

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST GILBERT OF SEMPRINGHAM C OF E PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Sleaford

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120606

Headteacher: Mrs M Hall

Lead inspector: Heather Evans

Dates of inspection: 26 – 28 April 2004

Inspection number: 258166

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils: 4-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 68

School address: West Road
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Sleaford
Lincolnshire
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Telephone number: 01529 240465
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs M Carr

Date of previous inspection: 23/3/1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Saint Gilbert of Sempringham Church of England Primary School is much smaller than most other primary schools with 40 boys and 31 girls aged between four and 11. Eleven of these are young children in the reception group. Currently, although some pupils might well qualify, with no provision of hot meals, none of the pupils claims an entitlement to free school meals. The take-up is therefore lower than in most other schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above that usually found. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is close to national figures. The school has no pupils for whom English is not the family language and there are few pupils from minority ethnic groups. Mobility of pupils in and out of the school other than at the normal time of admission creates a significant problem. Often pupils who have found difficulty in learning in other schools join the school in classes throughout Years 2 to 6. This has been especially true for the present Year 6 group. Whilst a few pupils are from advantaged homes, overall the socio-economic circumstances of the school are below those regularly found elsewhere. The attainment of most pupils on entry to the school from the seven local villages varies, depending on the composition of each relatively small group. In some years assessment records show that it has been below that of children in many other schools but, for the most recent intake of children into the reception group, attainment on entry was about average. The teacher for the class for the youngest children is on maternity leave and the replacement teacher, on a temporary appointment, had been in the school for just four days prior to the inspection.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21374	H Evans	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communications technology Design and technology Music Foundation Stage English as an additional language
32697	D Smith	Lay inspector	
14732	E Korn	Team inspector	English Art and design Geography History Physical education Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with a number of very good features where pupils achieve well towards their undoubted potential. Pupils learn well and the standards of work seen in classrooms and exercise books are close to the expected level at the end of Year 6 and are above national expectations at the end of both the Foundation Stage and Year 2. In most years the school meets or exceeds its agreed targets but with small groups in every year and the above average number of pupils with special educational needs, standards fluctuate. The quality of teaching is judged to be good overall. As a result, pupils learn well in most lessons and subjects. The school provides a rich range of opportunities for learning across the curriculum. It is firmly established at the heart of the village community. The school is superbly led and managed by the headteacher with the full support of the governors and the teaching team. The aim of everyone involved is to enable every pupil to reach his or her personal targets. Finances are well managed and the school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The above average standards in reading, mathematics and science at the end of Year 2 and in science at the end of Year 6.
- The good provision for children in the Reception group.
- The quality of teaching and, as a result, pupils' learning are predominantly good.
- The quality and use of assessment in evaluating and planning work are very good.
- Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to work are good and their relationships with one another and with adults are very good.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The care and guidance provided by adults for the pupils are very good, as are the links with parents and the community.
- Overall the leadership and management of the school by the headteacher are excellent.
- The understanding by the governors of where the school has strengths or weaknesses is very good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

The achievement of children and pupils across the school is good. Most children in the present Reception class are on course to exceed all of the expected learning goals by the end of the year. Pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress and most achieve their personal targets. The standards attained in statutory tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 in the subjects tested were average when compared with all other schools in reading and writing and were very high and in the top ten per cent of schools nationally in science. By the end of Years 2 and 6, for the past four years, standards have been maintained at a level above that in most other schools and the trend of improvement has been similar to that in most schools nationally. Standards in information and communication technology match national expectations across the school but its cross-curricular impact is less secure. Pupils' attainment matches national expectations in art and design, history, geography, design and technology, and physical education. Pupils in classes across the school

exceed national expectations in music especially in their singing. Religious education was not included in this Section 10 inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. There are no marked differences between the attainments of boys and girls.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education including teaching, learning and curriculum provision is good and the care and guidance of children is very good. The quality of teaching is good overall because the staff members have a clear understanding of the requirements of the National Curriculum. In the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2, much is very good. Lessons throughout the school are interesting and stimulating particularly when they are practically based. The investigations undertaken help pupils to learn profitably and to achieve well. Pupils' respond positively to the challenging work set by teachers. The quantity, quality and presentation of pupils' work are all good. There is good provision for all of the required subjects within the curriculum. Links between subjects with revision and consolidation tasks threaded through from one subject to another are developing well. Teachers prepare work that is well matched to the different age groups and attainment levels in all of the mixed age classes and sets. The local community holds the school in very high esteem. **Pupils' personal qualities are well fostered and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** Pupils like school and show great respect for the established values. The positive attitudes towards learning and to one another are obvious. Pupils arrive early and attend regularly. They are eager to learn and in lessons and around the school their behaviour is good. Pupils tell of residential visits and of collaborative work during art and writing weeks. Their pleasure and enjoyment when describing a recent visit to Wales are infectious. Pupils have a very good understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of life. Their perception of values and belief systems other than their own is very well developed in many ways, particularly through religious education and geography. These strong elements play an essential part in maintaining the harmonious atmosphere that reflects the strong Christian ethos of this school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are very good. The headteacher has provided excellent vision and direction for the school. There are very effective systems in place to manage all aspects of the school with the total commitment of the staff. There is excellent and clear direction for the teaching and support staff as well as for the governing body. The collective decisions made by governors follow and track the sensible priorities set out in the school improvement plan. They work diligently to ensure that all of their statutory responsibilities are met. Subject co-ordinators share the workload between them. They work together effectively and share the organisation of the many areas of responsibility well. Since the last inspection the leaders of the school have been successful in remedying all of the identified weaknesses including, teaching, the curriculum, the accommodation and the provision for the youngest children.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

In conversations, at the meeting with parents and in the replies in questionnaires, all of the responding parents expressed a very high level of satisfaction about the school. Pupils like their school and what it offers them. When asked they say they like their teachers and their friends and except for indicating that they would like longer playtimes, they would change nothing.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- to follow the plans set out in the supplement to the school improvement plan to increase the use of information and communication technology in other subjects in order to enhance the quality of work across the curriculum;
- promote even more opportunities for extended writing across all subjects of the curriculum as set out in the action plan for writing.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

In 2003 there were just four pupils in Year 2 and only nine in Year 6. As a result the tables comparing pupils' test results with those in schools nationally or with similar schools are not helpful and therefore they have been omitted. In the present Year 6 almost half of the group to be tested have identified special educational needs and again the numbers will distort comparative scores however well the most advanced pupils attain.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In 2003 standards in the tests in English and mathematics were above average by the end of Year 6 and in science they were well above average.
- During the inspection, evidence showed that in science in both Years 2 and 6 pupils are on course to achieve standards above the expected levels.
- Standards in reading and mathematics are on course to be above the expected level at the end of Year 2.
- Attainment levels in music exceed those usually found by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The above average number of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 this year is likely to mean that the overall test results will fall to a below average level in the statutory tests.

Commentary

1. With such small numbers attainment on entry varies widely from year to year. Children join the school from several different pre-school providers some have attended nursery classes and play groups whilst others come straight from home. The most recent group of children to enter the Reception group, in the mixed age Class 1, had attainments assessed as being close to those expected for children of the same age nationally. There has been a review of practice in this part of the school since the last inspection and all of the systems in place, including the curriculum, have been significantly improved. The changes and improvements in teaching and facilities made since the last inspection are proving to be very successful. From the average level of attainment on entry, children in the Reception group make good progress and achieve well. The fluctuation of attainment levels on entry and the variation in the numbers of pupils, including some with learning difficulties, means that the stringent assessment procedures used are essential. The evidence gathered is used in a sensitive way so that the provision made can be tailored to meet the needs of every individual. This personal planning is one of the advantages of the small numbers.
2. The standards attained in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 in 2003 were close to the national average, although in reading they were well below those in other schools where no pupils claimed free school meals. Standards in mathematics were well above the national average, as they were when compared to similar schools. Scores in mathematics placed pupils in the top ten per cent of all schools nationally. Comparative scores in writing were below average. These comparisons are not really significant because with just four pupils in the group the percentage value of one pupil distorted figures unrealistically. What is clear, following the progress of the three pupils from this group who are now in Year 3, is that in 2003 every pupil in Year 2 achieved to their best personal level and fulfilled their individual potential.
3. By the end of Year 6 in 2003 standards attained by another small group of pupils were above national averages in English and mathematics and were well above average in science. When compared with the attainment of that group of pupils when they were in Year 2 there had been improvement that was above that of pupils in similar schools in English and mathematics and well above in science. Standards in information and communication technology remain in line

with expectations. In all other subjects, collected evidence indicates that standards are in line with the expected level at the end of both Years 2 and 6 except in music, where attainment across the school is above the expected level.

