

INSPECTION REPORT

**THE PINCHBECK EAST CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Pinchbeck, Spalding

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120550

Headteacher: Mrs C Baumber

Lead inspector: Mr P Sudworth

Dates of inspection: 12 – 14 July 2004

Inspection number: 258152

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	369
School address:	Fennell Road Pinchbeck Spalding Lincolnshire
Postcode	PE11 3RB
Telephone number:	01775 723841
Fax number:	01775 768015
Appropriate authority:	Local education authority
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend Dr Murray Harvey
Date of previous inspection:	22 February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This larger than average primary school educates boys and girls aged 4 to 11 years. It has 14 classes and is situated in Pinchbeck, two miles from Spalding. Most pupils are of white British heritage, but with a small number of pupils from other ethnic groups. Four pupils are at early stage of learning English. The school serves an area of mostly private homes. A large number of pupils travel in from Spalding. The percentage of parents who claim entitlement to free school meals, is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is around the national average. Sixty-two pupils have special educational needs and include pupils with learning, social, emotional and behavioural problems and autism. They include six pupils who have statements of special educational need. The percentage of pupils joining or leaving the school at times other than the start of the academic year is about average. Overall, attainment on entry is comparable with children of a similar age, although a significant minority show above average attainment. During the inspection, one Year 4 teacher was absent and alternative arrangements had to be made for this class. The school has a higher than expected staff turnover. The school is a member of an 'Excellence in Cities' initiative.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2700	Peter Sudworth	Lead inspector	Science Design and technology Geography English as an additional language Personal, social and health education
9736	John Brasier	Lay inspector	
20003	Suzi Metcalfe	Team inspector	Art and design Music Religious education Foundation Stage
14806	John Stevens	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education
20007	Trevor Neat	Team inspector	English History Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services
 Anglia House
 Carrs Road
 Cheadle
 Stockport
 SK8 2LA

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The Pinchbeck East CofE Primary School provides an unsatisfactory standard of education for its pupils. While current standards are broadly average at the end of Year 2, they are below average in some key areas of work by Year 6. The achievements of a significant number of pupils are unsatisfactory. Both the leadership and the management of the school are unsatisfactory. Although teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory overall, some unsatisfactory features affect standards adversely. Additionally, a significant staff turnover has caused disruption to pupils' education. **The school provides unsatisfactory value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well in reading by Year 6, though significant numbers of pupils do not achieve well enough in writing, particularly boys, despite the good start that they make in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils do not achieve well enough in science by Year 6.
- The school's leadership and management, including that of the governing body, are unsatisfactory; the roles of subject leaders are insufficiently developed.
- The staff are committed to the pupils, take good care of them and provide well for them in the very good opportunities after lessons.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Assessment systems and the monitoring of pupils' progress in different subjects across the school are unsatisfactory.
- Pupils' behave well in class and have good attitudes to their work; relationships with their teachers and amongst the pupils are good.
- While there are good links with the community, significant numbers of parents have lost confidence in the school's leadership and there is low morale amongst some staff.
- Pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory.

In accordance with section 13(7) of the School Inspections Act 1996, I am of the opinion, and HMCI agrees, that special measures are required in relation to this school because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

The school has made poor progress since the last inspection. There has been an improvement in standards in information and communication technology (ICT), but standards in science, art and writing have fallen significantly by the end of Year 6. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is not as good. There is less very good teaching. Not enough progress has been made in developing whole-school assessment systems and they are unsatisfactory. The previous difficulties in the school's leadership and management remain. Furthermore, the unsatisfactory relationships between the headteacher and some staff are causing internal conflict and unhappiness. Parents' views of the school and its leadership are not as positive with significant amounts of dissatisfaction.

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	C	C	C

mathematics	C	D	D	D
science	D	E	E	E

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

Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage, but there is significant underachievement in writing and science by Year 6 and not enough pupils reach the higher levels. Pupils of different abilities and those from different ethnic groups achieve similarly. Pupils achieve well in Year 5. In mathematics and ICT pupils meet the expected standard throughout the school and they meet the local standard in religious education by Year 2. Insufficient evidence prevented a judgement in religious education in Year 6. It was not possible to make judgements on pupils' achievements in other subjects because they were not inspected in full. The school's trend of results over the past five years has been above the national trend of improvement at Year 2, but below at Year 6. The school did not reach its targets in national tests at Year 6 in 2004. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and those with English as an additional language satisfactorily.

Overall, pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory. Pupils' moral and social development is good. Their spiritual development is satisfactory, but their cultural development is unsatisfactory. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to their work are good. Pupils' attendance is above average and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching and learning observed during the inspection were satisfactory overall, but over time teaching has not always been sufficiently challenging of pupils' capabilities, resulting in some unsatisfactory achievement. The curriculum is planned satisfactorily with a very good range of opportunities outside lessons. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Assessment of pupils' work is unsatisfactory. The staff take good care of the pupils and make good arrangements for their welfare. There are satisfactory links with parents and good links with the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory and this is a major weakness. The headteacher has lost the confidence of some staff and there is a lack of harmony and much unhappiness because of the way the school is led and managed. She has also lost the respect of a significant percentage of parents. The roles of subject leaders are under-developed. While the governing body fulfils its statutory duties, it has not been sufficiently involved in making important decisions. It has relied too much on the headteacher. The overall quality of its work has been unsatisfactory.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS

The vast majority of parents are happy with the progress that their children make and the quality of teaching. Inspectors' views are not so positive. Their children are happy at school and this is confirmed by the pupils' own views. Parents feel that behaviour has declined over recent times. This is not evident in the vast majority of lessons, though pupils report some unacceptable behaviour at break-times. Inspectors agree with the significant number of

parents who find the leadership unsatisfactory. Younger pupils find learning fun. This is not the case for the older pupils where many fewer are excited by their lessons.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in writing across the school, particularly those of boys, and standards in science by Year 6.
- Improve significantly the leadership and management of the school and the work of the governing body so that staff morale is lifted, standards rise and parents' confidence is restored.
- Ensure that subject leaders are given better guidance and opportunities to fulfil their roles more effectively.
- Establish whole-school record keeping systems to track pupils' continuing progress in subjects.
- Take steps to improve pupils' cultural development.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Children achieve **well** in the Foundation Stage, but pupils' achievements are **unsatisfactory** in aspects of work in Years 2 and 6. Overall, standards are **above average** at the end of the reception year, **average** at Year 2 and **below average** at Year 6. English and mathematics skills are average overall. Pupils with special educational needs **achieve well** and those with English as an additional language **satisfactorily**. Gifted pupils do not achieve well enough in some aspects of their work, but pupils with particular talents **achieve well** through the opportunities provided in music and sport.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in all areas of their learning in reaching above expected standards.
- Standards in science are above average at Year 2, but well below average at Year 6.
- Boys' achievements in English are well below those of the girls.
- Pupils achieve well in reading by the end of Year 6, but they do not achieve well enough in writing.
- Pupils' attainment has risen in ICT since the last inspection.

Commentary

1. In 2003, Year 2 teacher assessments in science were above average. National test results in reading and writing were respectively average and below average compared with all schools, but both were well below average when judged against similar schools. About one-fifth of the pupils did not reach the expected level in reading and slightly less in writing. However, one-third of the pupils reached the higher level. In mathematics, pupils' results were above average overall and a higher percentage than nationally attained the higher level. On average over the last three years, Year 2 girls have attained more highly than the boys and by more than the national difference, particularly in reading and writing. The five-year trend in results has been above the national trend of improvement.
2. Over time, Year 6 results in national tests in English have been above the national average despite falling back sharply in both 2002 and 2003, and below average in science and mathematics. In the 2003 national tests, about one-fifth of the Year 6 pupils did not reach the expected level in English, nearly one-third in mathematics and about one-seventh in science. The proportion of pupils reaching both the expected and higher level was well below the national average in science. Boys have not been attaining as well as the girls in English and the difference is much greater than the national difference. The trend in performance at Year 6 is below the national trend of improvement. Results against similar schools in 2003, those with similar attainment when the group was in Year 2, were well below average in science, below average in mathematics and average in English.
3. The current group of children entered the reception class with slightly above average skills, though attainment on entry is usually broadly average. The children settle in quickly

because of the good arrangements made for their entry to school and they take a keen interest in their work. They consolidate and extend their pre-entry skills in the reception classes and achieve well because of the good teaching. A majority of the children exceed the goals for the end of the reception year in all the areas of their learning¹ and significant numbers are reaching the first stages of the National Curriculum in their reading, writing and mathematical skills.

