

# INSPECTION REPORT

## CHESTNUT STREET CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ruskington, near Sleaford

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120693

Headteacher: Mr. C. Petz

Lead inspector: Mr. M. H. Cole  
Dates of inspection: 10<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> November 2003

Inspection number: 257378

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	402
School address:	Chestnut Street Ruskington Sleaford Lincolnshire
Postcode:	NG34 9DL
Telephone number:	01526 832424
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. P. Osborne
Date of previous inspection:	28 <sup>th</sup> September 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This large Church of England primary school educates 402 boys and girls aged 4 – 11. It is one of two primary schools in the large rural village of Ruskington. The attainments of pupils starting at the school and their social and economic circumstances vary widely, but, overall, are broadly average. A very small number of pupils is of minority ethnic origin but none uses English as an additional language. The overall proportion of pupils with special educational needs is a little below average. However, eight pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs, an above average proportion. The range of special educational needs is wide and includes physical disabilities, learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural difficulties.

A substantial proportion of pupils is from air force and army families. As a result the school takes in more pupils than usual who have had some or most of their primary education elsewhere; 40 per cent of pupils leaving Year 6 in 2003 had not started at the school at age 5. This is a popular school and it has been expanding over many years. The number of pupils has grown by 16 per cent since the previous inspection.

The school received *Artsmark* and *Investor in People* awards in 2002.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3369	Mr. M. H. Cole	Lead inspector	Science, information and communication technology, music
9103	Mrs. A. Strong	Lay inspector	
32226	Mrs. T. Quick	Team inspector	Mathematics, history, religious education, personal, social and health education and citizenship
4262	Mr. T. Taylor	Team inspector	English, design and technology, physical education
22398	Mrs. L. Wright	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, art and design, geography

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good school**. Good teaching helps pupils learn and achieve well. Their standards of work, attitudes and behaviour are good. Leadership and management are good. The school provides good value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils aged 11 achieve well above average standards in their work in both English and mathematics.
- Good, challenging teaching ensures the great majority of pupils apply themselves well to their learning and achieve well.
- Good leadership and management include very effective involvement of governors, a firm commitment to clearly shared aims, good checks on the school's performance and successful planning for improvement.
- A very caring ethos and good provision for pupils' social and moral development lead to pupils' positive attitudes, orderly behaviour and good relationships.
- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- Relations with parents are very good and there are good links with the community.

The school has made good improvement since its previous inspection in 1998. The strengths reported at that time have been consolidated, the weaknesses identified have been resolved, standards have risen and the quality of the teaching has improved.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

**The overall achievement of pupils is good.** The table shows that over the last three years Year 6 pupils' test results have been generally above average. The standard of the work of present Year 6 pupils seen during the inspection is also above average in English and mathematics and it is average in science. The 'similar schools' grades in the table above are an unreliable measure of pupils' progress as the school's results put it in a borderline situation in relation to grades and there is an inevitable margin of error in the assessment processes. Additionally, the school's results are a little lower than they would otherwise be because of a significant number of pupils who joined the school only a short time before the tests. Many pupils are from service families and the turnover of pupils is high compared with most schools. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' overall progress and achievement are good. In almost all recent years the Year 6 test results have been above the average for schools serving areas with similar social and economic circumstances. Foundation Stage pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are achieving well in relation to their capabilities and levels of special educational needs. At age 7 pupils' overall standards of work are average, but they are above average in reading and writing. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 also achieve well.

The great majority of pupils show **good personal qualities** in their keen attitudes, co-operative behaviour and harmonious relationships. As a result, this is an orderly and happy school. Provision

for pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall**. Pupils are given a good lead about right and wrong and about ways to be co-operative members of the community. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall but pupils have too few opportunities to appreciate the diversity of cultures. Pupils' attendance is good and their punctuality is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good. Teaching is good**, particularly in the main subjects of English and mathematics. Examples of good teaching were also seen in most other subjects. Teachers know their subjects well, plan well and clearly expect pupils to work and behave well. Pupils concentrate, try hard and take care over their work. In Years 1 to 6 the great majority of lessons are good and quite often very good; in the reception year they are satisfactory. Teaching could make more extensive use of pupils' good skills in information and communication technology to support teaching and learning across the curriculum. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 provides a good, broad and balanced coverage of the National Curriculum. The planned curriculum receives good enrichment from activities outside lessons, including educational visits. The Foundation Stage curriculum and teaching for reception pupils is satisfactory; compared with other years it is less imaginative in its content and organisation and less stimulating and challenging. Arrangements for pupils' care and welfare are good and they receive very good guidance and support, particularly where they have difficulty with learning or behaviour. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very carefully planned and effectively carried out. Very good links with parents and good community links help to support learning and the care shown to pupils.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher, his deputy and other senior colleagues give **good leadership** that makes this a purposeful and well-organised school. Staff are hard working and committed to the pursuit of their clear, shared aims and to the raising of standards. Good management includes thorough checks on the effectiveness of teaching and learning which are linked to very good provision of opportunities for staff to develop their professional knowledge and skills continuously. Subject co-ordinators vary in effectiveness reflecting levels of experience and resources of time but overall they lead the work well. Governors make a consistently **very good** contribution to leadership and management; they are very well informed about the school, hold it effectively to account and are active in supporting strategic planning of school improvement.

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

Parents have very positive views about the school. They particularly value the way that teachers teach well, have high expectations and are fair. Parents consider the school well led. The few dislikes of a small minority of parents were not found to be justified by inspectors. Pupils are also positive about their school, especially the helpfulness of their teachers.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- bring provision in the reception year up to the good standard found in the rest of the school;
- make more use of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning across the subjects of the curriculum;
- give pupils more help and opportunity to appreciate cultures other than their own.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils in Years 1 to 6 **achieve well** and the overall standard of their work is **good**. Children in reception achieve **satisfactorily** and attain the goals expected of them at the end of the Foundation Stage.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The oldest pupils' results in National Curriculum tests of English, mathematics and science in recent years have been generally above the national average and better than in similar schools.
- The English and mathematics work of the oldest pupils seen during the inspection is of well above average standard.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6, the great majority making good progress in relation to their abilities and previous attainment.
- Good standards are achieved in geography and in physical education.
- Most of the pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in their learning and general development.
- While overall achievement is satisfactory in the reception year, it is not as good as in other parts of the school.

