been good to date but management systems need to be more rigorous in order to ensure more consistent practices across the school.

Commentary

48. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection, but standards could be higher. Standards are above average by Years 2 and 6. Achievement is good by the end of Year 2 as these pupils entered with average standards and are taught well. Achievement from the end of Year 2 to the end of Year 6 is satisfactory because this year group reached above average standards by Year 2 and because the teaching of older pupils is of a more variable quality. Boys do slightly better than girls in Years 1 and 2 but do less well by the end of Year 6 and are losing ground over time. Pupils with special educational needs generally achieve well.
49. By the end of Year 2 standards are above average in reading, writing, speaking and listening, because teaching is good overall. Pupils can read a variety of texts with understanding, often with fluency and expression. They can employ alphabetical knowledge by Year 2 and have a range of other reading strategies. Pupils can listen at length and talk confidently with an increasing vocabulary, which is extended well through good teaching. Their writing, in a range of text styles, develops ideas carefully, shows a good command of vocabulary and is well punctuated and organised. The pupils enjoy regular opportunities to write at length and the more able are suitably challenged to extend their skills further.
50. By the end of Year 6 standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing remain above average. Teaching is satisfactory by the end of Years 6 with most teaching being sound rather than good. Some pupils, including the more able, are not always sufficiently challenged by the work set for them. Consequently, progress is uneven in the different classes in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the curriculum and National Literacy Strategy and consequently lessons are well structured. In Year 6 pupils' writing is carefully marked and good advice is given to individuals about how to improve their work.
51. There are three key reasons that explain why teaching is not yet good in Years 3 to 6 and pupils are achieving satisfactorily, rather than well in this age range. The setting arrangements, whilst facilitating more homogenous teaching groups, are not fully effective. Teachers do not yet sufficiently link their planning to the information gained through assessment about what each pupil can and cannot do. As a result the tasks set in lessons to different groups of pupils and individuals, although enabling most to work productively do not provide the challenge that would enable them to consistently achieve well in lessons. Secondly, targets are not set with pupils as

to how they might improve their own writing and so pupils' self-evaluation skills are not fully promoted. Finally, the teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling is not always sufficiently linked to pupils' own writing and engaging texts. Activities in some classes are often over-reliant on published materials which focus on skills but do not then enable pupils to apply and link them together to produce high quality work. In addition, teacher inputs do not promote pupil dialogue sufficiently well and, consequently, pupils' enthusiasm for learning wanes at times.

52. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs are well supported by an effective team of CSAs. Pupils with specific learning needs have been carefully assessed and are supported in small groups through specific and effectively modified teaching programmes. As a result these pupils achieve well.
53. Leadership in the subject has been good to date. Much formal and informal support has been given to staff to ensure that teachers feel confident in teaching each aspect of the literacy framework which is now fully implemented in a developmental way. The co-ordinator has led colleagues in assessing pupils' work together and the staff are now clear about the attainment of pupils in their class in both reading and writing. However, more still needs to be done to make use of those assessments and so secure consistently good teaching. Lesson observations are not conducted systematically enough in order for areas for development to be identified and explored. Systems for pupil assessment and the tracking of pupil progress, although satisfactory, are not yet rigorous enough.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. Teachers make satisfactory links to other curriculum areas. For instance, in Year 2, ICT was used by pupils investigating word meanings. In religious education, texts which extend pupils' understanding of faith stories and rites of passage are well selected.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Too high a proportion of average and more able pupils coast or underachieve because lessons are not planned well enough and teaching is inconsistent.
- Although a good emphasis is given to mathematical investigations in Years 5 and 6, practical mathematics is underdeveloped in other years.
- Assessment information is not used accurately enough to set individual targets for pupils although pupils with special educational needs are well catered for.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

55. Unsatisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection as not enough has been done to sustain and improve provision and standards. By the end of Years 2 and 6 standards are average but should be higher. Achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 2 but unsatisfactory by the end of Year 6; unsatisfactory overall.
56. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. In lessons seen the teachers' secure knowledge of mathematics, constructive relationships and clear planning resulted in a satisfactory climate for learning. However, in the Year 2 class, although learning was predominantly satisfactory the lack of a CSA had a negative impact on the pace of learning for the above average number of pupils with behavioural difficulties in this class.

57. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6, although some good teaching was seen in a minority of classes. The degree of underachievement is more marked in this subject than in science and English. This because little has been done to track pupils' progress and intervene when needed. Planning is also much weaker for a number of reasons. Different teachers do not always make it clear to pupils what they are going to learn. Consequently, learning sometime lacks a good focus and is not as brisk as it should be. The activities provided lack variety and challenge, and are too dull, and so pupils do not consistently learn new things in interesting ways. This is particularly so for the average and more able pupils, who are given work which is often too easy for them, although pupils with special educational needs are well catered for. Assessment information, although regularly obtained throughout the year, is not used well enough in planning to set learning targets to act as a spur to learning and enable progress to be tracked. Although pupils bring good attitudes to their work these are not always fully exploited and capitalise upon their good, independent learning skills. Whilst marking is done regularly, there are too few comments to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve.
58. In Years 5 and 6, teachers give a good emphasis to mathematical investigations, which helps develop pupils problem solving and mathematical thinking skills. Pupils collaborate well and enjoy solving different problems. However, in earlier years standards in practical mathematics are unsatisfactory because pupils do not understand what they have to do and lack confidence when working together.
59. The joint managers do not have a complete overview of the subject across the school. Consequently, they do not have a clear view of how standards and achievement should be improved. Management and organisation of grouping for mathematics is not working as well as it should, because work is not tailored to the needs of individual pupils within the set.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. The development of mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding through other subjects is unsatisfactory. For example, in science pupils display data in charts and graphs. However, these sometimes lack precision with older pupils joining up the points in graphs rather than drawing a line of best fit. However, some good links are evident, such as in ICT, where older pupils engage in data handling. Opportunities tend to occur coincidentally rather than as part of systematic planning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils now undertake more scientific investigations but teachers do not have a clearly set out plan of how to progressively build up a spirit of scientific enquiry through Years 1 to 6.
- The work given to pupils is pitched so that learning is productive but it is not finely tuned enough enable all groups of pupils to consistently achieve well.
- Teachers emphasise the key facts and ideas pupils need to know but their knowledge of the subject is sometimes inaccurate and leads to pupils making mistakes.
- A good and varied range of scientific writing is encouraged but pupils are not always secure when writing or explaining their predictions, explanations and descriptions.

Commentary

61. Unsatisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection. Since then standards have mostly been broadly average, although in the last two years they have been much lower than they should have been. This was because teachers focused too heavily on teaching the pupils facts and ideas at the expense of how to plan, carry out and make sense of scientific

investigations. Good steps have been put in place this year to remedy the situation. As a result the decline has started to be reversed but has not yet been fully addressed. Standards are average by the end of Years 2 and 6 but could be higher.

62. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Most pupils are achieving satisfactorily. In lessons seen, pupils tested a range of materials and recorded in a prepared table whether the materials could be bent, squashed, twisted or stretched. Both lessons had a good emphasis on scientific vocabulary and learning through first-hand activities. However, although learning was productive it lacked good pace and challenge and a few boys in Year 2 did not learn to their full capabilities.
63. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. Achievement is unsatisfactory, although the proportion who are underachieving is less than last year and a little less marked than in mathematics. Good, satisfactory and unsatisfactory teaching was seen and so pupils make patchy progress in different classes. Some teachers are planning their lessons well, pitching the work well to the set they are teaching and tailoring challenging work to the individual needs of pupils. For example, in an upper ability set in Year 5, the class were trying to solve the problem of how to separate a mixture of sand, salt and water. The teacher's clear introduction, emphasis on enquiry and good focus on key vocabulary enabled the pupils to work effectively with initiative. She also provided a variety of well structured worksheets which were successful in challenging and helping pupils of different abilities within the set to write more scientifically. Planning was weaker in the two other lessons seen with the older pupils as it did not clearly set out a range of interesting activities and challenges which were well tuned to the needs of individual pupils. Although the lessons were helped by the good attitude of the pupils, learning was too mundane and proceeded with too little pace. Teachers stress the key facts and ideas that pupils need to acquire but have some misconceptions themselves, such as what are the correct symbols for electrical components or how gravity acts, which are passed onto pupils. Some teachers are starting to widen the range of scientific writing undertaken by the pupils but as yet there is no well thought through policy on how this should be developed.
64. The curriculum is improving but remains insufficiently developed. This is because it is not yet rich, varied and challenging enough to consistently ensure good achievement. Pupils are generally learning the right things at the right time. A better emphasis is now being given to scientific enquiry. Pupils say they like the increased emphasis on practical work. However, teachers do not have a clear enough idea of how investigations should be progressively developed, year by year, in a way that places a spirit of enquiry at the heart of the curriculum. Separate nature and science clubs help enrich the curriculum as does an improved, computer based, revision scheme which is in place in Year 6.
65. The subject is now being led well. The co-ordinator has clearly analysed the reasons for the decline in standards and has taken effective action to arrest and reverse the trend. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and a clear understanding of how the subject should now develop. Management is satisfactory. Much good work has been undertaken this year, and this is starting to have a positive impact. The science policy has been enhanced and classes are now taught in one hour rather than two hour sessions. However, she has had less impact on improving the quality of teaching. Although assessment procedures are being strengthened the information is not used well to give pupils challenging targets and the guidance needed to help pupils reach these.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is very well led and well managed.

