

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **NORTH HYKEHAM LING MOOR PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Lincoln

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120397

Headteacher: Mrs J Marston

Lead inspector: Mr P H Cole

Dates of inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> June 2004

Inspection number: 257040

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:	253
School address:	Richmond Drive North Hykeham Lincoln Lincolnshire
Postcode:	LN6 8QZ
Telephone number:	01522 682602
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs P Hughes
Date of previous inspection:	April 2002

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

North Hykeham Ling Moor is an average size primary school with 253 pupils on roll. Overall there are similar numbers of boys and girls in the schools although the proportion of boys and girls varies considerably from year group to year group. The children come from a wide range of social backgrounds that are average overall. Almost all the pupils are white and all speak English as their main language. Slightly fewer pupils than usual have special educational needs and these are mainly concerned with learning difficulties. Children enter the reception class with slightly better than average attainment in their language and mathematical skills. The school achieved Investors in People status earlier this year and in 2003 gained an achievement award for its improved test scores.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2616	P H Cole	Lead inspector	Science, information and communication technology and art and design
14141	E Marshall	Lay inspector	
32827	J Marshall	Team inspector	English, design and technology, music and physical education
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school that has successfully addressed previous underachievement and is continuing to improve at a good pace. Standards are above average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory but improving because of effective teaching and strong leadership and management. The school provides good value for money

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils are attaining above expectations in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and in information and communications technology (ICT). They are now achieving satisfactorily overall and well in ICT.
- Teaching is good, particularly in the reception classes and in Years 4 to 6, and together with very effective assessment supports well the good progress that pupils are now making.
- Pupils are well cared for and benefit from the very strong links the school enjoys with parents and local schools.
- Leadership is good and management is very effective. The headteacher is very capable and is at the heart of the drive to make the school better.
- Although pupils write well, their finished work is often careless and is not as well presented as it could be.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. Standards have risen and all pupils are achieving better, including the higher attainers who had been judged to be capable of more. Teaching is stronger and leadership and management are effectively improving the quality of the school's provision and driving up standards.

### 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	B	C	D
mathematics	E	B	A	B
science	D	B	A	C

*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.*

**Pupils currently achieve satisfactorily overall.** The Year 6 test results in English in 2003 were disappointing because fewer pupils than expected gained the higher level 5. Over the last three years results have improved faster than they have in schools nationally. Standards are above national expectations in English, mathematics and science by the Year 6. Pupils, including the more able, now achieve satisfactorily in most aspects of English but weaknesses still persist across the school in their writing, as spelling and presentation are often careless. By Year 6 pupils achieve well in mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT), religious education and design and technology. Standards are above national expectations in English and mathematics by Year 2 and in line with them in science. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in these subjects given their starting points. As in Year 6, Year 2 pupils achieve well in design and technology and religious education. Achievement is satisfactory in the remaining subjects of the curriculum from Years 1 to 6. Children in the reception classes are achieving very well in all areas of learning.

**All aspects of pupils' personal development are strong.** They behave well and their attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils' social and moral awareness are developing very well and their spiritual and cultural development is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a good quality of education.** Teaching and learning are very good in reception classes where a very good balance is maintained between high quality learning opportunities that children can choose and skilful direct teaching. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and pupils make steady progress. In junior classes teaching is good, and particularly in Years 4 to 6, where pupils' learning improves in response to skilful questioning that challenges pupils to think for themselves. In these classes knowledgeable and confident teachers use a range of effective and sometimes imaginative strategies such as talking partners and simulations to engage and sustain pupils' interest and involvement. As a result, pupils now make good progress in junior classes. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning across the school. Teachers do not insist that written work is done carefully enough and as a result it often contains unnecessary mistakes or is not presented well enough. Assessment is used very well across the school to ensure that teaching builds on what pupils know, understand and can do, and meets the needs of the different groups of pupils; however, marking could sometimes provide the pupils with more help to understand what they need to do to improve. The curriculum is satisfactory but is enhanced by events, such as "arts week" and visits that enrich pupils' learning. Accommodation and resources are good.

The improvements that are being made in pupils' learning are supported very well by the high levels of care and the very effective guidance that are being given to pupils. The very strong links that the school has with parents and local schools and colleges also make a very strong contribution to the quality and effectiveness of the school's provision.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership is good and management is very effective.** The headteacher's very thoughtful and strong leadership is at the heart of this improving school. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and has also skilfully developed the effectiveness of other key staff, who contribute well, and she has developed excellent approaches to evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses and very good account of these is taken when planning improvements. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are fully involved and effective in helping the school to move forward. Very good use is made of the funding available to the school.

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

Parents are very supportive. They believe they are well informed about their children's learning and what is happening in school and are very happy with the quality of what it does. Pupils are happy in school and they know that their views are taken into account.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The school is aware of the most important thing that should be done to improve things, which is:

- Tackle the carelessness that is evident in pupils' written work and improve the quality of their presentation.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall pupils achieve satisfactory standards by Year 2 and Year 6 and in the reception class they are achieving very well against the goals for the Foundation Stage of learning. Standards are above national expectations in English and mathematics by both Year 2 and Year 6 and they are also above expectations in science by Year 6

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall standards are above national expectations.
- Many pupils exceed the early learning goals in reception classes.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics and ICT by Year 6 and in design and technology and religious education by both Year 2 and Year 6.
- Careless mistakes and untidy presentation limit pupils' achievement in their written work in English and in other subjects.

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.7 (15.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.6 (14.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.9 (14.9)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27 (28.4)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.5 (28.1)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30 (29.2)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 16 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

1. Over the last few years test results have improved at a faster rate than they have nationally, although they dipped in English at Year 6 in 2003 because too few pupils achieved Level 5. This was a small cohort and the late arrival of a pupil with learning difficulties depressed scores in English. The results were nevertheless well above national averages in mathematics and science, while they were in line with the average for English. When compared to similar schools, based on the pupils' results in Year 2, results were satisfactory in both mathematics and science but were well below average in English. The Year 2 results for 2003 were well above national averages in writing and mathematics and were above average in reading. They were well above the average results in schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals.
2. Pupils in both infant and junior classes are currently attaining above national expectations in English, mathematics, religious education and design and technology. By Year 6 they also achieve above expectations in science and ICT. Given these pupils' starting points this

represents good achievement in mathematics, ICT, religious education and design and technology.