#### Commentary

1. Pupils' results in National Curriculum tests have risen steadily in the long term. In the most recent years, results at ages 7 and 11 have generally been above average and sometimes well above average. There are some fluctuations from year to year reflecting changing profiles of pupils' abilities and levels of special educational needs. For example, pupils aged 7 taking the 2003 tests did a little less well than their predecessors. Their scores were average in reading and writing and slightly below average in mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.2 (17.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.0 (15.7)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.0 (16.3)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 46 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

*The average points scores for over 90 per cent of schools are in the range 11 – 19 points.*

2. Work of pupils at or approaching age 7 which was seen during the inspection showed standards to be above average in reading and writing but below in mathematics where a significant number of pupils find difficulty in learning. In science, inspectors' observations endorsed teachers' own formal assessments for last year showing standards to be average.
3. The results achieved by 11-year-olds at the end of Year 6 in the 2003 tests were well above the national average in English and above average in both mathematics and science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.4 (28.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.0 (27.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.3 (27.6)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 64 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

*The average points scores for over 90 per cent of schools are in the range 23 – 31 points.*

4. The Year 6 results in 2003 were better than in 2002 in all three subjects and they restored the steady upward trend in results that has been apparent since the previous inspection in 1998 and which matches the national improvement.
5. The work of the oldest pupils seen during the inspection was of well above average standard in both English and mathematics and it was of average standard in science. Although the inspection focused principally on the main subjects of English, mathematics and science, examples of good standards were found in work in geography and in physical education. In other subjects, examples of the standards achieved seen in lessons, from examination of pupils' past work or from discussions with pupils point to standards that meet national expectations in relation to pupils' ages and are at least satisfactory. The profile of pupils' attainments generally matches the school's priorities for school improvement in recent years. The greatest emphasis has been on English and mathematics and this is where improvement and raised standards are most evident.
6. Overall, the achievement of pupils is good. They make good progress. Pupils start at the school aged 5 with broadly average attainment and leave it at age 11 with above average attainment. When 11-year-old pupils' test results are compared with their attainment on starting school they are found to have made good progress. These test results have also been better than those of schools in areas with similar social and economic circumstances for the last three years. In 2003 results were well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science when compared with schools in similar areas. The table in the parents' summary (above) shows that the 2003 Year 6 test results were average in English and below average in mathematics and science when compared with schools which had achieved similar results in the tests for 7 year-olds in 1999. However, these measures are an unreliable guide to pupils' achievement in this school for two reasons:
  - The school's 1999 test results for 7-year-olds placed it on the borderline between two categories of schools defined by the results. A very small difference in the 7-year-olds' test results would have been sufficient to transform the 'similar schools' grades. The grades would have been 'A' (well above average) in English, and 'B' (above average) in mathematics and science. Since there is an inevitable margin of error in processes of testing and assessing pupils' attainments at age 7, the school's borderline position makes the similar school comparisons shown in the summary table unreliable.
  - Because a substantial proportion of pupils are from service families many pupils taking the national tests have received a part, and sometimes most, of their education elsewhere. For example, 8 per cent of the Year 6 pupils who took the 2003 tests had been at the school for less than a year and 13 per cent for less than two years. Nine per cent of Year 2 pupils taking the 2003 tests had spent less than a year in the school. The school provides good induction of new pupils and has good processes for assessing pupils' progress and needs. Nonetheless, records show that while some pupils who join the school part-way through their primary education subsequently progress well, pupils who have changed school generally do a little less well than others because of the disruption to their schooling. The difference is small and not a cause for concern but it is

sufficient to have a negative impact on measures of the overall progress promoted by the school when, as in this case, the school is in a borderline situation in relation to the grades.

7. The more reliable, up-to-date and broadly based evidence available to inspectors during the inspection shows that pupils are currently achieving well. They are progressing well in relation to the wide range of abilities, needs and backgrounds they represent. They are set challenging tasks by teachers to which they respond with attitudes of care and endeavour and with good behaviour.
8. Although pupils in Years 1 and 2 are currently achieving well, their standards of work, especially in mathematics, do not fully reflect this. This may be because their progress in previous years was affected by the many changes of teacher some of these pupils have experienced since they started at the school. In addition to the effect of teachers leaving and joining the school, there have been maternity leaves. The school is now emerging from this unsettled period and pupils' day to-day progress is now good.
9. There are no significant differences between boys' and girls' achievements. Pupils with special educational needs generally make good and often very good progress in their learning due to the very good levels of support they receive. Numerous examples were noted during the inspection of pupils with more severe needs reaching towards their potential, for example in gaining literacy skills and in physical activities.
10. Reception children start at the school with average attainment. They achieve satisfactorily and most are likely at the end of the reception year to attain the expected standards in all areas of learning. They are taught satisfactorily but they are not inspired or encouraged to make progress as successfully as in other classes.

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

Pupils have **good** attitudes to school and behave **well**. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is **good** and cultural development is **satisfactory**. Attendance is **good** and punctuality is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils get on well with each other and with adults and are respectful of each other's feelings and views.
- Pupils develop a keen interest in learning as they move through the school.
- In classrooms, around the school and in the playground, behaviour is good.
- The school has very good methods for promoting the pupils' punctual arrival at school.
- Although pupils have a good understanding of their own culture, not enough is done to promote an understanding of other cultures.
- There are occasional inconsistencies between classes in the ways teachers manage behaviour.

### **Commentary**

11. This school is a happy place in which to learn. Staff, pupils, parents and governors form mutually respectful and trusting working relationships which both contribute to and reflect the school's Christian ethos of care. Pupils are generally polite and courteous and take care in their responsibilities. They feel well supported by their teachers and most try hard to do their best at all times. Pupils' personal development remains a strength of the school and they have a good understanding of their own local culture. However, improvement is still needed in helping them to understand and celebrate the culturally diverse wider society in which they live. Pupils have good opportunities to contribute to decisions about the life of the school. The school council gives pupils of all ages a voice. Meetings are conducted formally and ensure

that open and calm discussion takes place on a wide range of issues, such as the Buddy system.