4. Current standards in reading are broadly average at the end of Year 2 and slightly below in writing because insufficient pupils reach the higher level in this aspect. Standards in speaking and listening, spelling and handwriting are average, but pupils' writing skills, including their knowledge and use of punctuation, are less secure than their reading. Pupils do not achieve well enough in writing, but their achievements in other aspects of English are satisfactory. When reading they know how to break down words that are new to them, but they tend not to look carefully enough at the text and sometimes substitute different letters in words when they read aloud.
5. In Year 6 their attainment in speaking and listening is broadly average. Most pupils listen and make suitable responses in class discussion. Some pupils are very articulate, but others are not drawn into discussion enough and some speak too quietly. Most pupils achieve well in reading by Year 6 and this is a strength in English with about half the pupils reaching the higher level. However, a small minority of pupils have a limited range of strategies for tackling difficult words and a few pupils are not confident in library skills.
6. There is large discrepancy between reading and writing standards at Year 6. Writing standards are too low and a significant number of pupils underachieve. More than four out of ten pupils do not reach the expected level in writing. Furthermore, boys underachieve compared to the girls and this becomes more pronounced as pupils move up through the school. Slightly more than half the boys currently in Year 6 do not reach the expected level in writing. The underachievement in writing in Year 6 noted at the last inspection has still not been reversed. Teachers' expectations are not high enough as pupils reach the top of the school. The school reached its quite low target in English in 2003 for the expected level, but did not meet it in mathematics and results were well below the targets for the higher level. It has not reached its increased targets in English and mathematics in 2004 for the expected level, though there were four absentees.
7. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in mathematics and attainment is around the national average at the end of Years 2 and 6. The current cohort of Year 2 pupils, however, is not attaining as well as in the previous two years, when results have been above average. There are not as many able mathematicians in this year's group of pupils. At Year 6, the school has not been able to regain the better results being obtained four years ago because expectations are not high enough.
8. In science Year 6 pupils underachieve. This is because there are inconsistencies in the emphasis given to investigation in some parts of the juniors, some teachers' lack of confidence in teaching the subject and pupils' written accounts in science are too slapdash. Pupils' below average skills in investigation in science were an issue at the last inspection and remain so. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level in science has still not been addressed sufficiently well in Year 6. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in reaching the expected levels in ICT by the end of Years 2 and 6. This represents an improvement at Year 6 since the last inspection. Pupils' attainment in history and art and design reaches expectations and achievement is satisfactory, but

¹The six areas of learning comprise communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative, physical and personal, social and emotional development.

standards in art and design have fallen since the last inspection. Pupils' attainment meets local expectations in religious education at Year 2 and their achievements are satisfactory. Insufficient evidence prevented judgements in religious education at Year 6. There was insufficient time to make secure judgements in other subjects.

9. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their earlier learning, due to the effective support they receive from teachers and their assistants. This was the case at the time of the last inspection. The pupils taught directly by the special educational needs co-ordinator make good progress in lessons because of her specialist knowledge of their learning difficulties. Gifted pupils make satisfactory progress in reading, but do not achieve well enough in other key aspects of their work. Pupils with special talents have good opportunities in instrumental music and in sport and they achieve well in these aspects. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily over time in acquiring English. Pupils from different ethnic minorities make similar rates of progress to other pupils.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.9 (17.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.3 (15.6)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.4 (17.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 43 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	26.6 (27.7)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	26.3 (26.3)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	27.3 (27.2)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 62 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attendance is **very good**, their attitudes and behaviour are **good** and their personal development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show good levels of interest in their lessons and most confidently play a full part in them.
- Some rough play on the playground detracts from the otherwise good behaviour.
- Bullying sometimes goes undetected, but is handled well when discovered.
- There are good relationships amongst pupils and between adults and children.
- Pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory.
- Attendance is strongly encouraged by both school and parents.

Commentary

10. Younger pupils find learning fun, though fewer of the older pupils are excited by their lessons. Despite these views expressed in the pupil questionnaires, pupils show good attitudes to work. This is seen in their keenness to answer questions and in their willingness to contribute their own ideas to lessons. They listen with respect to others' viewpoints and show pleasure in the achievements of others. Pupils usually work hard. Older pupils are mature and respond well to the many opportunities offered for them to take on responsibility, such as the buddy system, which helps the youngest children settle into school. Most pupils appreciate what is expected of them and are keen to comply.
11. Apart from two classes where behaviour was not always managed well, behaviour in lessons is good and similar to that reported in the previous inspection. It is good around the school and satisfactory at lunch and playtimes. Pupils state that there is too much rough play in the playground. This view is supported by the midday supervisors and explains parents' concerns about behaviour. Parents also have concerns about bullying. Discussion with parents and pupils during the inspection supported these concerns and revealed that, in particular, occasional instances of bullying have gone undetected for considerable periods of time. It is also clear that once detected it is handled well.
12. Good relationships are particularly evident in classes where pupils have to work together, for example, in a French lesson in Year 5 where they had to practise their language skills with each other. Pupils talk about the good relationships they have with teachers, saying in one instance that a particular teacher can tell you off, but still leave you feeling good about yourself.
13. Pupils' personal development is not as good as it was at the last inspection, when it was judged to be good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. It is good for their moral and social development. Residential visits, after school activities and the arrangements for the school council support pupils' social development. The good provision in the reception classes enables them to exceed the goals in their personal, social and emotional development. The use of well chosen literature and class discussions in English and work in religious education support their moral development effectively. Spiritual development is satisfactory and promoted well in some classes in science and through religious education, but it is not planned for across the curriculum. Acts of worship lack a real depth of meaning and sense of occasion. The organisation of them is haphazard. Pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory because there are limited opportunities to appreciate the richness of their own culture and they are not being sufficiently well educated to appreciate the multicultural nature of society. Pupils' artwork lacks inspiration and there are missed opportunities to use music in assemblies to promote pupils' awareness of mood in music and knowledge of composers.
14. Pupils' attendance is well above average and punctuality is good. Pupils are keen to attend school and parents also ensure the regularity of their children's attendance. The school has very good systems to ensure pupils' attendance is encouraged and accounts for the reasons for any absences. There have been no exclusions.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	3.7

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.3

National data	5.4
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National data	0.4
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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 school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching and learning observed during the inspection were satisfactory overall, but over time teaching has not been sufficiently challenging of pupils' efforts, resulting in some unsatisfactory achievement. The curriculum is planned satisfactorily with a very good range of opportunities outside lessons. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Assessment of pupils' work is unsatisfactory. The staff take good care of the pupils and make good arrangements for their welfare. There are satisfactory links with parents and good links with the community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory overall**, but some features are unsatisfactory resulting in some unsatisfactory learning over time. Assessment is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Year 5 and pupils make good progress in these classes.
- Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and they are confident to contribute answers in lessons as a result.
- Teachers plan their work well.
- There is a lack of consistency in the type of records kept to monitor the pupils' progress.
- Marking does not help pupils to improve their work enough and some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve.

Commentary

15. The good teaching in the Foundation Stage enables the pupils to achieve well by the end of the reception year. Lessons for pupils in the reception classes are well prepared with good use of resources and a range of interesting activities, which maintain the children's interest. In the rest of the school, teaching is satisfactory overall, but with some specific weaknesses, such as the recording of pupils' ongoing progress and different expectations about how pupils should present their work. A particular strength is the teaching in Year 5 where a mixture of good and very good teaching facilitates the pupils' good learning and progress. The overall quality of teaching has fallen since the last inspection because there is not as much very good teaching, although the percentage of unsatisfactory teaching has fallen very slightly.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 51 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	5 (10%)	23 (45%)	21 (41%)	2 (4%)	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.