3. Weaknesses in reading, identified by the school's own detailed analysis, have been successfully tackled and standards in this strand of English now comfortably exceed national expectations. Writing is a current priority and the gains identified by the HMI monitoring visit have been maintained, although the weaknesses found in spelling, punctuation and presentation remain in much of the older pupils' day-to-day work. This is unnecessary as the same pupils can produce much more careful work when they are asked to do so. Avoidable carelessness is depressing the standards that pupils could attain.
4. Pupils achieve well in mathematics because, belatedly, the National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively implemented, and lost ground from the previous inspection has been reclaimed. Skilful teaching is enabling pupils to develop good skills in problem solving and in handling numbers both in their heads and on paper.
5. A strong emphasis on practical work is also supporting good achievement in science by Year 6. Pupils demonstrate good knowledge and understanding across the different aspects of the subject. The recently improved resources for ICT and regular, confident teaching of skills, using opportunities from across the curriculum, are enabling pupils to make good progress in their learning, and by Year 6 pupils have good skills in most aspects of ICT. Pupils are achieving above expectations and well in religious education because they have good knowledge, and in design and technology where they have well-developed skills and produce work of good quality.
6. Children in the reception class benefit greatly from the high quality provision that is made for them and this is enabling them to make very good progress across the early learning goals and many are exceeding them.
7. Pupils of different abilities, including those with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils, make equally good progress across the school. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection where the progress of different groups was unsatisfactory and many, particularly the more able, underachieved.

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

Pupils' attendance is above the national average for primary schools and is good. Punctuality is good and pupils enjoy coming to school. In class, their attitudes to work are good and this matches their behaviour both in class and around the school. There was a fixed term exclusion recorded for the previous school year and one permanent exclusion has taken place in the current year. The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and pupils acquire a good standard of personal development as a result.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good relationships in school promote a harmonious atmosphere where pupils can concentrate well and enjoy their learning.
- Pupils show very good moral standards and this contributes positively to their personal and social development.
- Pupils' good attitudes in most lessons enable them to make progress and improve their achievement.
- Regular attendance and good punctuality enable pupils to make effective use of teaching time and improve their progress.

## Commentary

8. The school promotes very good relationships between pupils and between pupils and the staff. This provides an environment where pupils feel respected and are able to concentrate on their work. Pupils are able to work well together in pairs such as with their 'talking partners', or in groups when required, and they share resources sensibly. In the playground pupils show the same quality of relationships and play well together and there is no evidence of bullying or any other form of harassment. They are polite to visitors and respond confidently to questions.
9. The school also promotes high standards of behaviour and all pupils are well aware of what is expected of them. Only on the few occasions where teachers' expectations are not so explicit does the level of pupils' concentration fall. In all other instances pupils concentrate well, work hard and try to please. Children in the reception classes show particularly good attitudes to their work. They show a very good level of personal development and their confidence in lessons enables them to make very good early progress. These pupils respond very well to teachers' expectations. A good example of their co-operative nature was seen when one pupil voluntarily helped another who was struggling to take off an apron and all the other pupils then folded and put their own aprons away without being told.
10. The level of personal development across the school is good. Pupils' high moral standards can be seen in their responsible attitudes to others and this leads directly to their very good social development. A link with a Ugandan school and work for charities enable pupils to recognise the needs of others and to make a positive contribution to their relief. Pupils show respect for the feelings and beliefs of others and have a good awareness of other cultures and faiths. They have a very good awareness of their own culture but are less informed of multi-cultural issues in society. The school provides well for pupils' spiritual development. Music and art feature prominently and pupils respond well to the opportunities provided.
11. Pupils are happy to take on extra responsibilities such as caring for the school pets, looking after the reception desk at lunchtime, filling water bottles and monitoring corridors at playtime. School pets are used well to promote spiritual development, and reception children, for example, were excited and delighted when duck eggs hatched and frog spawn turned into tadpoles. Membership of the school council is a particularly popular responsibility and gives elected pupils a good opportunity to work on behalf of their classmates.

## Attendance

12. Pupils like coming to school. Their good levels of attendance and punctuality are clear indicators of this. They say they are expected to work hard and try to do their best. The good attitudes and other personal qualities seen show that the expectations are largely met, and pupils acquire a good preparation for the later stages of their education and for life after school.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.1	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.*

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Chinese
No ethnic group recorded

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

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
243	1	0
5	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0

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

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning overall is good. Assessment across the school is very good. Improvement in teaching, learning and assessment since the last inspection has been good overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and good overall in Years 3 to 6.
- Very good assessment procedures ensure that pupils' progress is tracked effectively and work is matched well to their needs. However, the quality of marking is inconsistent and does not always help pupils to understand the next steps in their learning.
- Teaching assistants throughout the school work effectively as a team with the teachers and give very good support to pupils who need extra help.
- Pupils' learning is extended through the use of good questioning techniques and the range of teaching strategies used.
- Pupils do not always take pride in the presentation of their work because teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough.

### **Commentary**

13. Teaching for the Foundation Stage children is very good. The direct teaching of basic skills is very well balanced with children-initiated activities that allow them to use and extend what they have just learned. Teachers plan for very good quality of provision for all areas of the children's learning and use assessment well to inform their future planning. This results in very good progress by these children.
14. In Years 1 and 2 teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching seen in two of the classes. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. As a result of good and some very good teaching, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are now making good progress in English, mathematics and science following a period of inconsistent teaching in their early school career.
15. Throughout the school, teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers plan effectively for them, ensuring that they are well informed about what they have to do and which pupils they are to support within the lesson. There is a strong professional partnership between teachers and their assistants. Teachers recognise and make use of individuals' skills and expertise so that in a Year 6 class, with the class teacher's guidance, the teaching assistant plans her own groups' guided reading sessions. A teaching assistant who has particular skills is responsible for music throughout the school, supports staff with their planning and works alongside the Year 1/2 teachers in lessons.