4. Inspection evidence indicates that those pupils who do not have special educational needs are on course to exceed the expected standards in reading, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. Expectations are not so high in writing but most are likely to attain at the expected level. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are making good progress and many in Year 3 are already achieving the standards expected by the end of Year 4. These pupils are making especially good progress in reading and the new initiatives to promote opportunities for extended writing are working well. In lessons the challenge for pupils of all attainment levels is good. Those capable of working at a higher level are supported well and are encouraged to succeed. In these classes the lower attaining pupils achieve their individual targets because of carefully modified work and the dedication of the teaching team. In a few lessons pupils do very well when they have their share of the trained teaching support staff.
5. By the end of Year 6 the average and above average attaining pupils are on course to achieve standards at the expected levels in English and mathematics and to exceed expectations in science. Those pupils with special educational needs, a high proportion of the Year 6 group are working at the expected levels in class and often in their books, because support is provided and extra time is allowed to enable pupils to complete tasks. With more support some might achieve more in lessons but this would not affect their ability to perform well in test conditions. In the statutory national curriculum tests this group of pupils with SEN are unlikely to reach the levels expected for their age. This in turn will impact on the overall scores attained by the school this year. To achieve to their potential pupils have worked hard and most learn well and make good progress. This is as a result of the industry and commitment of the teachers. In other subjects pupils' developing skills and achievements in reading and in mathematics help to maintain attainment levels and most pupils perform well when undertaking practical work, when increasing numbers exceed the expected levels. The school is pursuing a programme of work to use skills learned in writing in English to extend different styles of writing in other subjects. Individual pupils are encouraged to increase their development using independent research and personal study. Across the school pupils' overall achievement is good.
6. In mathematics pupils learn well and they use their knowledge and understanding of number without hesitation. They manipulate numbers using multiplication and division, confident that their understanding of the rules of mathematics will help them to find the easiest way of solving a problem. Pupils endeavour to reach an acceptable solution as quickly as they can, trying to beat their own previous best effort. Targets agreed in mathematics are followed keenly. Tracking personal progress is managed more easily in mathematics where understanding is more easily measured. During the inspection, work with number skills was the only part of mathematics observed, but the work in books showed how well pupils understood how to use their knowledge of time, space and measurement to support their work in other subjects particularly science and design and technology.
7. Standards in science are above the national average in all groups across the school because the work to help them to be scientists and learn through investigation is so well organised. Pupils' skills and confidence in planning, conducting and recording the findings of investigations were seen to particularly good effect in Years 2, to 6. Pupils show good scientific knowledge by the end of Year 6. Across the school the completed individual and independent work in books, as well as that displayed in classrooms, shows good levels of presentation and achievement in all of the areas of the curriculum for science.
8. Work in information and communication technology (ICT) is interesting and challenging, as a direct result of the improved facilities. Since the last inspection, the increased skills of the teachers have enabled pupils to make good progress. The standards of pupils in all classes are now in line with the expected level. Individual pupils in classes across the school have

above average skills and confidence. What is particularly pleasing is the demonstration of pupils' confidence and understanding of control technology in both Year 2 and in classes for older pupils. This work is undertaken using programs on screen and when writing instructions to program robotic toys and equipment. All of the pupils are confident when using computers for word-processing, to enhance work in English, history and geography. This rapidly expanding work is helping them to select from a bank of skills to plan, organise and review data in science and mathematics. Boys and girls perform equally well in most subjects although the reluctance to read for pleasure by some boys has caused the staff to select additional reading material aimed at capturing the boys' enthusiasm. In practice, for many, once they are competent readers they still prefer to read facts about cars and sport more than they enjoy reading stories. The uniform use of ICT across the curriculum in all classes is not yet totally secure.

9. The attainment of pupils in music across the school is good and exceeds national expectations. The limited time during the inspection means that there is insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement for provision and standards for every other subject. Through discussions with pupils and subject leaders, together with sampling work, reviewing teachers' files and assessment records and other available evidence indicates, that as pupils' achievement is at least in line with the expected levels; provision across the curriculum is at least satisfactory. In design and technology examples of completed work indicated that links with science, mathematics and geography are used well in designing and refining work. The work using writing, poetry, art and design, design and technology and geography in the 'cosy corner' is impressive. This area links work in many subjects with the schools' commitment to helping people less fortunate than themselves and provides good evidence that pupils achieve well across the curriculum.
10. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good, due to the support they receive from learning support assistants. In all the sessions seen during the inspection these pupils were working as hard as they could when given this support. The achievement over time of some pupils is restricted because the support available is very limited and is not always available exactly when they need additional help. The need for more support has been identified in the school improvement plan and in the newly ratified budget plans. The governors' wish is to employ additional classroom support as soon as a suitably skilled person can be found. Teachers measure progress against the targets set in pupils' individual education plans as part of the school's assessment procedures for all pupils. The tracking progress of pupils with SEN is even more detailed than for other pupils. Individual education plans are reviewed each term. Teachers adapt work to match the needs of lower attaining pupils as well as for those capable of higher attainment.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance, punctuality, attitudes to school and behaviour are **good**. There have been no exclusions in the last school year. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very interested in school life and the range of activities provided.
- Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good and this creates an atmosphere that is conducive to learning.
- Pupils learn to respect the feelings and values of others very well; they have a very good understanding of the responsibilities of living in a community.
- Pupils are punctual at the beginning of the school day and lessons start on time.
- The school monitors attendance closely.

Commentary

11. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and learning, both in the Reception group and in classes across the school. Children and pupils in all year groups enjoy sharing in the activities provided and show great interest and enthusiasm for every opportunity. In the reception group all of the children are on course to exceed the expected early learning goals for their personal, social and emotional development by the time they are introduced to the National Curriculum. Pupils have excellent relationships with teachers and other adults and are keen to take responsibility and show personal initiative. The feelings, values and beliefs of others are respected by all and pupils work hard to achieve the high expectations that the school has for them.
12. Pupils enjoy a range of stimulating activities both during and after school. These include sports such as basketball and football as well as work in art and design and music. Residential visits, such as time spent on an adventure holiday in Wales with PGL (Parents Get Lost), are celebrated in colourful displays in classrooms and develop children's confidence and ability to get on with one another.
13. During lessons and at play, pupils behave well. They mix and play well with others. All members of staff insist on high standards of behaviour and the majority of pupils conform to these expectations. Relationships between teachers and pupils are warm and are characterised by mutual trust, respect and consideration; pupils say that their teachers are kind and very approachable. Inspectors agree with these positive comments. Rewards for achievement or effort are celebrated in school assemblies and through 'Target Topper' certificates and house points.
14. As pupils progress through the school their understanding of the responsibilities of citizenship and the needs of others improves. They accept the roles of serving as house captains very willingly. To gain election pupils have to make speeches to the whole school and both the captains and their deputies are voted for by the pupils and are not selected by the teachers. Pupils like this process and explain how it helps them to plan their speeches in advance. Younger children demonstrate how they develop initiative and responsibility in the way they greet others or hold back doors for their friends as well as for adults. House captains and the other older pupils share responsibilities such as organising the music and overhead slides and in setting up and clearing the hall for school assemblies. They also take pride in managing the ecological compost towers that are in the garden areas. All this is done without fuss and without the need of reminding by the staff.
15. Most pupils arrive at school promptly in the morning. On arriving in the classroom they settle quickly and this ensures that they make the most of their time in class. Attendance is like that in most schools nationally. Registers are completed punctually. They are scrupulously maintained and are monitored closely. As the school has an in-depth understanding of the circumstances of every child, any absence or concern is followed up speedily and rigorously but always sensitively. The school strives to ensure that parents understand the need for good punctuality and attendance. As a result, very few children are absent for family holidays during term-time. With so many pupils travelling to school together by bus they see this time as a positive opportunity for socialising and lateness is very rare.
16. Members of staff act as good role models for their pupils. They have high expectations of pupils' conduct, and as a result, pupils behave well. During the period of the inspection there was no evidence of bullying or any other form of oppressive behaviour. Pupils like school and enjoy playing and working with their friends. The school's policy regarding pupils with special educational needs is very inclusive. As a result these pupils have a positive attitude to all subjects and work with real commitment. Most pupils work well independently or collaboratively with others in order to get things done.