- Good teaching is helping pupils to achieve well in all years and standards rising rapidly.
- Assessment information is used well to set challenging work for individual pupils.
- There is a very good computer suite, and good use is made of the Internet and e-mail.
- More use could be made of ICT in all subjects of the National Curriculum.

Commentary

66. Very good improvement has been made since the last inspection. Standards were then below average and pupils did not reach the standards they ought to have done. Pupils are now reaching average standards. All groups of pupils are achieving well by the end of Years 2 and 6.
67. Good strides forward have been made, particularly in the last two years. The main reason why achievement is higher is that there has been a considerable financial investment in ICT. This has enabled a very good ICT suite to be built and above average numbers of computers to be purchased. However, more use could be made of other equipment such as digital cameras, videos and tape recorders. Achievement has also risen because the subject is better co-ordinated and training has ensured that teachers now have the confidence to teach the subject effectively. Pupils have some time each week in which dedicated ICT skills are taught. Standards are rising very quickly. However, they are not yet above average because most pupils have not had the full benefit of better teaching and improved facilities for their full time in school. ICT clubs and revision programmes for Year 6 pupils in English, mathematics and science are also boosting achievement. However, the full impact of the measures taken has yet to be felt.
68. Good attention is paid to ensuring that all aspects of the ICT curriculum are covered well. Word-processors, spreadsheets and databases are prominently used. Pupils control floor turtles but insufficient use is made of sensors in science to monitor the physical environment. Good use is made of the Internet for research and pupils regularly correspond through e-mail.
69. Teaching is good in all year groups in the ICT suite. A key factor here is that a good assessment scheme is in place which helps teachers set challenging work to individual pupils and provide the extra support when this is needed. Consequently, pupils have a zest for the subject, approach it enthusiastically and use time to the full in lessons. The interactive whiteboard in the ICT suite is effectively used to demonstrate specific skills to pupils and there are firm plans to increase the number of interactive whiteboards in classrooms. A strong emphasis is placed in Years 1 and 2 in developing pupils' keyboard skills. This pays off later on and can be seen in the speed with which many pupils work. Teaching in later years enables pupils to work independently and successfully. In good lessons seen, Year 5 and 6 pupils used a "maths invaders" programme to solve a variety of number problems and interrogated a data base to find out which holiday best suited the needs of a variety of customers.
70. Leadership of the subject is very good and management is good. Responsibilities are shared between the co-ordinator and school custodian who work very well together. There is a very clear plan for the future. Very useful reports to governors ensure they are kept fully informed of developments. Pupils' work is scrutinised to help provide an overview of standards. Although teaching is monitored informally there is no clear programme for monitoring teaching and giving clear guidance to staff on what they need to do to make their teaching better.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. Satisfactory use is made of ICT across the curriculum. Pupils regularly use computers in the ICT suite to support work in English and recently extra time has been provided for mathematics. There has also been a steady increase in the use of ICT in science, geography, history and music. However, developments are impaired by the lack of suitable software in some subjects but are being supported by introduction of additional computers into each classroom.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected in full and is reported on below. No lessons were seen in history. However, the subject was sampled through a discussion with the co-ordinator, planning and work on display around the school. Geography is not reported upon.