16. Learning objectives are regularly shared with pupils and in the best lessons these objectives provide a clear structure for the various activities and inform the concluding discussions, enabling teachers to evaluate pupils' learning. Where teaching is good, imaginative activities are well matched and challenging for all pupils and purposeful links are made to learning in other subjects. Good use is made of a range of strategies to engage and enthuse pupils, in particular using 'talking partners' to clarify and develop ideas. Questioning is used throughout the school to extend pupils' understanding further, keeping them engaged and challenged. In a Year 4/5 history lesson in the ICT suite pupils used an 1841 census return to investigate differences between families then and now. The teacher's very good questioning skills enabled pupils to confidently try out their ideas and elicited the reasons behind their findings.
17. In some less effective lessons pupils make satisfactory progress but are not as engaged in learning as they are in the good and very good lessons. Where this occurs it is because the pace of the lesson does not challenge the pupils as well as it could and pupils become uninterested and chatty during over-long explanations. Whilst in other aspects of the lesson teachers set clear expectations, these are not always high enough when pupils record their work. The scrutiny of work in pupils' books found that some of the work is untidy and is not presented well, particularly in English and science. The school is aware of this issue and is looking at ways of encouraging pupils to take more pride in the way they present their work.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	6 (18%)	13 (38%)	13 (38%)	1 (3%)	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.*

18. Assessment is very good overall. There are very good systems in place to track pupils' progress. The results of statutory assessment are carefully analysed and this, with other assessment information, effectively informs teachers' planning, ensures appropriate levels of challenge and has a positive impact on pupils' learning. In lessons teachers show how well they know their pupils with their ability to focus appropriate questions directly at individuals. Although teachers' written comments in pupils' work are very positive and encouraging, they do not consistently provide sufficient guidance for pupils on how they could improve.

## **The curriculum**

The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory overall. Opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum are good. The accommodation and resources support the curriculum well.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Links between subjects are good and provide for the development of pupils' numeracy, literacy and ICT skills.
- Effective coverage of the mathematics curriculum in Years 1 to 6 results in pupils making good progress and reaching standards above the level expected nationally in Years 2 and 6.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- There is good enrichment of the curriculum through extra-curricular activities, visits out of school and visitors who talk to pupils.
- The range and quality of the provision for the reception children are good.

## Commentary

19. The actions taken to put right the weaknesses found at the last inspection in the learning opportunities in both mathematics and science are good. There is a consistent approach to investigations and problem solving that is helping to provide more challenge to all pupils and raise standards. The restructuring of the school day has provided a better balance of time and coverage of all subjects. The range of learning opportunities is now matched well to children's differing needs.
20. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 meets their needs well in mathematics, and also in English in Years 1 and 2. In other subjects, pupils' needs are met satisfactorily. Statutory requirements are now met for the teaching of all subjects. The learning opportunities in mathematics are based effectively on the National Numeracy Strategy. Effective opportunities are provided for speaking, listening, reading and writing in English and in other subjects in Years 1 and 2 that contribute to pupils making good progress in these key areas.
21. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT skills when working in the computer suite in specific timetabled lessons. These are often well integrated into other subjects and enable teachers to develop ICT skills as well as their learning in subjects such as history and religious education. The school has an innovative approach to curriculum planning to develop a more integrated approach and to extending problem solving. The flexible approach to planning provides for whole days given to 'design and technology' and 'arts weeks' that provide the opportunity for more in-depth study as well as a wide variety of experiences that enrich the curriculum. There are well-established plans to review the curriculum structure and coverage that will extend the integrated approach ready for the next school year. In addition, the school is extending its thinking on how to help pupils learn through the development of thinking skills and different styles of learning.
22. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress either in small withdrawal groups or with additional support in class. The good support from teaching assistants and the carefully planned tasks provided help them to achieve well. Targets in pupils' individual education plans are sharply focused, and the regular review meetings promote a positive home-school partnership. Individual and very appropriate arrangements are made for gifted and talented pupils that enabled them to work to their potential.
23. The school has an appropriate sex education policy and promotes the teaching of personal and social education successfully. There is good use of personal and social education to help pupils develop their awareness of others and to help them respond appropriately.
24. There is good extra-curricular enrichment of the curriculum. Pupils have opportunities to attend after-school and lunchtime clubs in a range of areas, including various sports. These activities are well attended. They motivate and interest pupils and help them develop positive attitudes to school and to learning. Visits to places of interest, a residential visit and visitors to the school add enrichment to the curriculum, particularly in religious education, history and geography. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to learn French, and in Year 6 pupils have weekly German lessons. A specialist music teacher provides instrumental tuition.
25. There are sufficient teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. Good improvements to the external accommodation and to the resources for the reception class mean that children now have continuous access to outdoor facilities, which supports their learning very well. Resources are good overall and support the curriculum in all areas. Resources are good in mathematics, ICT, religious education and design and technology.

## **Care, guidance and support**

The school makes good provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. There is good support and guidance for the pupils and their involvement in the work of the school and its development is very good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are good and trusting relationships between adults and pupils and pastoral care is effective.
- There are good arrangements to help pupils who join the school to settle in quickly and easily.
- The school council provides pupils with a very good opportunity to take an active part in the running of the school, as well as developing their understanding of citizenship.
- The use of marking and assessment is ensuring that pupils' progress is monitored.

## **Commentary**

26. As at the last inspection, the school places a high priority on pupils' personal well-being and ensures that they are able to work and learn in a healthy and caring environment. Good attention is paid to health and safety. Effective procedures ensure that pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are high priorities. Child protection procedures are carefully organised and all staff know what they have to do if they have concerns. There is also a good after-school care club for pupils, which pupils enjoy attending. There are clear health and safety procedures, including risk assessments, which are implemented well.
27. When children first start school in the reception class, they settle in happily. This is a reflection of the good arrangements that are made. It is evident in the way that children talk and work happily in the classrooms and outside areas. A number of parents expressed their satisfaction with how quickly their children settled and were eager to come to school.
28. Pupils benefit from the very good relationships they have with their teachers and other adults working in the school. They say that they would talk to their teacher or another adult at the school if they were worried about anything and almost all enjoy being at the school. Teachers know their pupils well and give good support and pastoral care. The assessment and record keeping have improved significantly since the last inspection. There is now good use of data to track pupils' progress, and personal and group targets are used well to provide challenge for all pupils. Reports to parents are good. They give information about the progress the pupil is making and set targets for further improvement. There is regular consultation with parents and pupils about progress and the setting of focused and realistic targets. From some of the marking of work and from the reviews of progress, the advice and guidance given to pupils are good.
29. All pupils have good opportunities to be involved in making some decisions about the running of their school through the work of the school council. The councillors seek the views of other pupils prior to the meetings and report back on what the council has discussed. They are pleased to be councillors, proud of their role and successfully manage their own budget. They feel that their views are taken seriously and that they play a meaningful part in the life and development of the school.