17. Pupils' spiritual development is very good and is promoted strongly throughout the curriculum, particularly in poetry, art and design and music as well as during collective worship. Pupils' moral development is very good. Teachers and support staff foster caring attitudes. Pupils are taught how to learn the difference between right and wrong, show due respect for one another's feelings and property as well as for the school and the planet's environment. From the youngest children to pupils in Year 6 they accept full responsibility for their own actions. Pupils' social development is very good. They work well together in class and take their positive ideas into the wider community demonstrating very good relationships. Their cultural development is also very good and is very well promoted through subjects such as world studies, religious education, art and design, music and the humanities.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 94.6%

Authorised absence	
School data	5.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.3
National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean

No of pupils on roll
69
2

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0
0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good** and the quality of teaching is predominantly **good**. Curricular provision is **good** and is enriched by a very good range of opportunities for reinforcing work learned in class and in the community where its relevance is made clear to pupils.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was almost always at least **good** and was very good in many of the lessons seen. As a result, pupils learn well and make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of the programmes of work that they study.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The overall quality of teaching is good.
- Teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach.
- They have very good relationships with the pupils.
- Teachers have realistically high expectations that challenge pupils' thinking.
- Lessons are organised well and work is well matched to pupils' needs and to their earlier learning.
- Planning is thorough, detailed and precise; teachers select from a good range of methods.
- Strategies for assessment are incorporated into planning and information gathered is used very well.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 20 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	11	3	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

18. In all lessons teachers' knowledge of the subjects taught is secure and the objectives set are clearly explained to pupils. Whenever possible teachers plan practical work or relate new objectives to previous learning experiences that most pupils remember. Lessons are well organised and teachers' planning is thorough. Teachers use suitable methods and good quality resources. Pupils' interest is captured at the start of lessons and there is a good pace of learning. Work across the age groups is challenging and teachers and pupils share very positive relationships. The quality of teaching is good across the school and it is very good in the lessons for the youngest children. This is much better than the quality of teaching found in 1998.
19. Teachers follow the agreed marking policy well as a strand of the shared assessment procedures. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress, attainment and achievement are very good as is the use made of the information gathered. There is a clear focus for the analysis of strengths and weaknesses and for setting short, measurable targets for improvement. These usually work well although some of the pupils in Year 6 do not always remember to check their personal targets when they find work difficult such as in writing tasks in English. Despite this, work is invariably well matched to pupils' levels of attainment whether when working in attainment groups or as individuals. Since the last inspection assessment and its use to promote work matched to pupils' ability has been greatly improved. The success of this work is one of the reasons for the improved and sustained gains in pupils' achievement and standards.
20. Teachers use the Code of Practice for supporting pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are identified as soon as possible in their Reception year or when they begin at the school part way through their primary education. The headteacher, presently acting as special educational needs co-ordinator, and the class teachers discuss each pupil's individual education plan based on targets that need to be worked on. The school plans short steps to enable each identified pupil to realise that progress is being made. Class teachers all work hard to help all pupils to make measurable progress and they receive good help from the very small allocation of staff.
21. The trained classroom assistants have very few hours devoted to supporting learning in Years 3 to 6 except for individual designated pupils. When available, however, their involvement in lessons is invaluable in helping to increase the rate of learning. Their skilled intervention when pupils think that they are 'stuck', enables lessons to move at a faster pace and then everyone builds well on the sense of success. The partnership between the teachers and the teaching assistants and trained nursery nurses makes a significant contribution to the very positive ethos of the school and to the working atmosphere in all classes. Homework is set at suitable levels and during the inspection was seen to be a positive aid to learning.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**. It offers a wide range of learning experiences and **very good** enrichment opportunities that enable all the pupils to achieve well. The accommodation and resources for learning are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.
- The needs of pupils in the mixed aged classes across the school are met well by the wide range of the curricular provision.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school is aware that the present provision of trained support for teachers and pupils during lessons is insufficient.

Commentary

22. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that is planned on a rolling programme of work covering the four years in Year 3 to 6. This is very suitable to meet the changing needs of the mixed age classes. All the requirements of the National Curriculum are met and provision for religious education meets the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. Pupils are introduced from Year 1 onwards to a modern foreign language and 'taster lessons' in French are provided for all pupils each week. The school's systems for monitoring pupils as they progress from year to year are very good. They ensure good equality of opportunity for all and opportunities for pupils to take responsibility are provided. The curriculum is effective in preparing pupils for each new stage in their education.
23. In order to teach literacy and numeracy more effectively pupils in years 3 to 6 are sub-divided into two different attainment groups for each subject. This method of organisation enables:
 - the higher attaining younger pupils to be taught with older pupils giving them challenging opportunities in which they can achieve well;
 - the lower attaining older pupils opportunities for revision and consolidation.The skills learned in these subjects are used well in other subjects.
24. The curriculum is regularly reviewed in order to meet the learning needs of the pupils and subjects are frequently successfully linked together. A very good example is a visit for older pupils to Lincoln, where they learn map-reading skills when on a road safety and traffic awareness visit. There have been some effective innovations to the curriculum. A writing week every term has increased pupils' enjoyment of this activity. The school holds an 'Eisteddfod' every year, which develops pupils' skills in speaking and listening and promotes and extends their levels of attainment in the performing arts.
25. Sessions for collective worship and time in assembly are used well each day to create an atmosphere of tranquillity and reflection. They are very effective in promoting the strong Christian ethos that is at the heart of the school. Time is allocated for reflection and the leader usually selects a social or spiritual message as a focus. These shared experiences unite the school as a community and set the pattern of work for each day.
26. The curriculum actively promotes a healthy lifestyle. The personal, social, health and citizenship education programme is a prominent feature within the provision. Personal safety, sex education and drugs awareness teaching are all incorporated. Staff are trained very well for this and provide many good opportunities to help pupils live as part of a community, such as how to understand and control their emotions. In physical education, pupils in years 3 to 6 have two hours of physical activity every week and swimming is taught to pupils from Year 1.
27. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. In most respects, the special educational needs code of practice is adhered to well. Records are very well maintained, pupils' specific learning targets are very well constructed, with clear success criteria and reviews are timely. Professional advice for all assessments and the fact that all staff know the pupils needs in detail are strengths. The verbal comments by parents expressed at reviews and the views of the pupils are not always recorded. The school has responded instantly to this observation and procedures have already been put in place to include these comments at

all review meetings. Some pupils at the early stages of the Code of Practice might well benefit from being moved to the next level. The school agrees with this point and is already reviewing the needs of every listed pupil.