12. Pupils' behaviour is good because they are helped to understand that their actions have an impact on other people and the whole school community. They play and work together sociably and co-operatively and there have been no recent exclusions from school. Pupils enjoy good relationships with their peers and they are supportive of those who have disabilities. Pupils with special educational needs have every opportunity the school can provide to do well and be successful. Consequently, these pupils grow in confidence and are positive in their attitudes. They make good gains towards being as independent as possible. Pupils respect those who are different from themselves in gender, background or race.
13. The recent push to improve behaviour further through the adoption of a new behaviour management policy and staff training is beginning to pay off. Behaviour in the dining room, where agreed strategies are used consistently, and in the playground has improved considerably and is now very good. Pupils say they feel safe and happy in these situations. However, following the many recent staff changes there are occasional inconsistencies in the application of the behaviour management policy in classrooms. For example, children in the reception classes achieve satisfactorily in their personal, social and emotional development but they sometimes find it difficult to settle to learning. The school has yet to monitor formally the impact of the new policy but is already aware of and tackling the minor inconsistencies in its use.
14. As pupils get older they develop an increasing enjoyment in learning. Teaching, especially with the older pupils, often generates an excitement in learning, as in a Year 5 design and technology lesson. Pupils concentrate and work hard because they know this is expected and because they want to learn. From the start, children are expected to take some responsibility for themselves and the increased emphasis on this as pupils get older helps them to respond positively. Time is set aside in all classes for pupils to discuss issues that allow them to explore their own views and feelings and those of others. This helps them to develop an understanding and tolerance of others' viewpoints, such as the case for and against war.
15. Assemblies, religious education and personal, social and health education lessons all play an important part in promoting pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Opportunities such as residential visits contribute very positively to moral and social development. The school promotes a very strong spiritual awareness through assemblies and ceremonies, but some opportunities to support this in lessons are missed.

### Attendance

16. Very good monitoring procedures have consistently maintained the level of attendance above the national average and ensured that there are no unauthorised absences. Pupils are prompt to school and the quick and efficient registration means that lessons begin on time and pupils are quickly on task. Although there has been a decrease in the level of authorised absence over the last year, holidays taken in term time continue to depress the level of attendance.

#### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%) 2002/3

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.6	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.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

**The quality of education provided is good.** Teaching and learning are **good**. The curriculum is of **good** quality and receives **good** enrichment from activities outside lessons. **Very good** care and guidance of pupils, **very good** relations with parents and **good** links with the community and other schools also contribute to the good educational provision.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are of overall **good** quality. The great majority of lessons in Years 1 to 6 are good; in the reception year they are satisfactory. Teaching and learning are supported by **good** assessments of pupils' work.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers know their subjects well, plan lessons well and help pupils make good progress in knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Teachers show high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Pupils show interest, effort, concentration and good behaviour; their work is well presented.
- Planning and organisation of reception year activities is not sufficiently stimulating or challenging for the children to progress as quickly as they could.
- Teachers and support staff give very good support to pupils with special educational needs.
- Some opportunities are missed to support teaching and learning through the use of information and communication technology.
- The quality of the teachers' marking of the oldest pupils' work is very good indeed.

### Commentary

17. Teaching staff are well qualified and have benefited from good opportunities for further training and updating of their knowledge. Consequently they have good knowledge of the subjects, which helps them to plan lessons well. They set relevant and challenging tasks, explain clearly and ask good questions to reinforce pupils' learning and check their progress. Planning is clear about exactly what pupils are to learn and activities are well designed and managed to ensure pupils take steps in their learning in a proper sequence and at a good pace. As a result, pupils progress well in their knowledge, understanding and skills.
18. Teachers are effective in engaging pupils' interest in the work and pupils say that they enjoy their lessons. Teachers' high expectations for pupils' work are successfully backed up with encouragement and reward. Pupils are willing to work, they concentrate on and persevere at their work and they take pride in their achievements. The great majority behave well and as a result lessons are largely calm, orderly events where attention is given fully to learning. A good deal of work is therefore completed with care, as is seen in the neat work found in most pupils' exercise books.
19. Teachers use a good range of teaching methods. There are some good examples of the use of information and communication technology to support learning in a range of subjects. This was well illustrated in lessons during the inspection when one Year 5 class worked at mathematics and another at music using the facilities of the computer suite. Although this aspect of the teaching is satisfactory, there are some missed opportunities to exploit new technologies to support teaching and learning and the classroom computers are underused.
20. The great majority of lessons in Years 1 to 6 are of good, and quite often very good, quality. Those in the reception year are satisfactory. Here, activities are less well planned to stimulate pupils' interest and to challenge their capacity to learn. The children are happy, interested and soundly behaved but the teaching does not fully capitalise on these qualities to promote learning.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (4)	12 (27)	19 (42)	12 (27)	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.

21. Teachers generally provide high levels of support for pupils who have special educational needs. Thorough additional support for individuals or small groups, sometimes in the classroom and sometimes in a separate room, is given by teaching assistants and the co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCO) and is very effectively managed. This helps to ensure pupils make good progress across the range of the curriculum and in the various other aspects of school life.
22. Planning of appropriate tasks and support for less able pupils is very thorough. Planning of tasks to challenge the most able pupils is sometimes less thorough but still satisfactory overall. It is generally good in English and mathematics and this is reflected in the substantial proportions of pupils who exceed the standards expected for their ages. In other subjects, the most able pupils are encouraged to extend themselves and these pupils take advantage of open-ended learning opportunities to stretch themselves so that they achieve at least satisfactorily. However, occasionally opportunities are missed, for example in science, to present these pupils with explicit challenges that ensure their capabilities are fully exploited.
23. Planning for teaching makes good use of thorough processes for keeping track of pupils' progress from year to year. Targets are set on this basis for teachers and pupils to aim at. In addition, teachers mark pupils' day-to-day work regularly and most use the opportunities well to comment on standards and the fulfilment of tasks, to make corrections and to indicate whether improvement or progress has been made. The quality of the marking is not entirely consistent throughout the school, but it is usually good. The quality of the teachers' marking of the oldest pupils' work is very good indeed. It provides apt praise for good work and good effort and is helpful in providing the pupils with clear information about how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. In lessons, teachers freely communicate with pupils through discussion and praise of their work and level of effort. This helps to promote the pupils' awareness of their progress, but the encouragement of pupils' own assessments of how well they are doing are at an early stage of development. However, a new system of assessment in information and communication technology makes good and systematic use of pupil self-assessment.

### The curriculum

The school provides a **good** curriculum. The formal curriculum provides **good** opportunities for learning and receives **good** enrichment from activities outside lessons. Accommodation and resources for learning are both **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good, broad and balanced coverage of the National Curriculum.
- Good provision is made for the enrichment of the curriculum through additional programmes of activity, educational visits and optional clubs.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.