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

The school has established very good links with parents that contribute positively to learning. Links with the community are good and bring benefits to the school. The school's links with other schools and colleges are numerous and used very well to provide support for both teaching and learning.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very effective links with parents, established through good communication and involvement, make a positive contribution to pupils' learning at school and at home.
- Very good procedures for obtaining parents' views enable them to influence the work of the school.
- Very effective links with other schools and colleges are used to promote the school and enhance learning.
- Good links with the local community are used to broaden the curriculum.

## **Commentary**

30. The school works hard to encourage parents to take a greater part in their children's education. Parents have responded well and are very supportive of the school and its efforts on behalf of the pupils. The school keeps parents well informed of school events through regular newsletters and gives information each term on the material to be taught through the curriculum. This enables parents to plan and prepare for the home support they can give. The school has provided workshops for parents to show them how they can support children in both reading and mathematics. Parents are invited to consultation evenings each term to discuss their children's progress and agree personal targets. Pupils' annual reports give good information on their progress and achievement and can be discussed in detail if required. The governing body's annual report gives parents a clear overview of the previous year.
31. In addition to home support, many parents are involved within the school. A group of eight parents regularly attend and help in lessons, mainly in the infant classes. Parents help to supervise off-site visits and help with the gym club and football club. Some help with maintaining the school grounds by planting borders, clearing the environmental area and constructing the willow arches. Parents with skills in music and gymnastics help in lessons. The Friends of School Association plays a valuable role in fund raising and promoting the school within the community.
32. The school regularly consults parents through questionnaires and newsletters. Recent issues covered include a review of the school's values and aims, the new school motto, the rejuvenation of the parent/teacher group, homework policy and the development of reading across the school. An annual 'how good is our school' questionnaire is used to determine any changes in parental views and to indicate any action required by the school.
33. The school has established a wide range of links with other schools and colleges. These are used very well to provide opportunities for joint staff training and for support in the classroom in such areas as the teaching of modern foreign languages and of performing arts such as music and dance. The links with schools and colleges provide the school with additional support for classroom staff as regular annual placements are provided for secondary school pupils on work experience and national vocational course students on practical work. To broaden the curriculum, the school has formed a useful association with two foreign schools, one in Uganda and one in France. These links give pupils an insight into the concept of global citizenship.
34. Although there is little community use of the school premises other than the after-school club and holiday club, the headteacher has worked hard to promote the school in the local community. As a member of the local Business Link the headteacher has established communication with businesses that now provide support for the school's science week activities and for the pupils' 'K'nex Challenge' games. Good use of the local churches and Christian associations is made to support the school's religious education programme. The local area is used well to illustrate and broaden topic work as pupils visit the local superstore, library and farm.



## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership. The leadership of other key staff is good. Governance is good. Overall management is very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The key factor behind recent school improvements is the headteacher's very effective leadership.
- The role of the subject leader has improved since the last inspection and key staff are now providing effective leadership.
- Governors support the school.
- The school's use of self-evaluation and monitoring performance data is outstanding.

### Commentary

35. The substantial improvements in the school's performance since the last inspection have been as a result of the highly effective leadership of the headteacher. Her clear understanding of exactly where the school is and what it needs to do next to improve comes from her extremely detailed analysis of all sorts of information. Decisions taken by the school to help raise standards, as a result, are based on sound facts. The regular monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher and key staff has also ensured that areas for improvement are identified and action is taken. Where this has been effective, unsatisfactory teaching has been identified and appropriate steps taken to support and successfully improve the teachers' performance.
36. Since her appointment the headteacher has worked hard developing each individual's roles and responsibilities, building the effective teams now present within the school. The deputy headteacher and the two senior teachers positively support the headteacher as members of the management team, whilst other subject leaders are increasingly encouraged to develop their own area. Every member of the team, whether governor or subject leader, teaching or non-teaching staff, knows what they have to do to and how this will help to improve the school. This process is supported very effectively by the school improvement and development plan. The headteacher sees staff development and training as an integral part of this process and a vital tool in any school improvements. Her commitment to this is evident in the increased profile of the non-teaching staff. Encouraged by the headteacher, one now has responsibility for music throughout the school, supporting teaching staff and working alongside pupils, whilst another is developing links and training for the support staff in the school and in other local schools too. This, and additional training, has meant that the support pupils and teachers receive within lessons is often of a very high quality.
37. Governors are enthusiastic, committed and fulfil their duties well. Working closely with the headteacher, the governing body are actively involved in school improvement. They know how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to carry on improving. Following guidance, the governors are increasingly acting as a 'critical friend' and holding the school to account, an area previously underdeveloped. Close links with key staff have been developed and governors visit the school regularly to see for themselves how well it is doing, feeding back to relevant committees. They seek training to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge to remain effective and also ensure support for the substantial number of new governors since the last inspection. The governors have ensured compliance with statutory requirements. Financial management is very good and closely linked to the school's priorities for improvement. The budget is monitored effectively by the headteacher, administrative staff and governors throughout the year and the principles of best value are applied well.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	537,520
Total expenditure	533,359
Expenditure per pupil	2,402

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	1,989
Balance carried forward to the next	6,150

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

## AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The quality of provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress across the areas of learning and are achieving very well.
- Teaching is very good.
- Detailed and effective assessments are made that support the very good progress that children make.
- Accommodation is very good and is used very well.