28. The support for those pupils with behavioural needs and those with statements of special need is good enabling these pupils to become progressively more involved in the learning process. Pupils on the early stages of the Code, with identified reading difficulties, achieve well in their direct teaching sessions. With more adult support many might well make even better progress. Good use is made of the many national programmes for increasing pupils' skills in reading. Those pupils identified as gifted and talented are supported well and as a result they achieve to their acknowledged higher potential.
29. The curriculum is greatly enriched by a residential visit each year that includes opportunities for outdoor activities and the development of pupils' skills in information and communication technology. Visits to the theatre and art galleries take place each year and pupils enjoy sharing experiences during the environmental education week. For its size, the school provides an extensive range of out of school hours clubs, that include the opportunity to sample many different sports and to play a range of musical instruments.
30. The accommodation supports learning very well. It is newly painted, very clean and brightly decorated with pupils' work that reflects a high quality. The two libraries are well stocked with new and attractive books. A recent extension to the school includes a new computer suite and a music room. The extension provides very effectively for access by disabled adults or pupils. The school also has several small rooms that serve well for group teaching. Teaching resources are very good. The outdoor accommodation is very good with a hard surface playground and a grassy field for athletics. The new area planned to develop opportunities for environmental education is also a well-used asset for science teaching and for painting and observational drawing in art and design.
31. There is superb and very skilled support provided by the trained Nursery Nurse in the class where the children in the Reception group are taught. With the teacher for this class being on what became extended maternity leave with her class covered by a new supply teacher it became necessary for this teaching assistant to devote much more of her time to the youngest children. As a result of this the need to provide more high quality support for pupils in classes for older pupils became more obvious than before. Sufficient money has now been allocated in the new budget to provide this as soon as possible.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **very good**. The support, advice and guidance they receive in both personal and educational development are **good**. Involvement through seeking and acting on pupils' views is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school actively seeks pupils' views through a very effective school council and tries to accommodate their suggestions and preferences.
- The school looks after its pupils well; health and safety and child protection procedures are comprehensive and effective.
- The school has very good induction arrangements.

Commentary

32. Pupils are confident that the school listens to their views and takes them seriously and inspectors agree. Pupils and teachers hold the school council in very high regard, and recommendations from the council have brought about several valuable improvements. For

example, pupils have chosen additional playground equipment, have made decisions on improvements to the school grounds, and have changed the sanctions associated with the management of pupils' behaviour.

33. The procedures in place designed to ensure effective Child protection and health and safety are very good. Teachers know all of the pupils very well and this helps them to identify any emerging problems at a very early stage and deal with them before they become issues. First aid procedures are very thorough and all members of staff have up-to-date training.
34. Induction arrangements are thorough and very well organised and there are especially close links with Saint Gilbert's Kindergarten a subsidised but separate pre-school group that meets in a building in the grounds of the school. Prospective parents and their children are invited to attend for a morning or afternoon session before they actually enrol. This early introduction helps children to make new friends and to get to know members of staff. Parents also receive a clear and very detailed booklet about the school and what and how their children will learn. This all helps to ensure that children new to the class and their parents are well informed about the life of the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **very good** links with both parents and the community. Links with other schools and colleges are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school actively seeks parents' views and acts upon them whenever possible.
- Parents provide very good support for their child's education at home and at school.
- Parents are very well informed about the day-to-day life of the school and their children's progress.
- The community provides very good support to the school.

Commentary

35. The school actively solicits parents' views in a number of ways. These are through surveys conducted around twice a year; during parents' consultation evenings and through pursuing an 'open-door' policy, where teachers make themselves available to speak with parents before and after school. Parents appreciate the voice this gives them and welcome the access that these measures give to the school and its staff. Whenever feasible, the school acts upon parents' suggestions and preferences and incorporates them into plans for the future.
36. The school provides very good information to parents to help them understand what their child is learning. This supplies parents with useful tools to support their child's education at home. The subject specific booklets provided by the school to parents contain expectations for every educational year. There are also a number of information sessions or 'workshops' concentrating on different aspects of the curriculum such as sex education or drug awareness education. As a result, parents are enabled to feel fully involved in the work of the school.
37. Regular newsletters provide information about school events and developments. The school actively seeks parents' opinions and has an 'open door' policy. Teachers try to be flexible in trying different strategies to involve and inform parents. Those who work full time and live considerable distances away from the school sometimes find contact more difficult. To address this the school website is colourful and very attractive. It is packed with useful information for both existing and prospective parents. It includes a prospectus, an events calendar, school photographs and even a virtual tour of the school.
38. This is a busy school. Members of the community and some former teachers and pupils provide support in the classroom and act as first-hand historical narrators, helping the pupils to explore the school's place in the community. Pupils from Years 5 and 6 enjoy 'Partnership Days' at the local secondary school and the headteacher from there sometimes comes to lead

collective worship at the school. Local business supports the school generously through the funding of books for the library. The fairs and events run by the school are very well attended and have proved to be very successful fundraisers. In addition, children participate in a number of charitable national events such as fundraising for 'Jeans for Genes', 'Blue Peter' and 'Children in Need'. The school welcomes a range of visitors such as members of the emergency services, an African dance company, a Hindu culture expert and other religious and secular visitors. All of these people add breadth and depth to the curriculum. The support provided by parents and the community ensures that the pupils' experience at school is enriching and stimulating.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school by the headteacher with the support provided by the members of the governing body and the staff are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has excellent vision and aspirations for all aspects of the school's development.
- The role of the governing body is very good in all aspects.
- The leadership and management of the curriculum by the staff is good.
- Strategic planning is very good and has contributed to the significant levels of improvement in standards and all aspects of provision.
- The school's assessment, monitoring, and tracking systems and their use are very good.
- Financial planning and management is very good.

Commentary

39. Since the last inspection there has been an excellent level of improvement in the leadership and management of the school. There is now a clear, shared commitment from the headteacher, governors and staff to continuous improvement and this has been instrumental in driving the school forward. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and educational direction. She has successfully extended the competencies of the governors and motivates teachers and teaching assistants very effectively. Initiatives are rigorously tracked and are kept on course. She refuses to allow them to drift or lose impact. The small teaching team shares the duties of being subject leaders and together they ensure that agreed strategies for teaching and learning are followed.
40. Clear goals are set for and shared with teachers and pupils; the headteacher has extremely high expectations of herself, the staff and the pupils. Performance management is very securely rooted in the governance and management of the school. The governors set measurable goals for the headteacher who in turn agrees individual targets with the rest of the staff. The headteacher, governors and the teaching team have ensured that the school has fully redressed all of the shortcomings identified in the previous report with the support of the Local Education Authority and the diocese. While recognising the importance of working towards high academic standards, the headteacher, governors and staff also place very strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. They ensure that all pupils, regardless of their attainment on entry to school, are fully included in every aspect of school life. This is very much better than was the previous position. Across the school there is an atmosphere of mutual respect, understanding and high expectations.
41. The headteacher leads an increasingly effective team. They have worked successfully to raise standards and to provide a good education for all pupils. They have very high levels of commitment to the school's vision of providing an inclusive and wide-ranging curriculum to meet the needs of pupils of all levels of attainment whatever their capabilities. Staff work diligently with drive and enthusiasm; they all offer support and encouragement to one another.

Decisions derive from monitoring and evaluation providing real support for pupils and colleagues. The school's vision of providing a strong Christian ethos permeates every part of the work. The strategic planning, responses to the key issues from the previous inspection and the school improvement plan are very securely in place. The improvement document is very well focussed on the identified needs and is managed very well.

42. All aspects of leadership are good. Teachers' roles and responsibilities are clearly understood and are carried out well. The shared responsibility for developing the work in all subjects in rotation is managed well. The regular effective curricular reviews trigger improvement and development. In most years the improving standards have had a very strong influence on the work of the school in all subjects and aspects. Teacher's assessments, monitoring and tracking procedures and the use made of information gathered have made strong contributions to the improvement in standards and achievement.
43. With the support of the LEA the headteacher has maintained an excellent programme of monitoring all aspects of school development, teaching and learning. The leaders of English, mathematics and science have regular opportunities for monitoring teaching and learning. Standards have risen because of this rigorous work. Pupils' test performance in the national tests is monitored and analysed by an outside agency and the information presented provides a very good statement of strengths and points up areas for development.
44. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. Curricular initiatives and very good monitoring and reviewing strategies contribute to strengths in all aspects of the provision. During the maternity leave of the post holder the very skilled work of the Nursery Nurse has successfully maintained the already high level. The staff has been very successful in improving the entire curriculum since the last inspection. The best possible use of the extensive and very imaginative range of resources and accommodation ensures that all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum are securely in place. Parents are fully involved in their children's reading and the home-school links in literacy are very effective.
45. The governing body has a very strong understanding of the strengths and plans for development of the school. They ensure that they are very well informed about all aspects of the school development. Governors are linked to areas of the curriculum and to other aspects of school life. All but the newest governors have attended extensive training provided by the LEA and have also attended Diocesan training. They know how the school works in all aspects including standards, curriculum, monitoring and the provision for pupils with special educational needs.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	236,058
Total expenditure	216,628
Expenditure per pupil	2,380

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	17,890
Balance carried forward to the next financial year	17,237

46. The governors at this school have the necessary detailed financial information in order to plan, prioritise and hold the school accountable for expenditure and results. The efficient office staff maintains detailed and up-to-date accounts. The systems for placing orders, checking purchases and balancing the different accounts are clear and effective. Governors have been very closely involved with the finance officer from the LEA and take appropriate opportunities to discuss and agree priorities for school improvement. The main priorities are set out by the headteacher in consultation with the staff. The finance committee and then the governing body review decisions and accept or modify the financial commitment. In this way the school has

developed very effective and evaluative approaches to financial management. Recent financial reports are very favourable.