### Commentary

24. The school meets the statutory requirements for the curriculum, including provision for religious education and collective worship. The school follows the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. In other subjects teachers have effectively adapted national guidelines for their schemes of work. Teachers plan collaboratively and thoroughly to ensure pupils take the necessary next steps in their learning as they progress through the curriculum and to provide the same quality of learning opportunities for both classes in each year group. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 provides a good, broad and balanced coverage of the National Curriculum. The Foundation Stage curriculum for reception children is satisfactory, but compared with other years it is less imaginative in its content and organisation and less stimulating and challenging.
25. Learning, especially for older pupils, receives good enrichment from activities outside lessons, including residential and non-residential educational visits together with visitors to the school. There are substantial provisions for homework which parents value enhance their achievement. Pupils' learning has been enhanced by the school's involvement in the Healthy Schools Programme. The school organises a Golden Time each week in which all pupils are provided with a choice of interesting and well-organised activities, which enhance the curriculum.
26. The school's provision for special educational needs is very good. Pupils' needs are identified early and progress is monitored closely. Detailed individual education plans are very clear about targets for pupils' progress and the support they are to receive. Pupils are fully included in all curriculum activities and their needs are well catered for with the support of very good special needs assistants. The school is effective in ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and the learning opportunities provided.
27. The school's accommodation is adequate overall. A major building programme since the previous inspection has included enlargement of classrooms. The expressive arts studio is a particularly good feature. The computer suite is now too small following a growth in the size of classes and the increased curricular emphasis on the use of information and communication technology since the suite was established.. Pupils were involved in the design of the courtyard, which is reminiscent of a Celtic cross, and they help to maintain it. Good play areas, sports field and gardens, including a Millennium garden, surround the school. These good environmental areas have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes, behaviour and learning.
28. The school's resources of books and equipment are satisfactory. They are well organised and effectively used in all areas of the curriculum. There are good resources to support pupils with special educational needs.

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

Provision for pupils' care and welfare is **good** and pupils are provided with **very good** support, advice and guidance. The school takes **good** account of pupils' views and involves them well in planning school development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has a very strong Christian ethos, with high expectations of good behaviour and intolerance of bullying.
- All staff show a high level of care for pupils.
- Staff are sensitive to the needs of each individual child with very good all round support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Procedures for child protection are very good.
- Checks that external agencies meet their obligations for safety audits are not tight enough.

## Commentary

29. The school places very high priority on pupils' welfare. This school can be justifiably proud that its Christian ethos is reflected in the very caring support it gives to all its pupils. Child protection procedures are very good and all the staff are aware of them. The educational welfare officer and social services provide strong support when required. The school has drawn up their access plan for pupils with disabilities and has already provided suitable ramps, handrails and toilet facilities. There is a very strict policy for the administration of medicines and a significant number of staff are qualified in first aid. The Healthy Schools Project is now an influential part of the school's everyday life. Provision for health and safety is good overall and there are detailed risk assessments carried out for all school visits. However, the school is awaiting an overdue inspection of electrical safety from a maintenance contractor.
30. Positive relationships between staff and pupils are promoted because adults provide good role models and talk *to* the children not *at* them. Very good use is made of outside professional support for any individual with special needs or for counselling after bereavement. The staff have high expectations of good behaviour and the pupils respond accordingly. Any anti-social behaviour is addressed immediately and there is no concern about bullying amongst the pupils. There is effective monitoring throughout the school of the support given to pupils that ensures its success in bringing about their progress and personal development.
31. The school is sensitive to pupils' views and feelings and takes good account of them. Pupils are able to express emotions, concerns and ideas through Circle Time<sup>1</sup>. The school council actively promotes citizenship. The 'buddy system', recently introduced, means the older pupils form a partnership with the younger ones and take responsibilities when there is an opportunity. Annual reports comment clearly on personal development and pupils have sound opportunities to express their likes and dislikes about school. Individual certificates, group rewards and house points promote both individual self-esteem and responsibility to others. Parents are happy that the school helps their children to become mature and independent.
32. There is a very good induction programme for children coming into the school from the pre-reception group with part time introduction into school. Parents of pupils transferring into the school from other areas say children have been made very welcome. Pupils say that they are happy to come to school and know how well they are progressing from their teachers, the marking of their work and the awards given.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **very good** partnership with parents, **good** links with the community and **very good** links with other schools.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very positive views of the school.
- Very good support for pupils' learning results from close links with parents.
- Parents, particularly 'The Friends of the School', give strong support to the work of the school.
- Information provided for parents is very good.
- Very effective links with other schools and colleges have brought such benefits as the 'buddy system' and improvement to the school's environment.
- Strong links with the church and other parts of the community enrich the curriculum.

## Commentary

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<sup>1</sup> Circle Time – when younger pupils sit together and share thoughts and feelings or talk about things that are important to or concern them. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

33. The school continues to maintain a very strong partnership with parents and effective links with the community. These have a very positive effect in all areas of school life.
34. Almost all parents are very satisfied with all aspects of the school, have no concerns and feel very welcome. They trust the members of staff to deal with the care of their child at school and praise the 'open door' policy. They strongly support the ethos of support and care, and the high expectations that help children to become mature and responsible. The quality of information to parents is very good. Regular newsletters are sent out on all aspects of school life and letters from class teachers on curriculum or other class matters supplement these. The school brochure and governors' annual report to parents are very informative and meet legal requirements. Pupils' good annual reports are detailed and personal and a meeting is held for parents to discuss them so that they know how to support their children's further progress. Two other meetings are held during the year but parents say that the staff are approachable at any time. Inspectors found no evidence to support the view of a minority of questionnaires returned that parents are not kept well informed of the progress of their children or that the school does not take account of their concerns or suggestions. The school has sought parents' suggestions for any improvements.
35. A significant number of parents or grandparents help regularly in the school. The 'Friends of Chestnut Street' is a very active group strongly supported by parents and other members of the community. The school has strong links with All Saints Church, which is always used for the Christmas carol service. At this time and again before Christmas, the school welcomes senior citizens and provides tea, entertainment and gifts for them.
36. There are good links with the community. Members of the community, including local businesses, support the summer and Christmas fayres. The school joins in many charitable activities in the community. The school council helped to improve 'Play in Ruskington', a local play scheme.
37. There are very good procedures in place for preparing pupils in Year 6 for the next stage of their education. These are aided by the very successful relationships with other schools and colleges. The school competes with others in sport and has an important link with a local secondary school with Specialist Sports Status. Work experience is made available at the school for students from the secondary schools. A very strong link is maintained with the RAF College at Cranwell. Cadets from the college have carried out work to improve the playground. The school has formed a valuable link with a school in Vancouver and the 'buddy system' introduced through it is popular with the pupils.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school's leadership and management are **good**. Governance is **very good**. The leadership of the headteacher is **good**. Leadership and management of other key staff are **good** and the school is managed **effectively**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Accurate self-evaluation enables the school to plan further development with clarity and vision to continue to raise standards.
- The governors have a very clear idea of areas where the school is most effective and what changes are needed.
- Staff new to the school are supported very well.
- There is a very good programme of on-going professional development which ensures that staff work effectively together.
- The school is highly committed to caring for each pupil so that they feel included in all aspects of school life and supported and encouraged to do their best.