### Commentary

38. Teaching across the reception classes and all the areas of learning is very effective. There is a good balance between well thought out activities that children can choose to engage in and short sharply focused sessions where teachers develop specific aspects of learning. The choosing activities, including role-play areas, are provided across the areas of learning and are very well resourced and managed. They frequently relate to the current theme, for example fairy stories. Very good use is made of the outdoor area to create a stimulating learning environment that enables children to develop, among other things, writing and drawing skills, reading, role-play and their awareness of the living world. This space is too small for large physical play and regular times are set aside for children to develop their physical skills using trikes, scooters and other large apparatus on one of the playgrounds. Planning is thorough and firmly based on the stepping-stones and children's next steps in their learning. All the team are involved in planning and this ensures that there is equality of provision between the two reception classes, very effective, collaborative working and that everyone is working consistently towards the same objectives. The staff work very well together because everyone has a good understanding of what they have to do. Assessment is regular and successfully builds a detailed picture of each child's development across the areas of learning. Assessment is very well used to modify plans. Assessment is also used to group children according to their ability and attainment for focused activities, such those for developing reading and writing skills and their understanding of numbers. This works very well and is making a very positive impact on the progress children make in their language and mathematical development.

39. The children have very good **personal and social** development and comfortably exceed the expected standard. They are consistently and successfully encouraged to engage in positive play together and to actively contribute to group discussion and learning activities. They do both with confidence, very sensibly, and show very good awareness of each other, for example helping each other with aprons. They are generally very well behaved, reflecting the high expectations of the adults who work with them. This was shown to very good effect during a movement session in the hall when the children used their bodies to express themselves and no one spoke unless asked to do so. The children's confidence is also very evident when they present what they have been doing to an audience, for example during a class assembly. They are responsible and independent when using resources and take good care of them, and do not need to be reminded to tidy away.

40. The children's skills in **communicating, language and literacy** are well above what is usually expected for their age. Many read simple books with confidence and most tackle new words well, using their knowledge of letter sounds to work them out. They show good understanding of stories that are read to them and enjoy sharing books and talking about their favourite ones. For example, one higher attaining child was eager to talk about what happened in *The Lion, the*

*Witch and the Wardrobe*. They listen closely to adults and to each other and respond thoughtfully to what has been said. They answer questions in some detail and confidently share their ideas and thoughts with both small and larger groups. Many are beginning to write by themselves and make plausible attempts at words while others clearly understand the purpose of writing and can write their own names. There are many opportunities provided for children to enjoy books, read labels and signs, and record their ideas through the choosing activities. Teachers provide very well focused language sessions where they skilfully question children to encourage them to work things out for themselves and to apply what they have been taught, for example, about letter sounds.

41. The children's **mathematical development** benefits considerably from the use of short ability-based group sessions, as do their language skills. These daily, very well focused teacher-led group activities are ensuring the children are developing a secure understanding of numbers and basic number operations. The children are confident when counting, ordering numbers and working out calculations. Structured choosing activities enable them to learn about shapes, and many opportunities to play in a focused way with sand and water are contributing to the development of their understanding of quantities and weight. They are successfully learning directions, for example through warm-up sessions in physical development sessions and the opportunities they have to use programmable toys such as 'Big Track'. The expected levels are exceeded.
42. Children are making very good progress in developing their **knowledge and understanding of the world** and exceed the early learning goals. As in the other areas, this is often through well thought through play and exploration activities as well as adult-led sessions. The children experience living things through the school's pets and special events, such as duck eggs hatching and the frog spawn turning into tadpoles in the classrooms. They have many purposeful opportunities to use ICT, including recording what they are doing on the digital cameras, programming toys and using the computers that are in the classroom as well as during the taught sessions in the ICT suite. Their skills are very well developed for their ages and new technology holds no fears for them. Themes, such as 'fairy stories', are used extremely well by the staff to provide opportunities to explore construction using a variety of materials, for example houses for the three pigs. At different times during the year very good opportunities are provided for the children to find out more about their past and the local area through interesting visits.
43. The children's **creative** development is also very well provided for through ongoing activities linked to the planned themes and events, such as the "arts week" in school. The learning goals for this area of learning are also exceeded. The artwork the children produce is varied and includes very good quality mobiles, such as those related to fire they did during "arts week", as well as the impressive collaborative picture of a phoenix, and the three-dimensional and carefully decorated volcano. The more recent pictures of the three pigs show developing understanding of different materials to create textural effects and the dragonfly mobiles show good use of soft and hard materials to make distinctive mobiles. The children are confident singers and 'actors' who enjoy performing for their parents. They show good levels of creative imagination when playing in role, for example in the three bears' house making porridge.
44. There are many well-focused sessions provided to improve children's **physical development** and as a result the standards are well above expectations. These take place in the hall and on the school's field and very purposefully develop the children's skills in balancing, stretching and their use of height and space. In these very well taught sessions, teachers skilfully use children to demonstrate thoughtful and careful movement, and challenge and encourage the children to improve their work. During the large apparatus sessions the children are also set challenges to improve their balance and co-ordination and they show good levels of application to practise and get better. In the classrooms fine motor skills are being successfully developed through the use of tools and materials when constructing and creating.

45. The good provision found during the last inspection has improved further and children get off to a very good start in the school. The senior teacher in reception provides very strong and purposeful leadership which ensures good teamwork and is at the heart of the improvements that have been made. The accommodation has recently been improved considerably with the extension to the outside area providing a good teaching space and the creation of a very attractive entrance area which is very welcoming to parents and children.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good** overall.

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

- Standards in reading have risen following a recent whole school focus but standards in writing are not as high as they could be due to inconsistencies and low teacher expectations in secretarial skills.
- Pupils make good progress in Years 4, 5 and 6 as a result of good teaching.
- Purposeful links are made between literacy and other subjects, which enhance the pupils' understanding and learning.
- The subject leader has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses through effective monitoring.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent and does not always help pupils to understand the next steps in their learning.