47. The governing body is successful in ensuring that collectively they fulfil all of their statutory requirements. They participate fully in helping to shape the future of the school and share the vision for working towards excellence. They have been totally involved in developing a school that cares as well for those pupils with disabilities as they do for those with special gifts or talents. Their knowledge and understanding of the work of the school and their responsibilities are greatly improved since the last inspection.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for the children in the Foundation Stage, in this case the Reception group, often working with pupils in Years 1 and 2 , is **very good overall** and has been greatly improved since the last inspection.

Children are now very well prepared for work with the National Curriculum. Children join the Reception class group in the term following their fourth birthday. Initially the youngest attend on a part time basis. Before starting at the school the children have had a number of pre-school experiences. Some come straight from home and others have attended day nurseries or had a few hours each week at various pre-school groups. Assessment shows that the attainment on entry of the present group was close to that expected for children of the same age. In some years, because the groups are small the assessment evidence shows that some pupils have attainment levels that are below those normally expected. For this years intake there is strong evidence that shows that these children have achieved very well because of the very good teaching and the help and guidance from the skilled classroom support staff. Since the last inspection the curriculum has been revised completely and is now very well planned. It provides an exceedingly wide range of interesting, challenging and relevant activities. All adults are very good role models for children and establish very good relationships with them. Care is taken to see that the needs of individuals are met. Staff carefully record and monitor all aspects of children's learning and personal and social development. The external and internal accommodation is spacious and is most appealing. It is used very well to enhance children's learning. Children have continuous access to a dedicated separate outside area. There is an exciting range of superb equipment for all of the required range of outdoor activities. The sheltered area enables access in all but the worst weathers.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area of learning is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well and develop very positive attitudes because of the very good teaching and very high expectations of the staff.
- The adults in the class ensure that children are sensitively introduced to prayer at the beginning and end of sessions.
- There are very supportive relationships and most children are confident learners.
- Work alongside older pupils is managed well and this enables pupils to move on in their social development.

Commentary

48. Children make very good progress in this area of learning because of the very good teaching and the contributions by classroom support. They are on course to exceed the expected goals by the end of the year. They know what is fair and acceptable behaviour because of the patterns shown by the older pupils as well as the consistency of the routines and the caring attitudes shown to them. Children share in the many interesting activities and stories and most speak clearly and confidently. They are continually encouraged to recognise their own achievements and celebrate those of others. They quickly learn about the very high standards of behaviour expected. They readily share and take turns putting up their hands before answering questions. Children share resources sensibly, especially the wide range of books, take turns when using computers and share the construction equipment very well. There is a very caring atmosphere where children feel special and valued.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for this area of learning is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and the staff members create many rich opportunities to develop children's skills in speaking and listening in all areas of learning.
- Children's achievement in writing is developing well.
- Children love books and enjoy reading activities because of very good teaching and the successful efforts made to involve parents.
- Reading with 'book-buddies' from older groups is a valuable contribution to learning.

Commentary

49. Discussions with children and the analysis of completed work show that most of the children are on course to exceed the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. Children make very good progress in speaking and listening because they often share in the rich opportunities of whole group discussions in all areas of learning. Staff plan many opportunities during activities to develop children's vocabulary through probing questions. They insist that children take turns and listen to one another. The average attaining children read most words and they remember the order of events. The lower attaining children use the illustrations for clues and recognise and repeat many simple words. Higher attaining and most average attaining children read fluently and accurately with good understanding, as the books chosen are well-matched to their abilities and interests.
50. Very good relationships give children the confidence to speak and adults listen to their comments. The teachers have developed a very rigorous and tightly structured plan for the teaching of sounds with the emphasis on children's ability to say the sounds, recognise them in words and practise their use in writing. Children are encouraged to hold pencils with the correct grip. The analysis of writing shows that most children form letters accurately and have frequent opportunities for practising letter formation and patterns. The use of ICT is well planned so that children's understanding of spelling and word order is developed. Standards show a good level of improvement from their recorded levels of attainment on entry.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main Strengths and Weaknesses

- Teaching strategies and therefore children's learning are very good.
- Children participate in a wide range of planned and very structured activities to ensure that they can apply their understanding of number to other areas of learning.

Commentary

51. Standards in mathematics are as high as they are and children achieve very well because of very good teaching and rigorous assessment. Staff members share very good subject knowledge and use assessment very effectively to guide planning based on children's prior learning. Their knowledge and understanding are very good in the required areas of number, shape and space. Most children add and subtract using numbers to ten. Higher attaining children count to 20 and some to 50. In the sessions observed most were skilled when accurately organising numbers in order. Most of the children recognise and accurately name two-dimensional shapes. Children create interesting mathematical patterns in art, showing a very good awareness of order, shape and colour. They described their patterns in detail. Most

children are confident in this area of learning, enjoy the activities and work very well. They work through a very good range of mathematical activities associated with other areas of learning. These opportunities further enhance the children's understanding and interest.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for this area of learning is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a wide range of interesting activities to celebrate both inside and in the garden areas and these enhance children's knowledge and achievements.
- Very good opportunities for speaking and listening, reading and writing and mathematics are included in the planning.
- Children have good opportunities for using computers in the classroom and the computer suite.
- Opportunities to build models and to care for plants and seeds are provided regularly.

Commentary

52. Few sessions were directly observed in this area of learning but indications are that the quality of teaching is at least good. From the very imaginative planning and discussions with children it is evident that achievement is at least as good as could be expected and as a result children are well placed to exceed the expected goals by the end of the year. This represents good achievement from their average level on entry. In the time since they started school they have become confident and interested learners who know they need to complete one activity before moving on to the next. During the inspection children discussed their topic on caring for plants as living things. It was evident that as children growing up in a country area they knew the conditions needed for growth.
- Plants need light and water.
 - When planting seeds the first thing to happen is that roots grow down to find moisture and goodness.
 - Leaves work with sunshine to make food.
53. Children describing the seeds they had planted gave well-considered reasons for their judgements. Most children know the correct names of different parts of the body especially the organs of sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch. They know why they need to run and jump as they exercise and can tell which foods help to make them strong. They know that to use machines such as CD players, listening centres and video recorders, they need to operate switches to make use of electricity. Children have many opportunities for making models from recycled boxes and construction equipment.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main Strengths and Weaknesses

- Staff and children make very effective use of the accommodation in the hall and outside.
- The equipment for outdoors offers very good opportunities for children to climb, jump and run as well as to pedal and push.
- The improvement since 1998 is enormous.

Commentary

54. No lessons were observed in physical education so it is impossible to make any judgement on the quality of teaching. The termly planning is very good. Children playing freely are clearly

well placed to reach the expected learning goals by the end of the year. They use a wide range of movements when creating sequences of shapes at different levels. They jump very high using their arms for momentum and land lightly, taking care to bend their knees. Children handle construction equipment, paintbrushes, scissors and pencils with very good levels of dexterity and accuracy. The majority of children hold pencils with the correct grip and consequently the standard of handwriting is developing well. Children identified as needing additional help are given very good support and encouragement and make the same levels of progress as other children in the class.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The provision for this area of learning is **good**.