- The management of the provision for special educational needs is very good.
- Subject co-ordinators are not yet all equally effective as some are less experienced in their posts.

## Commentary

38. The school's leadership is strong in promoting teamwork and a very positive school ethos of care and support. This is an important aspect of the school's work, appreciated by parents and recognised by governors as one way it helps its pupils to learn successfully. The headteacher is successful in engendering a shared purpose of raising standards and helping each pupil to develop as a person. The headteacher and deputy headteacher form a knowledgeable and hard-working team in which the headteacher's skill in promoting and managing change is complemented by the deputy headteacher's very good implementation of management systems. School self-evaluation is honest and accurate and priorities for school development are identified well. This leads to the creation of strong action plans to bring about improvement. The school has a wide-ranging, very well managed programme of consultation so that all adults in the school community can contribute to school development.
39. Governors make a consistently very good contribution to leadership and management by acting as true 'critical friends' and partners and challenging decisions to ensure that the pupils' best interests are served at all times. Governors are very well informed about the school and show much initiative in their contributions to strategic planning for the school's future. They consult closely with the school's senior management and subject co-ordinators to check standards, to ensure that different groups of pupils are learning as well as possible and to agree changes to planning and teaching where necessary. Where it is available, data from test and other assessments are carefully analysed. The development of checks on teaching is ongoing as some subject co-ordinators are relatively new and have not yet had time to become fully effective. Many co-ordinators provide a model of good teaching and are knowledgeable and confident in the subjects or aspects in which they lead.
40. The special educational needs co-ordinator leads and manages this aspect of the school's work very well indeed. Identification of needs and the challenge of ensuring the best possible support for the pupils are paramount. Systems are very efficient. Individual education plans, records and details of pupils' progress are thorough. Teachers are provided with clear information about the pupils in their classes who have special educational needs. They assist in the identification of pupils who need extra support and use the information in the pupils' individual education plans to guide their own planning. Teaching assistants are given clear aims for their work. Targets for the pupils' learning and overall progress are attainable but challenging. Very good liaison is maintained between the school and the variety of other agencies that support the provision of special educational needs.
41. Underpinning the strengths in leadership and management is a very good induction programme for teachers new to the school and graduate trainee students. This enables them to become effective quickly as they know very clearly what is expected of them and are given full support by all members of staff, particularly their mentors. There are very thorough systems in place for the formal monitoring of teaching and its effect on the pupils' learning. Accurate evaluations enable the school to provide well-targeted opportunities for further professional development to ensure that the school development aims are achieved and that teachers meet their own professional targets. This is an important way in which the school promotes rising standards and improved education. The very good performance management systems are new but have yet to be applied consistently by all team leaders to ensure even better support for teachers in this process.
42. Financial management is very knowledgeable and thorough. The governors and school are conscientious in ensuring that spending decisions are made wisely to reflect priorities for school improvement.

**Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	822,935
Total expenditure	825,967
Expenditure per pupil	2,049

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	67,573
Balance carried forward to the next	64,541

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

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

Provision for Foundation Stage children in the reception year is **satisfactory**.

43. Planning for all areas of learning is satisfactory. It takes full account of national guidance in planning steps in learning to help children of different abilities to make progress. Teaching in both classes is satisfactory in all areas of learning, but it is less imaginative and exciting in content and organisation than in other stages in the school. This is reflected in children's achievement, which, while satisfactory, is not as good as for older pupils. Children enter school with a wide spread of abilities but generally they match national norms in all areas of learning. Satisfactory provision enables most children to attain the expected standards in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1.
44. Classroom assistants and volunteer adults are used well so that most activities are organised smoothly and safely. The staff are very caring of all the children and make sure that all have the same opportunities to learn. They make careful and accurate records of how each child is progressing in each area of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff take care to praise the children's efforts, but this is often over-effusive and does not give the children a consistent message about how well they are doing and how they could do better.
45. At the previous inspection, provision was judged to be good and children were found to be attaining levels expected for their age in all areas of learning. However, provision has not kept pace with increasing national expectations. The school has made the improvement of Foundation Stage provision one of its priorities in order to address this situation. The leadership of the recently appointed Lower School co-ordinator is satisfactory but has yet to achieve the required impact. He has only recently had the opportunity to focus on this area in depth, but he has a very good grasp of what needs to be done and well-informed action plans are in place.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **satisfactory**.

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

- The very good information given to parents before their children start school helps the children to come to school happily and confidently.
- Teachers do not apply the school's behaviour code consistently so that children sometimes take too long to settle to classroom routines.

#### **Commentary**

46. Daily routines are firmly established so that the children feel secure. Staff expect the children to work co-operatively and to obey class rules, but do not always reinforce this firmly enough so that the pace of teaching, whilst satisfactory, is not particularly urgent. Children with special educational needs are given caring support so that they join in with the rest of the class. Achievement and standards match expectations.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

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

- Teachers identify how the children's speaking skills can be developed in some, but not all, activities.
- Formal guided reading sessions give the children experience of a wide range of books, but the organisation does not make the best use of adults' time.

### **Commentary**

47. The classroom learning environment promotes the children's literacy skills satisfactorily. Teaching of reading and writing is often formal and enables the children to match expectations, but lack of opportunity to write more freely, such as making their own notices and labels, prevents better progress and the attainment of higher standards. Satisfactory teaching is helping the children to make connections between speaking, reading and writing.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The children's numeracy skills are developed soundly through rhymes and contexts that interest them.
- Opportunities are missed to promote the application of numeracy skills in other areas of learning.

### **Commentary**

48. Satisfactory teaching in numeracy lessons involves the children in counting and recognising numbers and the children are expected to work out answers to mathematical problems so that they achieve satisfactorily to meet expectations.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children in both classes have a sound range of experiences to help them make sense of their world.
- Regular use of computers in the computer suite ensures that the children use them confidently on their own, although opportunities to do so in other lessons are limited.

### **Commentary**

49. Visitors, celebrations of traditional festivals, both Christian and of other faith groups, and discussions on family life help the children to make satisfactory achievement in understanding familiar things in their lives and gradually widening their experiences. Satisfactory teaching enables the children to reach the expected level.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children make satisfactory gains in their learning and so attain the expected level in formal, taught situations.

- Regular 'shared activity' sessions provide good opportunities for physical activity, but these are not so carefully planned as more formal sessions and attainment is lower.

### **Commentary**

50. The outdoor area is spacious and adaptable, enabling the children to play a wide range of games and engage in different activities. Here, satisfactory teaching enables the children to make satisfactory gains in their learning so that they attain in line with national expectations. When given free choice they do not do as well as when they are guided by their teachers.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children's skills in using materials and media are at the expected level.
- Children are developing manipulative and imaginative skills, but this is limited by the range of materials offered for exploration.