#### **Commentary**

46. Since the last inspection the school has made good progress in its overall provision for English. Across the school standards of work seen during the inspection were higher in reading than in writing. This mirrors the school's own assessments and the targets that have been set for groups of pupils. Pupils are now achieving above the national average overall for English by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, due in large measure to the rise in the standards of reading, which are now above average. Standards in writing are not as high, however. Whilst the content of the pupils' work shows them capable of higher standards, this is often let down by poor quality presentation, careless spelling and missed punctuation. Pupils do not always take enough pride in their work and teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough to ensure that pupils are always using the skills needed to achieve the higher standards. This is particularly evident with the older pupils, where their everyday work does not match the quality of work they are able to produce for their profile books each term. Throughout the school pupils are achieving satisfactorily. For the oldest pupils this represents good progress being made in recent years. Improvements in provision and teaching have enabled them to regain ground lost previously because of staff mobility. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils.
47. Teaching and learning are good for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6, with some very good teaching observed. For other pupils teaching and learning are satisfactory with some good teaching in one of the Year 1/2 classes. Planning now follows national guidelines, enabling teachers to ensure that learning activities are matched effectively to pupils' different needs, including the needs of those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils. Where teaching is good, or better, the rigorous pace of lessons, good quality questioning and interesting range of activities and tasks are a particular strength. These were evident in a Year 4/5 lesson where pupils responded by producing adverts that were lively and interesting, showing how successfully they understood the structure of persuasive writing. Whilst in a Year 6 lesson, high quality questioning ensured that pupils' responses about the text they were reading were in depth, using references from the text to support their opinions. In less successful lessons, pupils

were not consistently on task and actively learning because the teaching lacked pace and planning was not clear enough about how pupils were going to learn and develop new skills.

48. The use of 'talking partners' is a strategy that has been promoted throughout the school and used effectively to maintain pupils' interest and engagement. Pupils have time to clarify their ideas and, because of high teacher expectations, regularly give the reasons behind their answers during class discussions. The school is aware of the need to further develop pupils' listening abilities so that they more closely match their speaking skills. Questioning is used effectively by teachers and support staff to assess pupils' achievement and understanding. The information gained is often shared during the lesson and pupils are challenged or supported accordingly. Whilst targets for individuals, or groups of pupils, are clearly identified and regularly assessed, the quality of marking within the books is inconsistent and does not always help pupils to understand the next steps to be taken in their learning.
49. Leadership and management of the subject are good overall. As part of an ongoing monitoring role the subject leader regularly observes teaching, scrutinises teachers' planning and pupils' work and thoroughly analyses question papers and other assessment data. She has established a clear understanding of the subject's strengths and weaknesses and works closely with the headteacher and governors to bring about improvements, producing clear action plans and identifying opportunities for training. Time provided within the school day to support and further develop her role as subject leader is used effectively by supporting members of staff, carrying out her monitoring role and auditing and upgrading the school's resources.

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

50. There is good use and development of the subject across the curriculum. Purposeful links are made to other subjects, a very good example being in a Year 1/2 class where the whole literacy lesson was taught through the topic of the Great Fire of London. Pupils developed their understanding of question marks by posing questions they wanted about the fire, used time connectives to produce a piece of recount writing about the fire and developed their understanding of commas by producing a list of items Samuel Pepys would have saved from his burning house. When questioned, pupils talk enthusiastically about this approach to literacy, explaining: "You just learn more because it's interesting." The school is currently developing further links between subjects with its review of the curriculum.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above the level expected nationally in Years 2 and 6.
- Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good and often very good.
- Innovative teaching and a problem-solving approach helps to make achievement at least satisfactory and often good.
- Pupils have good attitudes to mathematics. They enjoy learning using mental calculation and, as a result, have a good grasp of mathematical facts.
- The co-ordinator has a good knowledge of the subject and of how to improve the provision.
- The use of assessment data and target setting is helping to raise standards.

### **Commentary**

51. The standards in Years 2 and 6 are good and better than at the time of the previous inspection. A good proportion of pupils are working at a higher level than expected of most pupils, in Years 2 and 6. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 but pupils in Years 4 to 6 are achieving well and making good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good

progress towards the targets set for them. This is because of the skilled support given by teaching assistants. When they work in small groups, work is effectively matched to their needs

52. A main reason for pupils' achievement and the higher standards attained is the school's successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. This results in the quality of teaching and learning being improved. Teachers use the ideas in the strategy to plan lessons that will engage and motivate the pupils. As a result, the pupils are enthusiastic, enjoy learning and make good progress. In particular, pupils are confident at calculating and manipulating numbers both mentally and in written methods. They have many good opportunities to use their knowledge and skills to solve mathematical problems.
53. Lessons are carefully structured and make good use of the time. They begin promptly and teachers make effective use of resources and different approaches to learning. Teachers explain carefully what the pupils are going to learn and use each part of the lesson well to promote learning. Lessons are carefully planned so that groups of pupils of different abilities have work that is suitably challenging. Teachers generally have a good knowledge of mathematics and this shows in the way they make the learning interesting. Towards the end of lessons, teachers check the pupils' understanding and reinforce the planned learning. The questioning is skilful and takes on a greater depth as teachers ask supplementary questions of 'how?' or 'why?' so that the pupils have to think clearly to explain their method and understanding.
54. Work is marked regularly to check the accuracy of the pupils' work and the progress they are making. The current practice usefully focuses on assessing and recording the pupils' understanding but does not always give helpful feedback to the pupils. There is very good use of assessment data to track pupils' progress and set challenging targets. There is also good practice in the setting of individual targets that are reviewed regularly and help the pupils focus on what they most need to learn to help them improve. At the end of each lesson, pupils are encouraged to record their own assessment of how well they have understood their learning and this helps the teacher plan for the next lesson.
55. Leadership and management of mathematics are good. The co-ordinator has helped to analyse the results of tests throughout the school, and monitored some teaching and learning and the level and quality of the resources. His good subject knowledge and effective self-evaluation mean that plans for improvement focus on raising the standards. There is an emphasis on a problem-solving approach. This is particularly important because there are some very capable mathematicians throughout the school who need to be consistently challenged. Planning now provides a better range of opportunities for all pupils to learn and enjoy mathematics, including work in other subjects.
56. Improvement since the last inspection is good. The quality of teaching is higher and this has helped to bring about the required improvements in the standards and the pupils' learning.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

57. The use of mathematical skills in other subjects is good. In science, geography, and design and technology, the pupils show that they can apply their mathematical knowledge and skills successfully as they estimate, measure, record and calculate. The approach to problem solving is helping to extend the use of mathematics across the subjects.

## SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above expectations by Year 6 and pupils achieve satisfactorily but this is an improving picture as pupils are making good progress in junior classes.
- Teaching is good in junior classes.
- The subject is well led and managed and this is leading to improvements in provision.
- Pupils' recording and presentational skills limit their achievement in carrying out and reporting investigations.