72. In **history**, more secure coverage of the curriculum has been put in place since the last inspection because national guidance is consistently used to guide planning. Pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are systematically built on, year by year, and as a result standards are average. A good range of visits, such as to Normanby Hall and Conisborough Castle and guest speakers help to enrich the curriculum and bring the subject alive. Limited opportunities are provided to use the Internet for research but there are firm plans to use this valuable resource more. Resources are adequate but not all topics are well resourced.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Visits, visitors and the use of religious artefacts and texts help to bring the subject to life for pupils.
- The subject is soundly led but there are areas of management which require development.

Commentary

73. Overall satisfactory improvement has been made since the previous inspection and standards have been sustained. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach the standards expected by the North Lincolnshire local authority agreed syllabus. Achievement is satisfactory.
74. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. This satisfactorily promotes pupils' understanding about religious concepts through an exploration of their own life experiences. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, for instance, acquire knowledge and understanding of key themes such as "People and Worship" and "Faith Stories" through their comparison of Hinduism and Christianity. In one lesson seen, religious artefacts were used to bring learning alive for the pupils. Key symbolic aspects of the Hindu naming ceremony and the baptism rite of passage within Christianity were re-enacted for the pupils in order for them to reflect upon the significance of the rituals.
75. In Years 5 and 6, pupils explore key issues about their own and others' identity and experience of life through the study of themes such as the nature of religious communities and through faith stories and their underlying messages. Lessons in class are closely linked to a systematic programme of collective worship. These assemblies are enriched by a range of visitors to the school, including faith leaders from within the local community, whose talks to the pupils are motivational and offer pupils insight into the liturgies and symbols of the Christian faith. Good links are made with literacy as teachers share stories which enable them to explore pupils' knowledge of key beliefs and teachings in different faiths as well as the pupils' sense of their own values and commitments. However, lesson planning, although generally sound is not yet sufficiently focused on pupils' individual needs. Lessons are sometimes overdirected by the teachers and so pupils who are less confident in participating in whole-class discussions do not always receive tailored support in order to develop and express their views.
76. The subject is soundly led and managed and this has ensured a satisfactory curriculum is in place. However, as yet, there have been few opportunities for the joint co-ordinators to monitor teaching and learning and so ascertain a clear picture of standards across the school.

Assessment procedures are currently underdeveloped and so teachers are not yet adapting planning so as to best meet the needs and challenge of all pupils.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

There was not enough evidence to report on any of these subjects in full. However, two music lessons were seen and the school band was observed playing together. Although no teaching was seen in art and design, samples of pupils' work were viewed and the views of the co-ordinators were also sought. Design and technology and physical education are not reported upon.

77. **Music** teaching across the school is mainly, but not primarily, taught by subject specialists. This, along with the continued emphasis placed upon offering the high number of pupils who learn musical instruments regular opportunities to play together and to perform, ensures that the subject remains high profile in the school. Pupils can learn brass, strings, percussion and woodwind in school and apply and extend their learning in the school band. This group of able musicians was observed during the inspection and pupils were able to read from standard notation with confidence, maintain their own parts within a piece and play in time accurately. Overall, these pupils achieved above average standards in terms of their playing, because of good specialist teaching. The school also runs two choirs, one for Year 3 and 4 pupils and one for those in Year 5 and 6. For these pupils, this opportunity promotes a love of singing and results in some confident and expressive renditions. As a school, the singing in assemblies is tuneful and in time. Pupils frequently perform using their musical instruments in assembly. Pupils very much enjoy exploring sound in lessons and are able to develop their own compositions with skill. Satisfactory improvement has been maintained since the last inspection because the very good extra-curricular provision for this subject has been well maintained.
78. **Art and design** teaching in the school closely follows the nationally published schemes of work for the subject. An after-school art club is run for interested pupils which has explored techniques involved with painting in water colours. By Year 2, some pupils have explored composition work when drawing, investigated portraiture and used viewfinders successfully to develop their understanding of form. They have experimented with a variety of mediums such as pastels and colouring pencils to explore different elements such as colour, texture and pattern. By Year 6, some pupils are capable of very detailed portraits of animals, explorations of human facial features and body movements. Standards seen in these samples of work were above average.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was sampled.

79. No full lessons were observed so no overall judgement on teaching can be made. Sex-education, and drugs use and abuse, are taught in line with the policy of the governing body. The police, fire and rescue service, the road safety team and school nurse make a valuable contribution to the curriculum. There are firm plans to further develop this area of the curriculum.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	5
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	5

Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	5

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4

The quality of education provided by the school	5
The quality of teaching	5
How well pupils learn	5
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	5
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	5
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	4

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