### **Commentary**

51. Satisfactory teaching enables the children to develop imaginative play to a satisfactory extent using language to express their thoughts and ideas so that they meet expectations. The resources offered, for example in the imaginary play area and in model making, are adequate but not exciting and unusual enough to promote better learning.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision for English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are very good in reading and writing and good in speaking and listening.
- The quality of older pupils' story writing and poetry is very good.
- Good teaching helps pupils achieve well.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to the work.
- Teachers mark pupils work well.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT resources to support teaching and learning.
- While pupils' literacy skills are good overall, they are not sufficiently promoted across the range of the curriculum, particularly at Key Stage 1.

### **Commentary**

52. Standards are good by the end of Year 2. Present Year 6 pupils have very good knowledge, understanding and skills in reading and writing and good skills in speaking and listening. Standards from Year 1 to Year 6 have risen since the previous inspection. Improvement has come about in consequence of the school's rigorous efforts to identify the weaker points in the pupils' learning and its determination to ensure teaching and support strengthens them. Pupils achieve well in relation to their individual capabilities and needs. No issues of pupils' achievement relating to gender were noted during inspection.
53. Speaking and listening skills are effectively encouraged in English lessons. The pupils are given good opportunities for small and larger group discussion, particularly in classes in Years 4 to 6, and this is beneficial in developing their thoughts and ideas about their work. The pupils

are mostly open and confident in answering questions, contributing to debates and addressing their peers about what they are doing or have done.

54. Reading skills are promoted well, with regular reading sessions, discussions and work on stories, poetry and accounts of events as well as suitable emphasis on the 'mechanics' of word-recognition and text analysis. Teachers often use imaginative ways of engaging the pupils' interest. For example, the encouragement of dramatic role-play of story characters by pupils whose general attainment is at a lower level than average greatly enhances their abilities to understand and enjoy texts. Again, pupils' knowledge of the layout, emphasis and meaning of newspaper headlines in a Year 4 class was an outstanding feature noted during inspection. The pupils' level of achievement was very high and general progress outstandingly good.
55. The pupils make good and often very good progress in writing, but this tends to be at the later stages in the school. Early skills are promoted satisfactorily, but it is the very supportive teaching in later years that ensures the pupils' very good learning. The pupils write imaginative stories. They use lively and well-developed vocabulary to describe interesting characters and events and their poetry writing is imbued with feeling and sometimes startlingly evocative cadences. By the time pupils are 11, handwriting is usually neat, fluent and thoroughly legible and spellings are mostly correct. Standards in both handwriting and spelling are clearly above average.
56. Teachers plan lessons well. Lessons are usually lively and briskly paced and succeeding lessons follow a progressive step-by-step format. The content is relevant and challenging and learning objectives are shared and reiterated to ensure the pupils' good understanding of tasks, targets and time-scales. Attention is concentrated beneficially on ensuring the pupils have the essential knowledge and skills for good communication. Literacy is taught very well to all ability groups. Extra support is given to those pupils who need it most and those with special educational needs are very effectively supported. In consequence, pupils are eager to get on with tasks and be successful. They work well in groups or on individual challenges. They work hard and take good pride in their work and achievements. Another supportive element is the good quality of teachers' marking in English, which is often informative, critical and helpful, especially for the oldest pupils.
57. The leadership of the subject is good. Overall, planning and monitoring of the school's work is efficiently done and aspects of provision that need development are well spotted and worked upon. Efficient links are maintained with other curriculum managers, such as the assessment and special educational needs co-ordinator, so that initiatives can have unity of purpose and maximum impact on the pupils' development.

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

58. Pupils generally have sound opportunities to apply and practise their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in the work that they do across the curriculum. They use these opportunities well, especially in the substantial opportunities for speaking, listening, reading and writing that older pupils find in their work in science and the humanities. Work in English is sometimes supported through use of information and communication technology but this is not an extensive feature.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

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

- Standards in Key Stage 2 have improved since the last inspection and they are now very good.
- Pupils achieve well, older ones applying themselves particularly well to their work.
- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school and in Years 3 to 6 they are very good.

- Provision is very well led and managed and shows a strong focus on improving the standards in mathematics.

### Commentary

59. In the 2003 national tests for pupils aged 11, results were above average, while the work of present Year 6 pupils is well above national expectations for pupils' ages. Since the last inspection the school has worked successfully to raise standards in mathematics and further development continues to be a focus of the school improvement plan. Pupils' overall progress in mathematics as they move through the school is good.
60. Evidence from lessons and from pupils' work this year shows that good teaching is now helping pupils in Years 1 and 2 to achieve well in relation to their capabilities and levels of special educational need. In lessons seen most pupils settled quickly to their independent work and stayed on task and worked at a good pace and with attention to accuracy. A few pupils find concentration difficult when working independently. In the present Year 2 the great majority of pupils attain the standards expected for their age, but a small but significant number with special educational needs, and some who have only recently joined the school, are finding learning in the subject difficult, despite the good help they are given. This means that by the end of the year the overall attainment of present Year 2 pupils is likely to fall short of national expectations. Standards at age 7 have been affected by interruptions to the continuity of their progress in previous years caused by a significant number of staff changes. In addition, some individual pupils' progress has been affected by changing school.
61. In Years 3 to 6 pupils' progress is good and sometimes very good. By age 11 the great majority of pupils at least meet the nationally expected level of attainment and about two in five exceed it. This is the result of teaching that is very good overall with some occasionally excellent teaching when lessons are particularly challenging, pupils' respond with a high level of effort and interest and a great deal is achieved in the available time. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons very well, making good use of the national guidelines. Good methods are effectively used, although there is a little inconsistency in the pace of the mental/oral beginning to lessons and in the challenges to pupils' problem-solving skills that teachers provide. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by teachers and learning assistants and they achieve well. There is little difference to be found between the achievement of boys and girls.
62. Computers were seen being used to support learning in mathematics in two classes, together with one mathematics lesson taught in the computer suite. Overall, though, use of the computer as a tool towards improving mathematical standards among the pupils is underdeveloped.

**A lesson seen in Year 4 demonstrated exemplary practice in the teaching of mathematics, with every pupil achieving very well.** Pupils were infected by the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject. Their concentration was caught by the vibrant, stimulating mental/oral start to the lesson. Learning was fun. Very careful planning of the lesson, based on precise learning objectives, ensured that every pupil was thoroughly challenged by tasks, given the help to succeed and therefore enabled to achieve to their full potential. High-achieving pupils' problem-solving skills were fully tested. The teacher used very good probing questions to advance the pupils' mathematical thinking. Very high standards of work and pupil participation were expected and achieved. Very skilful promotion of pupils' motivation and attitudes meant that they showed confidence and no fear of failure. The learning assistant gave very good support to the teaching and learning.

63. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership for the subject and the subject is very well managed. Such qualities have helped to improve provision for the subject significantly. The co-ordinator has made rigorous checks on the effectiveness of teaching and learning and analysed the strengths and weaknesses of the pupils' understanding thoroughly. This is carefully reflected in the planning of future provision. There have been good developments in

assessments of pupils' progress and allied target setting. The co-ordinator is a Leading Mathematics Teacher and is a very good role model. Mathematics has a high profile around the school. In each classroom there is a good visual display of number facts and correct mathematical vocabulary appropriate to the age of the pupils.

## **MATHEMATICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

64. Sound use of mathematics can be seen in a good range of subjects, including science, geography, design and technology, information and communication technology, history and art. Mathematical measurement, tabulation and the use of diagrams is often taught in conjunction with pupils' work on investigation in science or geography. In one very thoughtfully planned lesson seen pupils developed their mathematical skills of data handling as they used information and communication technology to record data collected from a geographical investigation and to display it in a variety of graphical forms.

## **SCIENCE**

The provision for science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The oldest pupils' results in the 2003 national tests were above average.
- Teaching and learning are of good quality.
- Pupils achieve well.
- Pupils are interested and enthusiastic about the work.
- The subject is being well led through a well-planned programme of development.

### **Commentary**

65. Pupils' results in National Curriculum tests at age 11 were above average in 2003 and were better than those for schools in similar areas. This points to good achievement by pupils and is consistent with the evidence from lessons and work seen during the inspection that pupils are progressing well in relation to their capabilities and earlier attainment.
66. The good teaching seen during the inspection helps pupils make good gains in their knowledge, understanding and skills in the subject. They respond well to teachers' high expectations of the knowledge they can acquire and of their ability to use the proper scientific terms to represent that knowledge.
67. Teaching is well planned to cover the curriculum systematically and to stimulate the interest pupils show. Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour are evident in the careful writing, diagrams and drawings they do. In several lessons seen, interesting practical investigations lead to a lively and thoughtful involvement from pupils. This aids good development of understanding of the sort found in discussions with older pupils when they are asked to explain the various ways plants reproduce, the forces that can oppose gravity, or why car windscreens mist up on cold mornings. Skills of investigation progress well. When asked to criticise an imaginary investigation, the oldest pupils show a sure understanding of the principles of a fair test as they identify the variables that need to be controlled. Asked to design an investigation of their own, these pupils respond very thoughtfully. Although achieving well in relation to their capabilities and prior attainments, present pupils' standards are average throughout Years 1 to 6. Compared with the previous Year 6 that took the 2003 tests there are a few more pupils of lower ability or with special educational needs.
68. Planning provides well for less able pupils and those with special educational needs and these pupils receive extra help so that they achieve well. Less attention is paid to devising ways to challenge fully the most able pupils and occasionally a few such pupils achieve less than they could. Occasional use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) but there

are missed opportunities to use ICT skills to tabulate, present graphically or analyse data from pupils' investigations. A computer-linked microscope and apparatus for recording temperatures and other data have very recently been acquired and there are good plans to use this to develop links between science work and ICT skills.

69. The subject co-ordinator gives good leadership to the work. Planning and resourcing of the work is well led and checks on planning and provision are made. The co-ordinator has a sound sense of strengths and weaknesses in the provision and has used this to devise a well-considered plan for improvements over the forthcoming year. Some good development has already taken place in the assessment and tracking of pupils' progress and there are good plans for further refinement. The improvement plan is well linked to relevant staff development activity.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

Provision for information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are of good quality and pupils achieve well in ICT lessons.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject.
- The provision is well led and managed.
- The size and layout of the ICT suite hinders some aspects of teaching and learning.
- Opportunities for pupils to apply their skills to learning in other subjects are limited.

### **Commentary**

70. Across Years 1 to 6 almost all pupils demonstrate a sound competency for their ages in a good range of skills within the subject. They make good progress in using a range of computer programs for different purposes. Older pupils confidently use their understanding of how to select program tools and options and apply them to manipulate text, tables, pictures and graphs. They send and receive e-mails and search the Internet effectively to locate precisely the information they need. Pupils' good basic understanding of the ways computer programs are used enables them quickly to master unfamiliar programs. This was well illustrated during the inspection when Year 5 pupils were introduced to a program for making their own musical compositions. Although pupils' attainment is good in many areas, the oldest pupils are less clear about the uses of ICT to control events or to sense and monitor physical data, the school having only recently acquired the equipment to support more challenging work of this kind. Overall, therefore, the oldest pupils' standards match the levels expected nationally for their age.
71. Teaching and learning in the weekly lessons in the ICT Suite are of good quality. Teachers know the subject well and plan appropriate tasks to which pupils respond with a high level of interest and enthusiasm. Challenging work is provided and lessons proceed at a brisk pace, with pupils achieving well. Although teachers and pupils make the best use they can of the ICT Suite, the small size and awkward layout of the room, and the limitations these impose on apparatus, hinder aspects of teaching and learning. It is difficult for teachers to demonstrate skills so that all pupils can clearly see, hard for teachers to monitor pupils' progress and difficult for pupils to see and evaluate each other's achievements.
72. The subject co-ordinator provides good, enthusiastic leadership and management of the subject and she supports and encourages staff well. There has been significant improvement in provision since the previous inspection when weaknesses were highlighted. The curriculum and resources are improved. Staff training has led to better teaching so that pupils are now achieving well and standards are rising. A sound check is kept on provision and there is thoughtful planning for future improvement. A good system for detailed assessment of pupils'

progress in subject skills has been adopted. This involves pupils in assessing themselves and thus makes a positive contribution to their sense of responsibility for their own learning.

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

73. Provision for this aspect of the curriculum is satisfactory but less strong than many other aspects. ICT lessons often make valuable links with several of the subjects of the curriculum as, for example, when pupils explore databases for information in several subjects or tabulate and graph data connected with their geography work. Activity in the computer suite is sometimes supplemented by work at computers in the classrooms but this equipment provides less potential and this is a limited feature of the work as a whole. Although there are some good examples of ICT being used to support learning in other subjects, there are also missed opportunities for further achievement by pupils, for example, in recording, organising, presenting and analysing data from science investigations.