16. Teachers generally have good relationships with pupils enabling them to be active and interested learners who are willing to ask questions and to contribute answers with confidence. Pupils are willing to try hard because their contributions are valued. Teachers usually show respect for the pupils and treat them well. There are some occasional tensions in two of the infant classes when pupils' behaviour is not managed well enough. In two lessons where the teaching was unsatisfactory, class management was ineffective, the pupils were not interested enough and the lesson objectives were not achieved. The pace of these lessons was slow, delivery lacked enthusiasm and liveliness and there were frequent interruptions.
17. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. Work is usually, but not always, matched well to pupils' capabilities. The mental starter in mathematics lessons is satisfactory, though sometimes teachers do not make enough use of visual material and resources to help develop pupils' understanding. In some lessons, thinking skills are not developed because too many questions are asked of individual pupils. In literacy lessons, teachers' enthusiasm for literature and expressive reading of shared texts leads to pupils improving their own intonation and encourages the pupils' own good reading habits. Teachers are not demanding enough of quality in pupils' written work and, too often, this is presented untidily. They occasionally develop pupils' speaking and listening skills further by getting the pupils to discuss questions or ideas in pairs and this technique is occasionally used to good advantage in other lessons also. However, class debate to share pupils' different ideas is used much less frequently.
18. Teachers research their lessons well, plan them effectively and usually show good subject knowledge. They clarify the purpose of the lesson and revise well on previous learning before beginning new work. This approach engages the pupils' initial interest, helps to revise their knowledge and assesses their understanding. Tasks that the pupils are to undertake are usually explained satisfactorily. Occasionally some very robust questioning was seen, which probed pupils' thinking deeply and followed up pupils' initial responses with further questioning. This clarified their thinking and helped their understanding. This was particularly effective in science lessons in Years 3 and 5 where rigorous questioning enhanced pupils' knowledge about fair testing and the process of particular investigations that they were to undertake. This approach led to pupils' keen engagement in the learning that followed and a sustained interest that promoted the pupils' progress well.
19. Resources are prepared well for lessons and this helps to retain the pupils' interest. They are sometimes overly prepared, as when one teacher put amounts of water in beakers before a science lesson began, depriving the pupils of the opportunities for accurate measurement. In a Year 5 English lesson, video clips of 'Carrie's War' were effective in the successful promotion of pupils' writing and looking at situations from different characters' viewpoints. Artefacts from the Victorian period, such as a bedwarmer, were successful in helping Year 2 pupils to understand how people used to live.
20. Teachers monitor the pupils effectively as they work, and so spot errors or any misunderstandings of the task at an early stage and prevent wastage of time. On occasions they do not make general points arising from such observations to the rest of the class, so that all the pupils can profit from a learning point. During a Year 2 design and technology lesson, the teacher gave good advice to one pupil only about a technique to measure for the carpet of the houses they were modelling. Others continued to struggle with this.

21. Teaching assistants support the teachers effectively in catering for those with special educational needs so that they can manage the work that they are given and take a full part in the lessons. They usefully support individuals during whole-class sessions talking to them quietly so that they understand and enabling them to make contributions, thus promoting their self-esteem. The special educational needs co-ordinator is effective in her role with pupils who have more severe learning difficulties, using a variety of approaches and resources to promote their improvement in reading and writing. Teachers provide satisfactorily for the very few pupils with English as an additional language and include pupils from ethnic minority groups fully.
22. Assessment is unsatisfactory despite the very good practice in the Foundation Stage. The school lacks whole-school subject record keeping systems and teachers in different year groups adopt their own. Good practice was noted in Year 2. The beginnings of a system to track pupils' National Curriculum levels at the end of the academic year are in place. However, there is no rigorous intervention during the year to hold teachers to account for pupils' progress, despite a series of helpful tests to assess progress at intervals during the year. Satisfactory use is made of test data. National test results are analysed for gender performance, but opportunities are missed to analyse them for areas of learning which need a greater focus. Teachers adopt different systems for setting targets with pupils and with varying degrees of success. Overall, this does not work effectively because of a lack of clear written guidance. Marking is unsatisfactory because pupils do not get enough written comment in how to make improvements and where helpful comments are made, pupils often ignore them and they are often not followed through. Unsatisfactory assessment systems are contributing to some unsatisfactory learning over time.

The curriculum

The curriculum provided is **satisfactory** overall with a **very good** range of opportunities for enrichment. Accommodation and resources to support learning are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage is good and allows children to make a good start to school.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Support staff make a valuable contribution to the achievement of Foundation Stage children.
- There is very good provision for pupils to participate in sports.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to investigate in science in some classes.

Commentary

23. Provision for children in the reception classes is of a good standard, maintaining that found at the time of the previous inspection. The well organised curriculum and the broad range of experiences enable the children to learn effectively. Foundation Stage teachers are well qualified and experienced and have the valuable support of teaching assistants. A good number of parents give up their time to support pupils by preparing curriculum resources and hearing readers under the skilled direction of the reception teachers, furthering the children's progress. Their classrooms are bright with sufficient space to

allow children good opportunities for movement and resources are good. Both classes have access to a secure outside area, but there is no external veranda to allow the children to continue their outside activities during inclement weather.

24. As at the previous inspection, the curriculum is satisfactory for other pupils in the school with adequate coverage of almost all National Curriculum subjects, though opportunities to develop pupils' investigative skills in science are limited in some classes. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies provide a good structure for English and mathematics lessons. Other innovations, such as the provision of a learning mentor by the 'Excellence in Cities' initiative and the continuation of a study unit to support Year 6 pupils when they transfer to secondary school have been implemented satisfactorily. Year 5 pupils also have the opportunity for a short weekly French lesson but these initial studies are not continued into Year 6 and so much of the advantage is lost. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects. The monitoring and analysis of pupils' progress and achievements through the schemes of work are not consistent features and so prevent regular evaluation of them. This was highlighted in the previous inspection as an area for development. As a result, the development of pupils' research and investigation skills in history and science, for instance, is not consistently in place across the school.
25. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. This is linked in part to other areas of the curriculum, including science and religious education, and contributes to the caring ethos of the school. Pupils discuss issues, such as the news and current affairs, as well as health and citizenship, and the subject contributes to their good social development. The opportunity to talk about personal issues has contributed well to raising pupils' self-esteem.
26. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The targets in the action plans to develop each individual's skills identify very clearly the next, small steps each pupil should take to improve. Very good practice is evident in the almost weekly recording of the progress these pupils make.
27. The school makes satisfactory provision for all pupils to be fully included in all activities and there are very good opportunities for enrichment. Very good provision is made for different sports at both lunchtime and after school. Many are competitive through participation in a range of local and county events. Other sports are for fun and to support community events, for instance maypole dancing and summer games. Participation in the arts is good. The choir and pop choirs are active in the community and in school productions. Over a third of pupils learn a range of musical instruments. The mathematics, newspaper and environmental clubs have been recent additions to the very good range. Further enrichment opportunities are closely linked to the general curriculum. Pupils enjoy trips to local museums and galleries; attend residential courses, participate in Tudor days and take part in work with a specific focus for the week, such as an arts week.
28. The accommodation is satisfactory, though much of the external woodwork is in disrepair. Although there are extensive grounds with fields and playgrounds, four classes are housed in mobile units with resultant difficulties for these pupils moving around the school in inclement weather. The hall accommodates the whole school and its good floor surface facilitates work in physical education. The lack of a central library has a negative effect on developing pupils' research skills. The computer suite is small, but extra ICT

equipment in classrooms enables pupils to practise skills taught in the suite. Overall, the school's resources for learning are satisfactory and meet the needs of both pupils and the curriculum. Displays in the classrooms and around the school are good and help create an effective learning environment.

29. The school has an adequate staffing complement and they are appropriately trained for the primary stage of education. Most staff are matched well to the age groups they teach. There is a satisfactory provision of teaching assistants to support groups of pupils. Opportunities for staff training have been limited because of financial problems, but several staff have attended courses without cost implications in their own time.

Care, guidance and support

Overall, **good** attention is paid to pupils' care, welfare and health and safety. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is **unsatisfactory**. There is **good** involvement of pupils in seeking their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils' health and safety and welfare are efficiently managed.
- The school lacks whole-school record keeping systems in many subjects in order to monitor pupils' progress on a continuing basis.
- There are good induction procedures.
- Child protection procedures are effective, but there is not enough staff training, except for the child protection co-ordinator.
- Midday supervisors have too low a status.
- The school council has rapidly become effective.