### Commentary

58. By Year 6 pupils have developed good knowledge and understanding across the different strands of the subject. They are comfortable devising ways to carry out investigations, as seen in a lesson where they were exploring ways of speeding up the dissolving of sugar in a solute. They have a very clear understanding of the need to have only one variable and that results are more reliable when tests are repeated. They also understand the need for careful measurements to be made. A weakness that reduces the overall achievement in this aspect of science is the underdevelopment of pupils' skills in recording appropriately what they have found out. They do not have many opportunities to decide how to present their findings and their finished work is often untidy and careless. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the natural world are well developed and concepts such as food webs and producer and consumer are well understood, although lower attaining pupils do not always remember the correct technical terms. Similarly they understand and can describe the properties of materials and suggest how they can be used. Pupils can describe with confidence how processes such as evaporation and filtering can be used to separate materials that have been put together. Forces are slightly less understood, for example how a balance of forces results in a boat floating on water. Electricity is well understood; for example, pupils are able to describe the effect of reversing the current to a motor and how this can be applied through the use of a switch to working models in design and technology.
59. Standards are broadly in line with expectations in the infant classes and pupils' achievement is sound. This judgement is mainly based on discussions with pupils and analysis of their work as only one lesson in Years 1/2 was observed. By Year 2 pupils have an appropriate understanding of investigating and with help can devise a simple test. They have reasonable knowledge and understanding of the different aspects of science but they are patchy. They have better knowledge and understanding of life processes than the other attainment targets and can, for example, describe the function of roots in plants and name the parts of a human body. Knowledge of technical terms such as 'transparent' and 'opaque' is not always secure and pupils are unsure about magnetism and which materials are attracted to magnets. Their knowledge of different materials and why they are used for particular purposes is better and their understanding of electricity is good; they can, for example, describe what a switch does in a circuit.
60. Pupils across the ability range make good progress in junior classes because teaching is confident and sometimes imaginative. For example, in a lesson in a Year 5/6 class pupils were challenged to produce drinkable water from samples that were contaminated. Teaching in this key stage is almost always purposeful, reflecting thoughtful planning that generates clear objectives for lessons and a good match to the learning needs of groups of pupils. A weakness in the teaching of older pupils, particularly, is the lack of emphasis placed on careful and well-presented findings and, as described above, this is limiting the overall achievement of pupils in their investigational work. It has not been possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of



teaching in infant classes as only the one lesson was seen. However, work samples suggest that it is satisfactory.

61. Assessment is effectively used to track the progress of pupils and to identify strengths and weaknesses in their learning. These strengths and weaknesses feed into future planning and this is helping to raise standards. Marking is variable with some teachers making helpful comments. For example, in one of the Year 1/2 classes the teacher's marking suggests how pupils can improve their work. However, this is less evident in the completed work of other classes. When useful comments have been made in the work of older pupils there is little evidence that they have been responded to.
62. The subject leader is enthusiastic and thoughtful. Monitoring and evaluation, which include the use of assessment data, observation of lessons, scrutiny of work samples and discussions with pupils, are used effectively to inform the planning of improvements and contribute to leadership and management that are good. Improvement since the last inspection is good, with standards being higher and teaching better.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above expectations by Year 6 and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is good in junior classes.
- The subject is well led and managed.

### **Commentary**

63. By the end of Year 6 pupils are often working within the levels of the National Curriculum that are above those usually expected for their age. They are achieving well and this reflects the good teaching and the effective use of the resources that are now available. Year 6 pupils have good skills in presenting ideas imaginatively, using word-processing and presentation software. They can produce leaflets that include interesting text effects and pictures as well as text, and multi-media presentations that take good account of an intended audience and incorporate a range of features such as hot links to other pages, sounds, animation and time delays. They can use formulae in spreadsheets to solve problems and present findings from data collection, using appropriately chosen graphs. Pupils are less sure about databases and are unclear about how to search for information. However, they can find information efficiently using the Internet. They have not yet used computers to control devices but have collected data on sound and temperature using logging software.
64. By the end of Year 2 pupils have just reached expected levels and are achieving soundly. They can use different formatting tools to improve the appearance of their word-processed work and produce attractive pieces of artwork, such as those of fireworks and of Joseph's coat using painting programs. They are also able to programme a 'Roamer' to follow a route and can print graphs of information they have collected, for example when surveying different house types and journeys to school.
65. Teaching is good in junior classes and is resulting in acceleration in pupils' learning. Only one lesson was seen in the infant classes and this was well taught. Lessons are well planned and build effectively on what has been taught earlier. Pupils understand what they have to do in lessons because teachers are careful to explain to them what they are going to learn. The success of the learning is evaluated at the end of lessons and pupils are developing a good understanding of how well they are doing. New skills are taught carefully with particularly good use being made of the interactive whiteboard in the computer suite to support explanations and

demonstrations. The completed work seen and discussions with pupils indicate that ICT is taught less regularly in infant classes than in junior classes and the progress pupils make in the infants is less evident than in the junior classes. Assessment is satisfactory and records the progress pupils make against the planned learning.

66. The ICT coordinator is strongly committed and leads the subject well. He monitors and evaluates the quality of provision carefully, reporting to staff and governors on what has been found. Outcomes of this monitoring have led to improvements in provision and are also used to inform the action plan for the subject. Recently major improvements have been made to the resources available for ICT and these are having a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection when standards were judged to be below expectations.

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

67. The use of ICT is becoming embedded in many subjects and good use is made of it across the curriculum. The Internet is regularly used to research information in subjects such as history and religious education. Several good quality pieces of artwork have been produced using art packages and older pupils have composed tunes on computers. There are many opportunities for pupils to use digital cameras as part of their work and older pupils have made use of data logging to enrich their learning in science.

### **HUMANITIES**

68. Too few lessons were seen to make judgements on provision in **geography** and **history**. Teachers' planning and pupils' work show that there is a satisfactory curriculum with systematic coverage of the requirements of the National Curriculum over a planned two-year cycle. Standards are at the level expected nationally overall and an improvement since the last inspection, although some higher attaining pupils have good skills and understanding. This indicates that the activities in lessons are satisfactorily matched to the pupils' differing needs. A good range of visits enriches the learning opportunities and enhances pupils' understanding of both subjects. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. There are interesting displays in each classroom that include questions to focus the pupils' thinking. The provision shows satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
69. Pupils enjoy their work, for example when they visited Folkestone and concentrated on both history and geography. As part of their study of the local area pupils have visited the local supermarket and used maps of the area. In the lesson seen the pupils used census information to look at life in Victorian times and to consider the differences to their own lives and the reasons for the changes.
70. Year 6 pupils have used the Internet confidently to research and extend their studies about the Second World War. Work in geography provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils to study local and more distant environments. Teachers use resources well to bring history and geography 'alive' for the pupils. Good links between subjects are used to develop the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.