Main Strengths and Weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good in the musical aspects of creative development.
- Standards in the musical aspect, especially singing, are above the expected standards.
- This area of learning makes a very good contribution to children's personal, social and emotional development.
- Children have very positive attitudes.

Commentary

55. Insufficient lessons were observed in order to make a judgement on the teaching and learning of all aspects but in those seen it was very good. Displays and discussions with children show that they are well placed to reach the expected levels in this area. Planning shows that over the year children have a very wide range of creative opportunities. They are encouraged to experiment when mixing paint and using modelling materials. Children are proud to show the designs and symmetrical patterns that they have created. Activities provided encourage their imaginative and collaborative activities very well. The very good teaching of the musical aspects successfully contributes to very high levels of achievement. Children sing enthusiastically with a growing understanding of pitch, time and rhythm. Oral skills develop well as they copy and compare rhythms when playing a wide range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments alongside older pupils. The wide selection of musical instruments from many cultures helps to extend their understanding of cultures from other than western traditions.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

The provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 2 in speaking and listening and in reading are good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well.
- Higher achieving pupils in Years 4 and 5 are well supported by the new system of setting by attainment.
- Innovations such as writing weeks and reading 'buddies' enhance the provision.
- Good use is made of the many support programmes now used in many schools for reading, incorporating these into the provision for special needs pupils where appropriate.

Commentary

56. In this school, because of the small number of pupils in each year group, each pupil's scores in the national tests has a considerable impact. Comparing benchmarked scores with those of other schools is unreliable. Standards vary from year to year and trends are not significant. Some examples of the impact of the irregular numbers are shown below:
- In 2003, the number of pupils in Year 6 achieving the nationally expected standard and the higher standard was greater than the national average.
 - In the current Year 6, the number of pupils who are working at the nationally expected standard and at the higher standard is lower than the national average.
 - In the current Year 5, standards are above those expected for their age.
 - In the current Year 4, standards are around the national expectation for their age.
 - In Year 2, in 2003, the number of pupils was very small and the proportion of those who achieved the nationally expected standard in reading and writing was around the national average.
 - In the current Year 2, the standards in reading are good and in writing standards are around the national expectation.
57. School records and inspection evidence show that the pupils identified as gifted and talented, and the higher attaining pupils achieve well, due to the setting by attainment in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. When they have their share of support by skilled teaching assistants in the classroom they make even better progress. Pupils achieve well in their learning of grammar as a direct result of good teaching. All pupils in the present class for pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well in all aspects of their learning.
58. Children's skills in speaking and listening are good in Years 1 and 2. The class teacher develops these skills successfully. She provides a range of good opportunities for pupils to speak in front of an audience and to negotiate with a partner. All pupils achieve well; they respond very effectively to this good teaching, particularly boys, although everyone is fully included. Pupils respond mainly using whole sentences. Even the youngest explain confidently what it means to be a good listener. Pupils provide complex definitions such as why and how they have identified alliteration in a poem. Standards in Years 3 to 6 are average, and reflect the quality of teaching seen for this age group. The achievement of most pupils in these years is satisfactory although for the higher attaining pupils it is good. Through discussions of texts teachers develop pupils' ability to express opinions. Some of the pupils, from all attainment groups, show considerable confidence. Other pupils have yet to develop the necessary skills to enable them to respond in a formal manner and find supplying relevant detail difficult. Whilst acknowledging that the sample was small no planning for more formal speaking was seen in the English lessons observed.

59. Reading standards are good by the end of Year 2 but remain just below the average in Year 6. The school has identified the need to place considerable emphasis on developing reading skills and the enjoyment of reading, recognising that many pupils in the years 3 to 6 still need considerable support. Reading is given a high profile during the day and many opportunities for reading are provided. These include group, paired, silent reading and reading aloud to an adult. A particularly good feature is the 'buddy' sessions where a pupil of higher attainment shares a book with a pupil with less advanced reading skills. Most pupils in Year 2 are confident when they identify their favourite authors as Dick King-Smith, John Bendall and Suzy-Jane Tanner. These are successful readers who describe the characters in books well and are very sure of what they like in books and why. The school uses a number of reading schemes to good effect and provides many additional paperback novels. The two libraries are well-stocked with an extensive range of attractive books. Teachers ensure that pupils read a set text in each lesson and they question pupils very closely, to ensure that they understand the text and the plot well.
60. The development of writing is a school priority and a writing week every term ensures that all pupils have greater than normal opportunities to develop their skills and to write in a range of styles including poetry. Standards are slightly below average in the present group of Year 6 pupils and close to the expected level in Year 2. The pupils of highest attainment in Years 5 and 6 achieve well and write at a standard that sets them on course to exceed the nationally expected level in time. Pupils in this group use similes well in their work such as when describing a shark with, *'teeth as big as daggers and a mouth as wide as a door'*. The standard of presentation in books is good.
61. When writing poetry, examples by pupils in Year 5 and 6 supporting work about waterfalls in geography, include lines such as:
'The cataracts strong, plunge along, striking and raging as if war is waging' and another pupil wrote *....'feel the force', 'like a power jet!'*
I tell you now its not over yet
It smells awful, like damp wet wood,
surrounded by trees and lots of mud. Down the river it finds its way it passes the children as they play.'
 This work presented images comparing the force of water to current events where a powerful force needs to rush on until it is spent.
62. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are introduced to good techniques such as writing clauses starting with a preposition at the front of a sentence, in order to create atmosphere. During the inspection pupils were seen to have few opportunities to write at length although the teaching of punctuation, grammar and handwriting is good. This was seen particularly in the sets for the older pupils in Years 3 to 6. Completed work in books shows that all pupils achieve well. A good recent innovation to improve the spelling of the pupils of lower attainment and those with special educational needs is the introduction of a spelling scheme. Using this system, pupils read and repeat letters in time to a tape.
63. In Year 2 pupils write short, well punctuated linked sentences. When writing poems, one pupil in this class used imaginative alliteration 'orange ox', 'poisonous pike' to make his work more interesting and his partner from Year 1 chose 'dancing dog', 'funny fish', all spelt correctly. Most pupils in these year groups have good spelling and handwriting for their age. Teachers celebrate pupils writing, placing it on display. Teacher's marking is generally very supportive with clear comments for development.
64. In two thirds of the lessons seen teaching was good. It is clear from lesson observations and from pupil's books that this teaching has been purposeful throughout the year. These teachers have clear learning objectives and consequently, pupils are able to achieve well. In one lesson that was judged to be satisfactory, the teacher found it difficult to include and motivate some of the pupils with special educational needs from Year 6. Younger pupils with special needs were included and supported well. In all lessons the national literacy strategy is incorporated well.

65. The assessment procedures are very good and are used well. The progress each pupil makes is carefully tracked. Older pupils have clear individual targets but, when there is no additional support available, pupils do not always choose to use these to help themselves to master what they need to do in order to move through the National Curriculum stages.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

66. Good opportunities for using and developing speaking and listening skills learned in literacy sessions are provided in the personal, social and health education programme and in history lessons. Pupils use their writing skills in science, history and in geography, but overall pupils have only limited opportunities for completing long passages of extended writing. The skills learned in literacy for reading and understanding texts and for writing well-punctuated work are used across all subjects of the curriculum. Younger pupils with special needs were included and supported well. In all lessons skills learned within the national literacy strategy are incorporated well.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the most recent tests in 2003 were above the national average by the end of Year 6 and are greatly improved.
- Standards of work seen are above national expectations at the end of the present Year 2.
- Teaching and learning are at least good in all classes across the school.
- The co-ordinators lead the subject very well.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 in the tests in 2003 remain at a low level.