Commentary

30. Good procedures are in place for health and safety with regular inspections and special attention given to risk assessments for out of school visits. Pupils' welfare is supported by a healthy eating initiative, breakfast and after school clubs, and adequate playground and midday supervision. There are good arrangements for first-aid and adequately trained personnel.
31. Teachers have good and trusting relationships with their pupils and know them well, enabling them to give good advice and personal support on a day-to-day basis. However, assessment systems are unsatisfactory because there is a lack of cohesion and few whole-school record keeping systems to monitor pupils' progress in different subjects across the school.
32. Reception teachers visit local playgroups and nurseries to familiarise themselves with the youngest children before they start school and this system works well enabling the Foundation Stage children to settle quickly. Other pupils, too, appreciate the school's induction arrangements when they start school. They are given a 'buddy' and a meeting with parents is arranged after being in school for one week.
33. Staff are provided with printed information about child protection, but there are no regular detailed procedures to remind them periodically of the warning signs of abuse or how to proceed if a child makes such revelations. Newly qualified teachers and midday

supervisors have not been trained in child protection matters except through informal, but inadequate, arrangements.

34. Pupils respect the friendship and helpfulness of midday supervisors, but state that sometimes they cannot solve problems because other pupils do not show sufficient respect to them. Midday staff confirm that a few older pupils occasionally swear at them and will not always obey their instructions. Despite the provision of a detailed booklet to guide them in their responsibilities, and a recent invitation to all ancillary staff to attend a whole school session on behaviour management, midday staff state that they have had little training to deal with difficult behaviour. They feel that contact with senior management to follow up issues is negligible and that they too frequently work in isolation.
35. The elected school council has a few achievements to its credit, such as choosing playground equipment and suggesting playground markings. It is an effective channel of communication between pupils and senior management. It is growing in confidence, believes that it is taken seriously and that it can help to resolve problems.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are **satisfactory**, although a significant minority of parents are critical of several aspects of the school, including its leadership and management. Links with the community are **good**. The links with other educational institutions are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive of their children's education and work hard to improve the school's facilities.
- Significant numbers of parents are unhappy about some aspects of the school.
- Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning.
- Good community links enhance the pupils' education.

Commentary

36. Parents' views are much less positive about the school's provision than at the previous inspection. They now have very mixed views and feel that the school's quality and standards have slipped over the past two years. There is now a significant amount of unrest amongst the parents. One-third of the parents who answered the pre-inspection questionnaire are critical of the school's leadership and management. The inspection team agrees with these concerns and also their concerns about bullying. While it is not widespread, it sometimes goes undetected for too long. Their concerns about behaviour are partially confirmed, but the main problem is rough play on the playground. Classroom behaviour is generally good.
37. Parents provide good help in school, particularly with younger children's reading. The Friends of the School is very active and raises large amounts of money for the school each year and provides the facilities for the breakfast and after school clubs. Parents help with sports coaching and taking competitors to fixtures. They also help on external non-residential visits.

38. Communication with parents is satisfactory. Letters to them about the school's work are sufficiently frequent. Teachers provide advanced information about the pupils' studies for the term ahead. However, 22 per cent of the pre-inspection questionnaire respondents state that they are not kept well informed of their children's progress. Reports have strengths and weaknesses. The comments are comprehensive and provide much information, but parents consider them to be impersonal because they are written with the help of a computer program which has a bank of statements. Targets are given, usually in terms that parents can relate to, but parents receive no information about National Curriculum levels, except in Years 2 and 6. The headteacher's comments on reports make it clear that she knows the children well. The two progress evenings each year are well attended. The school's prospectus and other printed publications are of good quality and informative. Curriculum evenings have been held and been well attended. The school has sought the parents' views through a questionnaire, but the results have not been communicated to them. Their views have not been acted upon because the headteacher has been waiting for the results of this inspection report.
39. Although about one-fifth of the questionnaire respondents are not comfortable approaching the school, most parents find the school welcoming and staff willing to listen to any concerns they may have. These are usually resolved amicably. Parents find reception teachers particularly approachable. They receive a ready welcome from the secretary at the school office. There is a good partnership with the parents of pupils with special educational needs, reflected in the large proportion attending meetings to review their children's progress.
40. The school links in well with the local community participating in village events, such as the carnival and the Spalding Flower Festival. The choir has a good reputation for its community involvement. There are good links with local churches, which support occasionally with assemblies and with religious education lessons. The school supports a number of charities. A fruit importer has supported the healthy eating enterprise and a business liaison group has supported reading in the school. Village residents help with sports coaching. There is a developing link with a school in France. The elderly are invited to attend the school's productions. All these activities enrich the experiences of pupils and contribute to their very good social development.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The governance of the school is **unsatisfactory**. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's leadership and management has alienated some staff and parents.
- The governing body has had a turbulent time and not been effective enough in confronting the school's problems.
- Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage and of the special educational needs unit are good.
- Weak leadership has resulted in very limited improvement since the last inspection.

Commentary

41. Poor progress has been made since the previous inspection in addressing the criticisms of the leadership and management at that time. Furthermore, the unsatisfactory leadership of the headteacher has brought discontent amongst both staff and parents. There has been a lack of rigour in promoting the roles of subject leaders. Consequently, their roles are under developed. Despite this, the leadership of the Foundation Stage and of special needs is good. Both lead and manage their responsibilities well. There is also much keenness among other staff to promote better standards, if given better opportunities by the headteacher. The lack of planned opportunities for subject leaders to observe teaching and scrutinise standards of work has resulted in a decline in standards in some key aspects of work, especially by Year 6. Standards have fallen since 2001 in English, mathematics and science with significant amounts of underachievement in aspects of English and in science. Not all the targets have been met on the school development plan. It is not rigorous enough in promoting improvements because the detail in the different initiatives is too imprecise and the means to measure the success of them are not thoroughly thought through.
42. The provision to meet pupils' special educational needs is led and managed well. The co-ordinator provides very clear guidance to staff. A system of formal meetings with individual teachers significantly enhances communication about individual pupils and promotes their good progress.
43. The school's management is unsatisfactory. The headteacher has not been sufficiently consultative when considering school changes and management decisions have sometimes lacked enough consultation and discussion. This has resulted in low morale amongst some staff. A substantial minority of parents has lost confidence in the headteacher's abilities and in the school. Staff are divided and there is a lack of harmony. Some internal staff changes have led to a lack of confidence in the senior management team and in its role and function. There is not enough evidence of the work of the senior management team or of staff meetings impacting on improved standards. Some staff are disillusioned with the performance management arrangements and they have not always had written feedback on the occasions when their lessons have been observed. The arrangements for the induction of new staff and the continuing professional development of staff are satisfactory, though financial restraints, have limited the number of courses they could attend. The tone of communication between the headteacher and staff is sometimes unhelpful to good working relationships.
44. Despite meeting statutory requirements, the work of the governing body is unsatisfactory. It has not been effective in managing its responsibilities. Governors have relied too heavily on the headteacher's views. Their lack of detailed knowledge of the school has not enabled them to analyse her decisions critically. The governing body is not fully conversant with the school's strengths and weaknesses and has done too little to hold the school to account. A new chairman was appointed in April and has now streamlined the governing body and its committee structures. Committees had not had terms of reference until then.
45. The school's finances have been tight and little money has been available for staff training. This is partly because of a dispute with the local education authority about the balances in its account. This issue remains unresolved despite three independent audits. The school strives to resolve this matter. The secretary gives good administrative support and submits regular financial reports to the resources committee. However, in the past, too much responsibility has been allocated to the headteacher in

drawing up the budget plan. Currently, there are satisfactory systems to manage the day-to-day finances and subject leaders bid for their budget on the basis of need. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily and the most recent Local Education Authority financial audit report was favourable. However, there is not a clear-cut link between the school's development needs and the allocation of non-contact time to address them and these arrangements are haphazard.