### **Religious education**

Little teaching was seen during the inspection. Judgements are based on an analysis of pupils' work and the discussions with pupils and suggest that provision in religious education throughout the school is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above those expected in the locally agreed syllabus and pupils achieve well.
- The pupils use their literacy skills well to record their work and are able to recall important facts about different cultures and religions.
- The pupils with special educational needs are fully involved and are well supported throughout.

## Commentary

71. By Years 2 and 6 the pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education are often above the standards expected in the locally agreed syllabus and the proportion reaching these standards is above average. The pupils' achievement is good and the school has done well since the last inspection to improve the depth of work covered. Pupils use their literacy skills well to plan and write questions and record the information and personal responses to the learning. The pupils have a good understanding of different places of worship after visits to the local church and the cathedral. They are building up a good understanding of symbolism in religions
72. Throughout the school, the pupils, including those with special educational needs, are developing a good understanding of Christianity, Sikhism, Judaism and Islam. Resources, including pictures, books and artefacts, are used well and create interest in the subject.
73. Evidence from planning and pupils work strongly suggest that the overall quality of teaching and the curriculum is good with very clear learning objectives that help to focus the teaching. In a Year 2 class, writing, following a visit to the local church and to Lincoln Cathedral, was used very effectively to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding of what they had learnt. It also provided a good opportunity for extending the pupils' skills in English. In a Year 6 lesson, in which teaching and learning were good, the teacher very effectively challenged pupils to learn about the Bible and the range of writing across the two testaments. In discussion the pupils showed good recall of the facts and the importance of sacred texts in other faiths. The pupils demonstrate in their writing and in discussion the importance of spirituality in the lives of many people of different faiths and cultures.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

74. No lessons were seen in **art and design** but evidence from completed work around the school suggests that standards are comfortably in line with national expectations and that pupils experience a broad range of materials and techniques. Their learning has been enhanced by the arts week when pupils worked with students from local colleges to produce many dramatic and good quality pieces of work on the theme of the elements. These included constructions, such as the hot air balloons, masks, willow structures, woven pictures and puppets. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to appreciate the work of famous artists and to gain insights into different techniques as they produce their own work in similar styles; good use is made of computers in some of this.
75. As no lessons were observed during the inspection there is insufficient evidence on which to base an overall judgement on **music**. The teaching assistant co-ordinating music across the school has introduced a scheme to ensure that pupils have appropriate opportunities to learn about the different elements and effectively supports staff in their planning. In daily acts of worship, pupils have opportunities to sing a variety of songs and singing observed during the inspection was tuneful, with standards broadly in line with expectations for pupils of this age, though older pupils lacked the enthusiasm of younger pupils. In addition, pupils listened to a chosen piece of music and their knowledge and understanding were developed through the effective questioning of the headteacher. Extra-curricular clubs for choir and recorders and peripatetic instrument lessons further enhance the provision for music in the school.

76. Only one **physical education** lesson was observed so it was not possible to make an overall judgement about teaching and learning across the school. Planning indicates that pupils have the opportunity to experience all aspects of the curriculum, with swimming being introduced in Years 1 and 2. Older pupils have the opportunity to take part in a variety of extra-curricular activities and the school has also organised various short courses, such as tag rugby and street dance. In addition to playground and grassed areas, for use during lessons, the extensive school grounds have been developed with the installation of some large apparatus. This has enabled the pupils to further develop skills, such as balancing and climbing, during playtimes. The school is aware of the need to develop the subject further, has appointed a subject leader and has identified it as a priority in next year's school improvement and development plan.

## **Design and technology**

Provision in design and technology is **good** overall

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good subject knowledge of the subject leader has played an important part in driving the recent improvements.
- Standards are above those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- There is a good balance in the planning that covers all the strands within the curriculum for design and technology and ensures that subject specific skills and vocabulary are taught progressively throughout the school.

### **Commentary**

77. Standards have improved since the previous inspection and the pupils achieve well as a result, with standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 above the expected national levels. The improvements to the design and technology curriculum and teaching are due to good leadership. The co-ordinator has adopted a sound scheme of work based on national guidelines. This gives teachers a much firmer basis for their planning that ensures coverage of all aspects of design and technology whilst also ensuring that teachers develop the basic skills and vocabulary in a smooth progression year by year.

78. The pupils experience a good range of challenging tasks and apply the full design process. Good challenge and differentiation are provided for all pupils, and they produce sophisticated final models. In one lesson, whilst some pupils made a vehicle that would travel forwards, others were asked to be able to control its direction and a small group were challenged to be able to alter the speed of the vehicle using cogs. Pupils observed during the inspection took real care both in their initial designs and in the making process. Displays of quality work from other pupils around the school and high teacher expectations ensured that pupils showed real effort in their work and were justifiably proud of their finished outcomes.

79. Teachers are beginning to weave skilful links with other subjects. For instance, the Year 3 work on alarms enhanced the pupils' knowledge of electricity in science and the Year 5/6 models of musical instruments helped to improve the pupils' appreciation of pitch, volume and of how sounds are made. Teachers ensure that pupils have good opportunities to use and extend their numeracy skills in the careful measurement of items to be cut and fitted and the accurate scale drawing in older pupils' designs. In the design briefs and evaluations pupils use their literacy skills, including flow charts and instructional writing. However, teachers' expectations of the standard of pupils' presentations are not always high enough.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

80. On the basis of limited evidence from lessons, discussions with pupils and analysis of teachers' planning and the outcomes demonstrated by pupils across the school, provision in this area of pupils learning is **good**. Regular lessons provide pupils with good opportunities to consider a range of issues related to their well-being, relationships and being a citizen. The school council gives insights into participating in and contributing to a community, and residential visits make a good contribution to the personal and social development of the pupils, particularly when these take pupils to other countries. The school pets also provide many opportunities for pupils to develop responsibility and caring attitudes.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).*