Commentary

67. Good teaching helps pupils to be on course to achieve their personal targets and exceed the nationally expected standards by the end of the present Year 2. Pupils have a secure understanding of how to use addition and subtraction up to 30 to help them build and use multiplication tables. They use practical skills to solve problems and automatically look for patterns in their written work. Those pupils with average and above average levels of attainment achieve very well and last year everyone in the very small group attained at or above the expected level.
68. Every effort is made to help each pupil to achieve his or her own personal best in lessons. By the end of the present year, for pupils in Year 6 the target agreed with the local education authority is likely to be achieved. Work in class is at the expected level 4, as is completed work in books. Almost half of the group has been identified as having special educational needs, many of these pupils have joined the school in the past two years. It is not likely therefore that the overall standards will be at the expected level in the statutory tests because pupils need additional time and support to reach this level. The average attaining pupils are well set to reach the expected level and the few higher attaining pupils are expected to reach high levels. The impact on the overall scores of the results of the lower attaining pupils in a small group make comparisons with national figures unrealistic.
69. Standards fluctuate from year to year as the numbers with special educational needs and the above average mobility of families changes the nature of the year groups. The number of pupils attaining Level 5, the level above that normally expected, was high last year as a result of the structured programme of booster classes that is in place. These booster classes have been used differently this year to help pupils experiencing learning difficulties to get as close as

possible to the levels expected nationally. What they can do in class with support is not likely to be repeated in a timed test session.

70. Across the school teaching is good in mathematics. As a result most pupils achieve their personal targets and learn well. In class, relationships between adults and pupils are very good and learning is an exciting and profitable activity. The schools financial position has created a situation where there have been very few teaching assistants in Years 3 to 6. The difference when a class enjoys its allocation of support is marked and for this reason funds to increase the number of support staff have been allocated in the new budget. Teachers and the support staff work well together and the special planning for these lessons always involves all adults and the purpose of activities is clear. Pupils are managed well and resources are always organised so that everyone is fully included in the good-natured process of working towards shared objectives.
71. In most lessons mini review sessions are interspersed throughout the activity period so that, by sensitive questioning, teachers are able to evaluate and assess how well the intended work is progressing. This works well, any pupils who appear to have barriers to learning are reminded of their targets and are encouraged to increase their effort in a persistent but gentle manner. The system also helps teachers to track how well pupils are doing and enables them to modify their plans in a practical way. In classes for younger pupils, teachers often mark work alongside groups and offer praise, hints or encouragement. The marking in books of older pupils is thorough and often involves a running dialogue over the term as difficulties are ironed out and success shines through. Equal care is shown when marking homework books.
72. The shared leadership of the planned work is effective. There is a good overlap between Years 2 and 3 and between the age groups in the mixed age classes and in the matched attainment sets in Years 3 to 6. The analysis of work and the identification of the reasons where lower attainment has been identified have enabled staff to devise approaches that are beginning to raise standards in lessons for pupils of all levels of prior attainment. The national strategy for teaching mathematics has been instrumental in establishing good systems and continuity across classes. Every teacher shares the secure knowledge and understanding of what is required and how the school is organised to teach mathematics to the highest possible level for each group of pupils. Teachers use the available help imaginatively to help pupils to meet their personal targets and objectives.

Mathematics across the curriculum

73. There is effective use of mathematics across the curriculum. The use of ICT in the computer suite and in the classrooms enhance pupils' understanding in numeracy and mathematics. These include problem solving, creating symmetrical patterns in art and design and accurate measurement in science and design and technology. Pupils demonstration of what they know and understand in other areas of mathematics besides numeracy such as in measurement, time and space, is also used well to analyse findings in science and to plan and make useful objects in design and technology.

SCIENCE

The provision for science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management by the headteacher, as the subject leader, are proving to be successful in raising standards and achievement levels.
- Standards above the expected level are achieved in lessons.
- The qualities of teaching and learning and pupils' achievement are good overall.
- There are many good opportunities for pupils' independent investigations.
- Pupils use accurate scientific language and apply their numeracy skills well.
- Science contributes very well to pupils' knowledge and understanding of a healthy lifestyle.
- Effective use of the school grounds helps to increase children's knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils still need prompting to use ICT to support their learning in science.

Commentary

74. As a direct result of the good and in some instances very good teaching pupils in Year 2 achieve well and are now well placed to exceed the nationally expected levels in science by the end of the present school year. A few higher attaining pupils are already achieving Level 2 and are on course to exceed this. Particular strengths are in their knowledge and understanding of foods to promote a healthy lifestyle and the range and scope of their practical work and investigations. Pupils know how circuits are constructed and have a good understanding about which materials are best suited to different purposes. In their work about forces and friction they are keen to devise practical tests to verify their ideas. They are very confident when discussing conditions required to promote growth in plants and how to plant and take care of seeds.
75. By the end of Year 6 pupils are well placed to exceed the expected standards by the end of the year. Even in the group where there are more boys than girls there are no significant differences between the achievements of the different groups. All pupils including the few that are higher attaining and those with special educational needs achieve well. Teachers plan well for the different attainment groups and match work to their prior attainment. Considering, the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and the well below levels of attainment on entry for many pupils, they achieve well in most classes.
76. From the analysis of pupils' written work and displays, discussions with pupils and from lesson observations, it is evident that the quality of teaching and therefore the pattern of learning are good overall, with some strong features. In Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning are very good overall. Across all three mixed-age classes the planning, challenges and support for each group are very good and consequently children achieved very well. Pupils plan and organise their own challenging investigations where they predict, test and record their observations in discovering how to prepare the best possible conditions for growth in plants.
77. In Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning are very good overall and in all of the lessons observed teaching was very good. In all of these lessons the planning was very good. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and give praise for reasoned answers and good effort. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace. All teachers ensure that pupils use accurate scientific vocabulary and give them opportunities to extend their numeracy skills whenever possible.
78. During the inspection most pupils spoke with interest about other investigations that they had undertaken and the way that they planned independent work. They regard the importance of a healthy lifestyle, environmental issues and conservation as very important. Most of the older pupils have benefited from a range of visits undertaken by the school. Curricular planning, pupils' completed work, lessons observed and discussions show that until the present year too little regular and systematic use has been made of ICT for recording and investigation.
79. The leadership and management by the headteacher as the subject leader are very good. They are very strong contributory factors to the improved standards since the last inspection. Her drive and vision has been responsible for the good levels of achievement and rigorous

monitoring and analysis of assessment alongside meticulous tracking. In most cases this increased confidence has contributed to the very pleasing and in some years rapid rate of improvement. The school has made very good progress the past five years and is well set to maintain this progress into the future.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership has had a significant impact on improving the quality of provision.
- Teaching is good overall.
- Pupils throughout the school achieve well and pupils are confident when displaying their understanding of the expected attainment levels.
- The new computer suite offers many opportunities for personal research and independent investigation.
- The instinctive use of the subject across the curriculum needs additional work and attention.

Commentary

80. At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be about average for pupils at the end of both Years 2 and 6. Since then the provision of a well-organised computer suite and the development of a very clear curriculum plan, as well as the provision of training for all staff, has ensured that aspects of the curriculum, including modelling and control technology, are now taught well. Pupils' range of skills is now very secure and standards are at least in line with those expected nationally and they are being developed in a very structured way. Teachers and pupils are confident when using computers for work and for research and personal investigations. The small number of pupils with access to personal computers at home share their more advanced skills with their friends.
81. Year 2 pupils understand the various forms of communication such as CD-ROM, tape recorders, text and photographs. They use the computer for word processing, using the mouse confidently, and are beginning to find their way around the keyboard and icons. They confidently log on, edit text, save their work and log off. By Year 6 most pupils (are) use computers confidently showing how competent they are. They know the usefulness of information and communication technology (ICT) in their work and in the outside world. Pupils readily collect information and present it on spreadsheets and graphs. They use search engines to access websites on the Internet. Their skills in control technology are strong and pupils delight in showing how well they can use the available software. At this stage of the year pupils have had good experiences using all of the required aspects of the subject at the appropriate level.
82. Teaching is good overall and is always good or better and this is having a positive effect on raising standards. Teachers have strong subject knowledge, enabling them to teach with confidence. They plan their lessons well and the learning objectives are made clear at the outset. Good emphasis is placed on the development of relevant technical vocabulary. Teaching is effective because the correct balance is achieved between the time devoted to teacher instruction and the time allowed for pupils to practice them and this results in pupils learning well. The pace of lessons is brisk and learning is broken down into manageable steps. Skilful questioning as part of the process of evaluation and assessment fully involves pupils in their own learning and support is well targeted at those who need it most. Positive attitudes and good behaviour are also important factors in pupils' good achievement in lessons. The leadership of the subject is good and the process of raising standards has been well managed. The computer club is well attended and enables pupils to practise and share skills.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

83. The school recognises that the use of ICT across the curriculum is not yet fully developed. It is now, however, undoubtedly much stronger than at the time of the last inspection. Teachers' planning for other subjects identifies opportunities for its use and during ICT lessons they often use work from other subjects, such as mathematics or science as a vehicle to extend skills. Literacy skills are improved by the pupils' growing proficiency in word processing. This supports reluctant writers and pupils of all ages benefit from the use of many programs to improve their skills in reading and spelling. Pupils' use CD-ROM and the Internet regularly for research. The use of ICT to extend and enhance work in other subjects such as history and geography is starting to show the range and scope of pupils' abilities. The detailed action plan for the development of the subject provides very clear direction for teachers to use the computer suite as a natural extension of work started in other subjects in the classroom.