### **HUMANITIES**

74. Provision in geography and history was sampled during the inspection, with three lessons seen in geography (in Years 1, 2 and 3) and one in history (in Year 4). No overall judgements about provision in these subjects are made. However, the geography lessons observed and displays around the school provided examples of work of good quality. In the lessons seen, teaching was good, promoting good achievement and rapid learning. Geography teaching is firmly based within the pupils' own experiences and environments, giving them a solid basis for further exploration of unfamiliar environments and more abstract geographical ideas. The pupils' literacy, design and technology and computer skills are used well to develop learning and make it more interesting.
75. The one history lesson seen, pupils' past work and displays around the school suggest standards in history are in line with national expectations. However, the lesson seen, which was about the Viking invasion of Lindisfarne, was of especially good quality. The teacher adapted original writings from the time and the pupils dramatised events showing very good empathy. There was a buzz of enthusiastic learning with the pupils totally involved in their work. Within the classroom were very good instructive displays of books, timelines and pictures, models of a Viking helmet and Viking boats. This is a cross-curricular topic with effective links to English, geography and design and technology. Around the school, other displays of pupils' work and copies of old photographs showed good use of the local area to develop historical enquiry.

### **Religious Education**

Provision in the subject is **good**.

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

- Pupils are encouraged to show respect for Christian beliefs and other world religions.
- Teaching is good and is improved since the last inspection.

#### **Commentary**

76. Three lessons in religious education and one Circle Time linked to religious education were observed. There was limited written work to examine. However, the lessons seen, analysis of the available work and talking to pupils indicate that at the time of the inspection pupils are achieving well. This reflects improving provision for the subject. However, this has yet to have its full impact on the oldest pupils' standards, which remain in line with expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, as they were at the time of the last inspection.

77. In the lessons seen teaching was good with pupils gaining a good understanding for their age and ability of Islam, Judaism and Christianity. Discussions with Year 6 pupils show that they are developing their own ideas and beliefs and many pupils are capable of mature discussion. They have a good understanding that symbols are important in religion. They suggest examples of the symbols and know the key features of a church. They recall well stories from the Bible. Following a visit by Year 3 to the local church, the teacher led a good discussion on why people visit a church and the pupils constructed a human sculpture as a reminder of how they felt when going in to the church.
78. Religious education is planned well to link closely with collective worship. Pupils write sensitive prayers, which are displayed around a prayer focus. There is a clear Church of England ethos in the school. The co-ordinator is leading the subject well and has promoted good improvements. She has led the adoption of sound assessment procedures and has a clear vision for the development of the subject.

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

79. During the inspection no lessons were observed in art and design but one lesson in design and technology and three in music were seen. No overall judgements about provisions in these subjects are made.
80. Work in **art and design** on display around the school was at the expected level. Some pastel sketches of feathers and still life pencil drawings were of high quality. A narrow range of media was used in the work seen and there was very little three-dimensional art-work displayed. The school has few images by famous artists or from other cultures to stimulate the pupils' imagination or to give them a standard towards which to strive.
81. The one lesson in **design and technology** seen was in Year 5. The teaching here was very good and the quality of the pupils' work and achievement was good. Progress in the lesson was very good. Very brief observations of work around the school indicate that standards are average and that the pupils make at least satisfactory progress in their learning.
82. In **music**, pupils in a Year 2 lesson showed a satisfactory rhythmic awareness as they joined in some challenging exercises in clapping rhythms. Year 4 pupils were seen making appropriate progress in understanding conventional musical scores and clapping correct note-values from such scores. Pupils in a Year 6 lesson showed a sensitive appreciation of the mood and meanings of some modern song lyrics and an understanding of the variety of roles that song has in social and cultural life. All of these lessons were well-taught and promoted good learning. They represent promising signs of the school's current plan to raise the profile of creative aspects of the curriculum after a number of years when school and national priorities have lain elsewhere. Recent appointments of staff with expertise in this area are also a promising development. A weakness that has yet to be resolved is the quality of singing in assemblies and hymn practices where there is a good deal of inaccuracy in the singing and a lack of sensitivity and expression.

### **Physical education**

The provision for physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils are keen and achieve well, most making progressively good gains in their physical skills.
- A good curriculum is very well supported by a wide range of activities outside lessons.
- Provision is well led by the co-ordinator.

## **Commentary**

83. Gymnastics and games were the two elements of physical education inspected. Information about swimming and other elements was gathered from discussions with the subject co-ordinator, evidence of extra-curricular activities and scrutiny of records and portfolios of work and events. Standards have risen since the previous inspection.
84. The pupils' gymnastic standards are good. At both key stages, pupils bend, stretch, curl and balance well and create imaginative sequences of movement on floor and apparatus. In games they are developing good ball-control skills and an awareness of the need for team effort and fairness in rules of play. They throw and kick, catch and pass, with increasing control and accuracy. Standards here are also good.
85. The teaching is good. A significant number of the teachers have good sporting skills themselves and their enthusiasm and expertise is beneficial. Lessons are planned to ensure progression in the pupils' development and the range of activities is wide enough to capture the interests of different groups. Good attention is paid to ensuring the pupils' safety during lessons and appropriate attention is given to warming-up and warming-down before and after activities.
86. Most pupils enjoy their physical education activities and make good efforts to improve their knowledge and skills. They listen to instructions well. They support each other, share equipment readily and the few who sometimes show some reluctance on colder days get much encouragement to join in and enjoy themselves.
87. The subject is led well by a relatively new co-ordinator. The plans for the subject's development are apt and the overall curriculum for physical education is being drawn together efficiently to ensure maximum opportunity and benefit to the pupils. This curriculum is supported very beneficially by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These include opportunities for competitive sport, interest groups and residential visits.
88. A very positive feature of the school's work in physical education is the way in which it approaches the learning of pupils who have significant special educational needs. In a lesson in Year 3 a pupil was very well supported by both teacher and teaching assistant in inventing a sequence of movements over apparatus. The pupil was encouraged to determine his own challenges and was helped to be successful. This had a very significant impact on his confidence and his self-esteem.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

89. Only two lessons in this area were seen and no overall judgement about provision is made. However, both sessions were soundly planned with a clear sense of the intended personal development of pupils. In a Year 5 Circle Time designed to encourage every pupil to share personal thoughts with peers, the teacher was very successful in encouraging pupils to reflect deeply on personal 'special places' and to discuss these with one another in an atmosphere of mutual respect. From discussion with the co-ordinator it is clear that a great deal of careful research and substantial staff training has gone into the development of the school's policy and strategies for this aspect of its work. The Healthy School programme, the 'buddy system' and the school council combine with lessons and Circle Times in a coherent way to promote pupils' personal, social and health education and to develop their skills for being constructive members of the community.

## 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>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<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	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
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	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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	2
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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