46. The school's unsatisfactory leadership and management, the low morale amongst the staff and the governing body not holding leadership to account, are significant barriers to the school's progress. Additionally, the unresolved financial problems with the Local Education Authority over the school's budget have held back in-service training for staff and there has not been enough planned training within school linked to its needs. Several staff have become disillusioned as a result of these factors and this is leading to a higher than expected staff turnover. Involvement in the 'Excellence in Cities' initiative has not yet had a significant impact on the school's improvement. Despite this, the school has some very good staff who are very willing and exemplified in some good and very good teaching and in a very good range of after school activities.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	782,410
Total expenditure	767,111
Expenditure per pupil	2,126

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-11,970
Balance carried forward to the next	3,329

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

47. Children enter the two reception classes with a broad range of abilities and skills but are generally similar to other children of the same age in areas, such as writing, number knowledge and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children achieve well in all areas of their learning. When they leave the Foundation Stage to enter Year 1, all but a very few have achieved the goals for the end of the reception year. Children who have special educational needs also achieve well. The provision and standards in the reception classes are broadly similar to those reported at the last inspection.
48. The key to the children's success as learners is the consistently good quality of teaching and support provided by all staff in each class working as a team. Teachers are very experienced and knowledgeable about the curriculum. They provide a good range of challenging activities that meets the needs of the children very well. They have very high expectations of how well children will behave and learn. Lessons are full of pace and often fun and challenge and children maintain their interest very well throughout. They monitor children's responses effectively, track their progress and build on all their experiences.
49. The curriculum meets the needs of all children and the range of abilities well. Both the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. The curriculum is appropriately resourced. There has been a satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. Children now have their own outdoor area with trees and grass. However, the lack of a cover restricts its use to fine weather and it is still not an area set out so that pupils can maximise their outdoor learning. A good and careful induction programme enables the children to settle quickly and happily. Good pre-admission arrangements enable the children and parents to know the staff well and to have confidence in them.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planned activities and support for children are good and children make at least good progress, and some, very good progress.
- Very clear routines are well established.
- There are clear and high expectations about behaviour.

Commentary

50. Teaching is good. Standards are above those expected, with all but a very few, who have specific needs, attaining above the goals expected for the end of the reception year. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Teachers very carefully establish how they expect children to behave and lessons are carefully planned to help them learn to live and work together happily. Discussions take place about how to behave in different situations and children have the opportunity to look at how characters

behave in stories. Role-play opportunities develop co-operative and imaginative learning. Children relate well to their teachers and support staff and as a result, all children are eager to come to school and join in all activities with enjoyment, interest and enthusiasm. They develop a good sense of right and wrong.

51. The children ask for help when needed, but are independent enough to try for themselves first. They develop the confidence and ability to take turns and share resources and equipment as a result of the well established routines. They have good opportunities to talk with adults about their concerns. Children contribute well to the smooth running of the classroom. They are very confident in getting out and returning resources to their proper places and keeping their rooms neat and tidy. They change themselves for physical education with a minimum of fuss, only asking for help when they are really stuck. They leave their clothes in neat piles ready to change back at the end of the lesson and put their kit back into their bag on their peg ready for the next session.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning is very good and based on an accurate assessment of children's skills and what is needed to help them learn and thus they achieve well.
- Good use is made of the National Literacy Strategy for reception children to develop speaking and listening skills and a love of books.
- Letter sounds and reading skills are well developed and closely linked to developing children's writing skills.
- Classrooms are language rich environments with labels and books, writing materials and well displayed children's work.

Commentary

52. Children achieve well because very good opportunities are provided in all activities for children to develop their language skills. The quality of teaching and learning is good as teachers frequently assess children's progress and plan well to push learning forward. Children enter the school with generally expected writing skills. By the end of the year, all but the very few children with special educational needs have reached expected standards and with most working beyond. Adults use children's natural fascination with words well. Children listen to and share a range of big books, re-tell well known tales, discuss characters and repeat choruses together. The teachers use tasks, stories and poems from the National Literacy Strategy to good effect to promote the children's developing skills further. Children link what they hear to develop their reading skills and use sound patterns to construct their own words.
53. The promotion of their writing skills is good and children practise cursive writing by labelling their work with their name and writing stories, explanations, poems and instructions. The teachers read stories well, helping the children to identify letters and matching to sounds. For instance, while having milk after break and before getting ready for physical education, one teacher read the story 'Room on the Broom'. Instead of drinking, children sat open mouthed, enthralled, especially when she adopted different voices and tones for the characters, the tension building, all joined in the final passage

with a triumphant Yes! with arms raised! Book areas are well used. As well as formal letter and writing practice, the reception rooms are equipped with a good range of writing and marking resources, as well as displays and labels, so that children can record their thoughts and ideas. Teachers encourage children to find and copy the words they want to use by themselves. The standards and progress noted by the previous report have been effectively maintained. Children with special educational needs are fully included in all activities with adults tailoring many to meet their specific needs.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good teaching of number and other areas of mathematics and the monitoring of their skills develop the children's learning well.
- Adults harness children's enjoyment of mathematics with carefully planned learning opportunities.
- Children learn well through a combination of practical and written opportunities.

Commentary

54. In both reception classes there is high quality planning to develop full mathematical potential and the continual monitoring of progress to achieve that potential. Teaching is good with both teachers making good use of the National Numeracy Strategy, including counting rhymes and songs to further the children's understanding of number. All supporting adults are well briefed about the abilities of each child and ask a very good range of challenging questions to encourage children to think and compute.
55. When they enter school, children's number recognition and knowledge of shape and space meet expectations, as does their ability to calculate numbers. When they leave the Foundation Stage, all children have achieved well and attained standards that are above expectations for their ages and abilities. They count to high numbers, recognise numbers well past 20, with most counting in 1's, 2's, and 10's. They use common symbols such as '+' and '-' when writing number stories. They recognise common two- and three-dimensional shapes and have good awareness of money and the coins up to £2.00. When working on 'buying a range of percussion instruments for the school', children were able to read the cost of each instrument and work out the coins from their purse to buy the item. Higher attaining children work out the change. Children use their mathematical skills effectively across the curriculum. When undertaking work on their topic of water, groups of children were able to estimate and then count the number of small containers of water that would be used to fill larger shapes. They particularly learned that water is heavy, but that one large container is lighter than lots of little full containers though more difficult to carry.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities are provided for children to use computers, as well as other equipment, such as the cassette players in the listening corners.
- Staff plan a good range of activities to develop children's knowledge of the world.
- Families offer good support to children's learning in school and at home.

Commentary

56. All children achieve well as a result of the good teaching and learning. All will exceed expected standards by the time they start in Year 1. The quality of planning is good and gives children a wide range of activities to develop the skills of looking at and commenting on the world around them. The good use of computer programs enables the children to extend their knowledge of language while learning how to use the equipment with skill. Using writing and mathematical games programs, they develop their eye-hand co-ordination through the careful control of the mouse as well as identifying icons and tools that they use in other programs.
57. Listening to stories such as 'Handa's Surprise' in their literacy work, and examining fruits grown in different countries as well as joining in songs, poems and rhymes from different countries, help children learn about and understand people from other places and cultures. Parents give good support to the work of the school. When children travel, parents send postcards and encourage their children to bring in photographs and small artefacts to be shared in discussions. Scientific enquiry skills are taught well. For instance, when looking at water, children investigated different objects for their ability to sink or float. They used a range of modelling materials to build boats, working out how to erect masts and sails without the boat becoming top heavy. Using bubble mixture they looked at the size, shapes and colours within the bubbles and observed each bubble floating, debating among themselves then observing whether the size of bubble affects how high it floats or how soon it pops. Children know a lot about themselves, their homes, family and foods for living healthy lives.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for children's physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and provides children with many opportunities to develop their physical skills.
- There are many opportunities for children to use scissors, brushes, paints and pencils to develop their physical skills.

Commentary

58. Children achieve well and will meet the early learning goals by the time they start in Year 1. This is because the good quality of teaching and learning enables children to investigate the space around them. They learn how to work together in formal physical education sessions in preparation for Year 1 work. Teachers place a high focus on the development of physical skills through handling pencils, scissors, brushes and other tools

on a daily basis. Teachers make good use of the hall. They provide good opportunities for children to climb, balance and jump, learning to negotiate the space well, avoiding others and adapting their behaviour to ensure that all activities are performed safely. In the classroom, children investigate their environment. They use a range of simple equipment in role-play and researching situations, having to think about what they are doing, how to do so safely and learning to share the space available with others, ensuring the safety of all. The 'home corners' give children the opportunity to work in a confined space and a good range of construction equipment to make cars, houses and homes helps children develop their manipulative skills. They paint and draw, developing their eye-hand co-ordination very well.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for children's creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of skills is combined well with good opportunities for children to learn through role-play.
- Children have good opportunities to use a wide range of creative materials.
- Music, song and story are used well to stimulate children's imaginations.

Commentary

59. Children learn well and achieve well because of good teaching. All children will exceed the early learning goals by the end of their time in reception. The development of children's physical and creative skills is carefully linked in the planning and all adults have very good knowledge of what experiences children will need for the future. The children's skills are assessed as they enter the school and opportunities are provided to meet any specific physical and behavioural needs. This is particularly important for those children with special educational needs who need to act out different situations. The teachers and supporting adults join children in this work to pattern positive behaviour and develop speaking and listening skills well.
60. There are very good opportunities for children to use their imaginations and to play together during role-play. They enjoy singing songs and learning rhymes and poems, which helps the development of their speaking and listening skills. During the inspection, children in one reception class ended the year by singing and enjoying a range of songs learned over the year. The opportunity to become the humps on 'Alice the Camel' or the 'Jellyfish on a Rock' was well taken and all joined in the actions for 'When I was one...', swaying backwards and forwards over the sparkling sea. There are also very well planned opportunities for children to draw and paint from their imagination as well as from stories to listen to and for them to make models from a wide range of creative materials. Nearly all children do these things well.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have fallen in the last two years.
- Writing standards are too low, particularly for boys.
- Marking does not help pupils to improve enough.

Commentary

61. Pupils' overall attainment in English is average, but weaknesses in achievement in writing lead to below average attainment in this aspect. In the main, there has been too little improvement in standards in English since the school was last inspected.
62. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in speaking and listening throughout the school and pupils' attainment at Year 2 is broadly average. Most pupils listen and make suitable responses in class discussion. They speak with a satisfactory level of confidence and explain clearly, although their spoken language is often brief. Pupils make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening in Years 3 to 6 and they meet the expectations for pupils in Year 6. However, some pupils are not drawn into discussion enough by questioning the opinions of others. Many speak softly, sometimes almost inaudibly, when addressing the class. Achievement in this aspect is satisfactory in the juniors.
63. Year 2 pupils achieve satisfactorily in reading with most pupils reaching the expected level and about one-quarter attaining above average standards. Pupils' achievements by Year 6 are good with almost half the pupils reaching the higher level. Their attainment in this aspect is average at Year 2 and above average at Year 6. Pupils in Year 2 read books such as 'The Old Vase' reasonably fluently. They know how to 'break down' words that are new to them, but tend not to look carefully enough at the text. This leads to mistakes, such as reading 'list' as 'last' and 'when' for 'then'. Year 6 pupils read prose and poetry with a good degree of fluency and expression and they enjoy reading. Many pupils by Year 6 are avid readers. However, their range of strategies for tackling difficult words is sometimes limited. Teachers provide appropriate instruction in how to use reference books and give pupils opportunities for research. However, the lack of a school library and the need for classes to share book collections results in a few not being confident about finding reference books.
64. The large difference between pupils' attainment in reading and writing seen at the last inspection still persists. Writing standards are too low throughout the school and significant numbers underachieve, but particularly in the juniors. Four out of ten pupils currently in Year 6 have not reached the expected level in writing at Year 6. Boys underachieve to a greater extent than they do nationally and this becomes more pronounced as pupils pass through the school. Just over half the boys currently in Year 6 have not reached the expected level in writing.
65. Year 2 pupils' spelling and handwriting are of a satisfactory standard. Their knowledge and use of punctuation is less secure. Pupils understand the need for capital letters and full stops, but do not use them often enough. They do not choose enough adventurous words and 'and' and 'then' are employed too often. Handwriting, punctuation and spelling skills are not developed progressively enough. Too few pupils in Year 6 have a consistent, fluent style of handwriting and too many make mistakes in spelling common words. Too few pupils of average ability use capital letters well enough. In pieces of free writing, such as 'Midnight', pupils begin to use complex sentences and are aware of the

need for a story to have a dilemma or complication. Generally, however, characters are not developed sufficiently and a limited range of adjectives is used.

66. The quality of teaching and learning seen during the inspection was satisfactory, overall. Some good, and occasionally, very good lessons were seen. Generally, teachers relate well to the pupils and this has a positive effect on attitudes to learning. The important features of the strongest practice were:
- good methods are employed, which leads to high levels of pupil interest;
 - the enthusiasm of the teacher results in pupils being keen to participate;
 - effective questioning ensures that pupils understand the main ideas;
 - generally, good control and management of classes mean that pupils behave and concentrate well.
67. However, the effectiveness of teachers' marking varies too greatly. Some teachers write helpful comments, but overall, too little advice is given to help pupils to improve, especially in their free writing. Some have low expectations of how pupils present their work. Too little is done to provide a language-rich environment. For example, not enough attention is given to celebrating pupils' writing in displays in classrooms and around the school. This is resulting in unsatisfactory learning over time.
68. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. Useful work has been done to promote the progressive development of skills when pupils move from Year 2 to Year 3 and other initiatives have been undertaken, such as the active consideration of a scheme to improve comprehension skills. However, not enough has been done to improve standards in writing.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

69. Overall, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in work in other subjects. The school has not yet planned to help them to achieve this. Chances are missed, for example, in science, when pupils are not challenged to write enough or to a high enough standard in their reporting of experiments. Pupils sometimes write partial sentences in response to questions posed and this does not encourage them to write in prose.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good attitudes to the subject, and behave well in lessons.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

- There have been some initiatives to improve the standards of higher attaining pupils, but they have yet to reap full benefit.
- Marking does not help pupils to improve enough.
- The lack of a whole-school record keeping system for mathematics does not always help teachers to monitor their progress effectively.

Commentary

70. Standards are average in both Years 2 and 6 and are similar to those at the last inspection. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory. However, results since that time have fluctuated. The 2002 and 2003 national test results in Year 6 were not as high as they were in the two previous years. Conversely the Year 2 results improved on the two previous years. One of the issues in the previous report was to raise the attainment of the higher attaining pupils. Some initiatives have been taken for these pupils with out-of-school clubs for booster classes and classes for the gifted and talented mathematicians. Setting is now used for Years 4, 5 and 6. These initiatives have yet to be fully effective in raising standards in Year 6 and these pupils could still achieve more, although the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level in Year 2 has increased. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are well supported by the teachers and teaching assistants and make satisfactory progress in lessons. There is little difference in the performance of boys and girls.
71. Teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 with a range from satisfactory to very good in Years 3 to 6. Overall it is satisfactory. Teachers use the national numeracy strategy guidance confidently, but sometimes do not match the work carefully enough to pupils' needs and capabilities. Whilst Year 4 pupils found their work in converting decimals to fractions difficult, some of the mental work in Year 1 was too easy and did not demand enough of the pupils as they counted in 1's. The lack of a structured whole-school record keeping system to track pupils' knowledge and understanding across the school is a drawback in ensuring that the pupils' build up on their existing skills with a ready assurance.
72. Over time teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers share the lesson objectives with pupils and these are reviewed at the end of lessons where teachers ascertain how much the pupils have learnt and understood. A key feature of the good and very good lessons is the good questioning which helps to challenge the pupils. Where the teaching and learning were very good, very effective questioning helped to keep pupils interested and focused and helped maintain a very good pace to the lessons. In a lesson taught to the more capable Year 5 pupils, the teacher ensured that pupils understood the mathematical terminology to be used in probability. In a Year 5 lesson taught to the middle ability set, the teacher's constant questioning helped the pupils make good progress in understanding a graphical form of sorting out given data and recording it accurately. Analysis of work and observation in lessons indicate that more problem-solving and investigative work now takes place compared to the previous inspection. The quality of marking is inconsistent and is an area for improvement. Some teachers mark with encouraging comments and useful remarks, while others mark without comment. Some work was unmarked.
73. Pupils enjoy their work and most work hard in lessons. Pupils have a good attitude to the subject and behave well in lessons. They usually settle quickly to their activities and

complete a satisfactory amount of work in the time allocated for their activities, sharing resources well.

74. It is not possible to judge the work of the subject leader because she has not held the responsibility for a sufficient length of time. She has made a good start to her role of leading and managing the subject. She has introduced unit plans in order to raise standards. She has monitored plans and pupils' work to good effect, but she has not been enabled to monitor lessons.

Mathematics across the curriculum

75. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory. Links are made in some subjects, but this is not yet widespread. In information and communication technology, pupils represent data on bar graphs and pie charts. Mathematics is used in science for measuring during investigations and to calculate results, and in the making and design of models in design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is an inconsistency in the opportunities to undertake investigations in different classes.
- Results in Year 6 have been below or well below average in national tests in the last four years and attainment at Year 6 is lower than at the last inspection.
- The new subject leader has not been given enough support to help improve standards in this subject.

Commentary

75. Pupils' attainment in science by the end of Year 2 is above average because almost all pupils reach the expected level and about one-quarter the higher level. They are achieving satisfactorily overall from their attainment on entry. At the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils reaching both the expected and higher levels is much lower than that nationally. Their achievement is unsatisfactory and attainment is well below average and continues the four-year run of below and well below average attainment at the end of Year 6. This represents a significant fall in standards since the last inspection at Year 6.
76. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 cover a good range of content, which is carefully linked to other subjects and they have good opportunities to carry out investigations. Work is neatly presented with good recordings made of their observations, but pupils do not consistently predict the results of their investigations and conclusions are not reasoned sufficiently well. Pupils are keen to engage in their work, as when they make simple electric circuits and see the affect of adding extra bulbs to the circuit. Teachers often add interesting activities to such investigations, as when the pupils added a small electric motor to the circuit and then placed variously coloured discs which they had made on the end, which rotated at speed, producing moments of wonder for the pupils.

77. While the National Curriculum Programmes of Study are fulfilled in Years 3 to 6, work is inconsistent in quality. It is of a good quality in Year 5. In Year 6 pupils do not carry out enough investigational work and too much is factual or theoretical with too much attention being given to practice papers for the national tests without pupils having a thorough enough background. This is resulting in the well below average standards by Year 6. While some neat written communication of their science work was seen, too frequently Year 6 pupils' work is slapdash and it shows a lack of pride. Teachers' expectations of what the pupils are capable of achieving are not high enough in this year group.
78. Teaching and learning observed during the inspection was satisfactory overall with some good features. Teaching observed in Year 5 was very good where well prepared resources, tasks matched carefully to different pupils' capabilities and clear expectations resulted in challenging activities. In one Year 5 lesson, pupils were fired with enthusiasm as they worked to resolve and separate various mixtures of materials. Thoughtful and probing questioning in a Year 3 class made the pupils think really hard when they were discussing how they were to organise their testing on the solubility of different substances. This excited the pupils and got them really interested. There are some failings in recording work because their work is not always explained well and diagrams are not always clearly labelled. Teachers do not consistently ensure that the comments that they make in their marking comments are followed up. There is no consistent record keeping system across the school to help track pupils' understanding of science processes. This is resulting in unsatisfactory progress.
79. Pupils enjoy science. They often regard lessons as fun. They particularly enjoy the practical element. Pupils contribute well to questioning, listen well and they work well together in groups, sharing the resources and co-operating well in negotiating the conduct of their group investigations.
80. The subject leader has only been in post for a short while and it is not possible to judge her leadership and management skills, but she has made a very good start to her role. She is very well organised and has good subject knowledge. She has bought in new resources to support the work and to ensure there is better provision for practical investigation. She has yet to be given opportunities to demonstrate her own good teaching practice to other colleagues and to monitor teaching and standards across the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 6, pupils' attainment has improved since the last inspection, when it was below national expectations.
- Effective links with a secondary school in computer assisted design support work in design and technology.
- There is an effective use of resources.
- Pupils have good attitudes and behave well in lessons.
- The computer suite is too small for some of the large classes.

Commentary

81. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in ICT and by the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils reach national expectations. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards were below national expectations in Year 6. Pupils' basic skills are developed well. Pupils use computers confidently. Year 2 pupils show good skills in manipulating the mouse and in logging on and off. Year 6 pupils demonstrate much confidence in storing and retrieving their work. Pupils in all lessons observed worked well together in the computer suite when they worked in pairs and took turns. The suite has helped to improve pupils' skills by affording the pupils more 'hands on', although its small size can be limiting, particularly when being used by the oldest pupils when sometimes up to three pupils have to share a work station.
82. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in the main and sometimes good. Where it is good, as was particularly noted in a Year 5 lesson, effective use is made of the large interactive screen and teachers make effective use of their good knowledge. By the end of this lesson, pupils had learned how to send an e-mail with an attachment and they typed well and drafted and re-drafted directly onto the screen. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. The school makes good use of teaching assistants to help these pupils meet with success. Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy the subject. They have a good attitude and behave well in lessons. National Curriculum Programmes of Study are fulfilled by the end of Year 6.
83. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has made a satisfactory start to his role. He has drawn up a new development plan. Assessment is in its infancy. The scheme of work guides the pupils' work effectively so that the pupils build up their skills sequentially. The co-ordinator is able to monitor work that has been produced from the pupils' saved files with the result that he can ascertain the standards being reached in each year group, but has not been able to monitor lessons. He has given some training to teachers on data handling and this has enhanced their confidence.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

84. Pupils use their ICT skills satisfactorily to support learning in other subjects and an electronic white board supports demonstration and learning in one classroom. This was used well by a Year 5 teacher when dealing with probability in mathematics and she involved the pupils effectively. Year 6 pupils used a digital camera to good purpose in a recent residential visit to Yorkshire. Pupils have created graphs in science, spreadsheets, pie charts and bar graphs in mathematics. They make effective use of search engines, particularly in history. In design and technology, Year 6 pupils e-mailed their key hook designs to a local secondary school to be milled.

HUMANITIES

Geography and history

These subjects cannot be reported in full as they were not an inspection focus and only a few lessons were seen. One lesson was seen in geography and two in history.

Commentary

85. Teaching and learning in the one lesson observed in **geography** in Year 5 were of good quality. The class was a hive of activity, as pupils scoured Ordnance Survey maps of their home area. They showed good skill in using four-figure grid references to locate particular features. They interpreted conventional symbols accurately. Lively teaching and good challenge resulted in pupils working productively and making good progress. Pupils' Year 6 workbooks indicate that pupils do not build on these skills sufficiently well and similar work is being set with some extension for some to six-figure grid references. Teachers' expectations are not high enough. Pupils' work in their exercise books in Year 6 is often untidy partly because of the writing tools used. They respond to questions in partial sentences. Furthermore, too many worksheets are used in geography in Year 6. Infant pupils' maps of their journey to school indicate that they recognise the position of major features. Some effective links are made with numeracy in Year 2 as pupils make graphs of the way their class travel to school.
86. Standards in **history** are broadly in line with the expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 6, as they were at the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 have a clear understanding of life in medieval castles. A recent visit to Castle Rising has helped them to compare their lives with those of people in that period. They learn about famous people such as Florence Nightingale and recognise some of the changes that she brought about. Teachers work well to promote pupils' sense of the passage of time. This was a feature of the lesson seen in Year 2, in which the teacher's good preparation and use of a range of devices for warming beds in the Victorian era helped significantly in improving pupils' understanding of chronology. Pupils in Year 6 also benefit from a visit to Whitby, which enhances their study of the life of Captain Cook. They know the dates of the main events of the periods they learn about, including World War II. However, they do not record work about the main characters, such as Churchill or Hitler, nor deal enough with the changes that events bring about.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are no overall strengths and weaknesses in the subject.

Commentary

87. It was not possible to see many lessons being taught in the school as most were timetabled outside the inspection period. Of the three that were, standards met local expectations for pupils in Year 2. No lessons could be observed in Years 3 to 6. The judgements for older pupils are made on discussions, school documents and a scrutiny of samples of pupils' work. The books for Year 6 pupils contained a very limited amount of work and so similar in content that it proved impossible to judge pupils' individual knowledge and understanding of the areas covered. Teachers' planning consisted solely of pages from the Local Agreed Syllabus and was not annotated to make any lessons individual to specific groups of pupils. Overall, the limited amount of evidence did not allow for a secure judgement on attainment at this age.
88. Pupils in Year 2 follow a thematic approach to their curriculum. They know of the harvest celebrations, such as the Jewish festival of Sukkoth and compare it with their harvest festival service. They know that the Old Testament contains stories about the plight of the Jews and that the first books of the Bible are about Jewish characters, such as Moses and Jonah. They know about Christianity and Jesus, some of his parables and his birth

and death. They are currently learning about Sikhism and the '5Ks'. Careful links are made to their work on personal, social and health education, with pupils thinking about families and family celebrations and adults that they trust to support them at home and at school. Pupils in Year 3 had the opportunity during the inspection to recall their work on Hinduism and different forms and places of worship and compare this with what they know about Christian worship. Year 6 books show pupils have consolidated knowledge about Buddhism, Judaism and Christianity and considered themes, such as pilgrimage and journeys of faith. There was also some limited work on signs and symbols of the faiths and Christian festivals. While all the work shows satisfactory knowledge about different faiths, knowledge of how such faiths affect lives and the way people live is more limited. Year 6 pupils' books show that their knowledge of how such faiths affect lives and the way people live is too limited to enable secure judgements to be made of the standards pupils have reached overall.

89. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers draw their lessons from the locally Agreed Syllabus and programme of work. They ensure that lessons are planned to match the learning needs of pupils in their classes and use a range of strategies to interest and involve pupils in their own learning. Visitors from the community, including parents and faith leaders visit the school and support the pupils' knowledge.
90. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader has produced a good programme of work linked carefully to the locally Agreed Syllabus. However, she does not have time out of her class to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and there is no evidence of assessment to check what pupils know, understand and can do. Resources, including non-fiction reference materials, have improved since the last inspection, but there are insufficient religious artefacts.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education

These subjects cannot be reported in full as they were not an inspection focus and only a few lessons were seen. One lesson was seen in each of art and design and physical education and two each in design and technology and music.

91. Displays and the analysis of pupils' work in **art and design** indicate that standards are in line with those expected, but the small amount of work in sketchbooks in Year 6 made it impossible to judge pupils' achievements by Year 6. In the one lesson seen in Year 1, pupils made good progress. They completed clay panels made earlier, painting the background and highlighting the patterns, mixing paints to achieve the colours and effects to make their patterns repetitive and even. The teaching was good and the quality of pupils' work improved because of the teacher's helpful advice. Pupils were also successfully encouraged to talk about the quality of their work. Many pupils made thoughtful suggestions about how their work might be improved. In older classes pupils are encouraged to use sketchbooks to experiment and to plan and improve their drawings and paintings. In Year 6 for example, while studying portraiture, pupils made a

collection of faces cut out of newspapers and magazines while pupils in Year 2 made close observational drawings of household equipment, such as irons as part of their work on houses and homes.

92. Two lessons were observed in the infants in **design and technology**, one in which teaching and learning were satisfactory and one where they were good. In both lessons, careful attention was given to health and safety and to the correct use of tools. In the lesson where teaching was good, the teacher's lively manner and good pace resulted in the pupils engaging with their work well. Some showed a good degree of invention as they made a Tyrollean chalet with the roof made from two shoebox lids. In the satisfactory lesson, pupils keenly set about furnishing their homes but ran into some problems because they had stuck their furniture down in their model houses too early. They then found some difficulty in covering their furniture with fabrics. Artefacts and models around the school indicate that the subject receives an appropriate amount of curriculum time and pupils recently engaged in a design and technology week.
93. Pupils apply a range of skills in designing their work. Year 1 pupils' individual and colourful stick and finger puppets show a good level of individual choice. Year 3 pupils used the research of their fellow pupils' flavour preferences well in designing their own drinks and looked at the feasibility of different types of packaging. Their greetings cards with moving parts are of an expected quality. Year 4 pupils' wind-powered vehicles and picture frames show good construction skills and have engaged them in various cutting processes, including sawing. Year 5 pupils' trialling of different sewing and printing techniques in designing and making pan pads against given criteria resulted in attractive and useable articles and their honest evaluations showed that they had profited from the process and had learned from their mistakes. Year 6 pupils' links with a secondary school help both sets of pupils. The Year 6 pupils make effective use of e-mail to send some of their designs to be milled before undertaking the finishing techniques themselves. In this way, they have made their own maze design and designed their own packaging for it.
94. Across the school there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the composition and listening elements of the **music** curriculum. No music lessons were seen for older pupils during the inspection. However, the school choir was seen practising and pupils were heard singing during assemblies. Pupils' singing skills were at an expected level for the pupils' ages with a good techniques exemplified in the choir. The specialist teaching of singing is good and the leadership of the choir inspires pupils to sing to a good standard. Two class lessons of younger pupils were seen. The Year 2 pupils clearly attain the standards in singing expected for their age. In the Year 2 lesson, pupils responded satisfactorily to the opportunity to use their voices to sing songs, speak chants and rhymes and rehearse ready to make a recording of their year's work. They listened well to the teacher's clear explanations. They demonstrated their skills by playing a range of simple, untuned percussion instruments to make specific sound effects. They reflected on what they could hear of their own and each other's performance and suggested possible improvements for the recording. The teacher was well prepared for the session, having gathered a range of appropriate instruments and set a pace that reinforced existing learning and built up confidence and concentration skills.
95. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. As a clarinet teacher to the school, the subject leader monitors the work of the peripatetic music staff for drums, cello and

violin and arranges opportunities for all pupils who wish to learn the recorder. Her non-contact time by virtue of being a member of the senior management team enables her to monitor work in class. There are no formal assessment systems in place for music, though the curriculum is based on a nationally produced scheme of work. Music is used well for school productions and community events.

96. It is not possible to make a firm judgement in relation to the provision of **physical education** because only one complete lesson was observed. Pupils experience a wide range of activities. The quality of teaching in the one lesson seen was good. From informal observation of lessons, Years 2 and 3 pupils showed satisfactory catching and throwing skills for their ages and Year 5 pupils changed batons correctly as they rehearsed athletics techniques. There is a wide range of activities after lessons, which cater for pupils' different sporting interests. Numerous fixtures take place against other schools and the school has gained much success, such as winning a cross-country competition. It recently represented South Holland in Lincolnshire Sports Festival and won at athletics. By the time pupils leave Year 6, most can swim the recommended 25 metres.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well structured.
- Good materials are used to help pupils prepare for new classes and secondary education.

Commentary

97. Teachers seize well on opportunities to promote aspects of personal, social and health education in other subjects. As a subject itself, personal, social and health education has a positive effect on pupils' personal skills and development. In science, pupils develop an understanding of healthy eating and safe living through their studies on diet and electricity. The opportunities for pupils to work together, such as when planning investigations, provides them with good opportunities to plan and negotiate. The good range of planned study units engage the pupils in thinking about the careful choice of friends and the importance of good relationships with others. They reflect on issues concerned with democracy and elect their own school council. The preparation for puberty through sex education and relationships helps pupils' personal development. They are alerted to the dangers of tobacco and alcohol and resolving conflict. Two lessons were seen and both were important in preparing pupils for the next academic year. The teaching and learning in one lesson were satisfactory and in the other they were good. They helped to resolve pupils' fears, aided by the good relationships with their teachers. The pupils in Year 6 pupils reflected on the skills and attributes they had gained during their time at school and which would them most when transferring to secondary school. They focused on the qualities they thought they had developed well, such as honesty, bravery and team play. They also identified that the school had helped them to organise themselves better as learners. It is not possible to judge leadership and management of the subject as the subject is being temporarily managed by the headteacher, and little development has taken place in recent months.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement**Grade**

The overall effectiveness of the school	5
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	6
Value for money provided by the school	5

Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	5

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4

The quality of education provided by the school	5
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	5
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

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

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