HUMANITIES

The last time the school was inspected pupils across the school attained satisfactory standards and made steady progress in these subjects. The evidence from this inspection is that pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, achieve at the expected levels. A good range of practical experiences is used to support both history and geography during visits made to places of educational interest. Pupils of all ages undertake local studies and use the rich facilities available in the school grounds. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 benefit from extended opportunities for additional learning during residential visits. Planning and achievement is monitored to ensure progression. There are good links with work in other subjects such as literacy, numeracy, design and technology and information technology. The available evidence demonstrates that although work in these subjects was sampled during the inspection the schemes of work and available resources cover all of the national curriculum requirements.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

History was not a main focus for the inspection and insufficient evidence was examined to make a firm judgement on the overall standard of teaching. Pupils project books of the Victorians and the notes they make in lessons show that they meet expected standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils' historical skills include an understanding of chronology and of how to use a range of primary and secondary sources of evidence. Their study includes the work of many notable personalities of the period and of the social conditions. Pupils have used the Internet well in their research. Their projects contain few long pieces of sustained writing that might enable them to enhance their literacy skills. In the one lesson seen, teaching and learning were good and pupils achieved well as they discussed aspects of the Viking society and where they traded. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and achieve at the same level as their friends.

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

This subject was not a major focus for the inspection and insufficient evidence was identified to make a firm judgement on teaching.

Commentary

84. Since the last inspection pupils overall levels of attainment have been maintained and in the class for pupils in Years 5 and 6 are close to the expected level. Pupils work on the lives and traditions of the Aztecs have been used well to link styles of art and culture with work about other people living in different times and places. Pupils demonstrate only limited skills in reading ordinance survey maps except some gained during a day visit to Lincoln. In the

lesson seen, pupils showed a developing understanding of how to use a key and to locate information from an atlas. The teaching was satisfactory overall, with good extension for those pupils capable of higher attainment who showed that they could use the Internet to find information. Older pupils in Years 3 to 6 have previously studied a mountain environment and younger pupils have studied aspects of life in India. Geography projects are supported effectively by pupils' writing skills and their computer skills. The subject contributes very well to pupils' cultural development. The work on display in the area known as 'the cosy corner' shows how pupils across the school link their studies across the curriculum to their developing understanding of whole world issues such as the clean water project. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have linked foodstuffs used in food technology to the country of production and have learned about the language and traditions of people living in Italy and India. In Years 5 and 6 pupils have found out about the lives and basic crops of people from every country on the continent of Africa and have tracked the route down the major rivers of crops such as coffee, maize and other crops.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Very few lessons were observed in the following subjects: art and design, design and technology, and physical education. In addition to observing lessons, inspectors analysed teacher's files and discussed with subject leaders where they saw strengths in their work. Inspectors spoke to pupils about what they had learned and examined samples of completed work. Evidence suggests that these subjects are supported effectively by the shared expertise by teachers. The teacher's planning is good and the planned curriculum indicates that over a four-year programme all of the pupils who have been through the school have experienced every part of the intended work. Teachers check progress and continuity through paying careful attention to assessment and review. The range and quality of resources is good.

Art and design

Pupils' work in art lessons was not a focus for the inspection and insufficient evidence was identified to make a secure judgement on the overall provision or the quality of teaching across the school.

Commentary

85. In the one lesson seen, in the class for pupils in Years 5 and 6, attainment levels were similar to those expected for the age of the pupils. In this lesson, pupils observed very carefully as they accurately enlarged a selected picture, using a grid as a guide. The quality of the teaching seen in this single lesson was very good. The explanations of the objectives of the lesson were very clear and pupils worked in a purposeful manner, concentrating hard and achieving very well. Pupils with special educational needs received good support and encouragement and they achieved well. The curriculum includes experiences where pupils have shared in creating 'living sculpture', such as the willow dome and the water pipe weaving in an area known as 'The Nook'. The subject is greatly enjoyed by the pupils and makes a good contribution to their cultural development. Pupils study the art of the Aztecs and the work of a range of western artists. The subject leader is very experienced and enthusiastic and readily offers support and encouragement to other teachers and to the pupils. Work in the art club is regularly completed to a high quality and adds to the displays that are beautifully mounted throughout the school.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Commentary

86. In design and technology, discussion with pupils showed that they are gaining experience of a range of materials and techniques and developing the expected subject skills through designing and making a variety of useful products. Younger pupils showed how they had designed and made models of houses that reflected some buildings in their villages and in periods that they had studied in history. Other pupils had designed musical instruments and made biscuits. Designing healthy meals as part of working towards the 'Healthy schools' award was described enthusiastically by pupils in Years 3 and 4. Strong links with the geography of India and Italy have enabled them to create designer meals using traditional foodstuffs from these countries. In Years 5 and 6 pupils were planning an 'Aztec market', designing stalls as well as their interpretation of traditional objects and 'take away meals' from the Aztec culture to sell. Well-organised sketchbooks show that pupils have developed a strong set of criteria for design and for evaluation. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection. Resources are plentiful and are of good quality. The use made of ICT to support learning either through planning, modelling and control is developing well especially now the computer suite enables larger groups of pupils to collaborate together.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **satisfactory**.

This subject was not a main focus for the inspection and insufficient evidence was identified to make sufficiently firm judgements on all areas of planned work.

Commentary

87. The school is affiliated to a national scheme where professional training and support is available for teachers and pupils. This also links schools with others in a local cluster to enable small groups to join together for competitive team games. There is a good scheme of work and resources are plentiful and are all very accessible and in good condition. Part of an athletics lesson was observed for pupils in Year 6. In this lesson pupils' skills were at the level expected for pupils of their age. This is an improvement in standards since the previous inspection. There were several good features observed that included:

- jogging to exercise the heart;
- direct teaching to help develop pupils ability to throw the javelin;
- score cards so that pupils could compete against their personal best and;
- very good resources for all aspects.

88. Stretching exercises and activities that raise the pulse rate are regular features within lessons. Pupils know the value of regular exercise and enjoy the facilities provided by the school. Swimming is enjoyed by pupils on a regular basis and the majority of pupils achieve the expected levels and a good number gain awards that exceed national expectations.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards across the school are above those expected for pupils of the same age nationally and they achieve very well.
- All pupils have very good opportunities to work with a range of musical instruments and explore music from different cultures and styles.
- Pupils delight in the many opportunities for performing.
- The leadership and management of the subject leader, supports other teachers very effectively.

Commentary

89. The quality and range of music heard during the inspection supported by the range of music recorded on CDs and video recordings reflect very good teaching and achievement. Teachers ensure that pupils of all levels of attainment are fully included in all activities. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to take part in all activities and achieve very well as do those who are gifted and talented. The opportunities for investigating the range of dynamics and the variety of rhythms contribute to good quality of composition and performance. Pupils listen with rapt attention and their impeccable behaviour and pride in performance reflect the good teaching observed. Standards show good levels of improvement since the last inspection.
90. Pupils who sing in the school choir perform a wide repertoire of songs with very good pitch, excellent dynamic range and a good feel for the style of the song. They sing a wide repertoire from, religious and modern styles. Their singing reflects traditions from many cultures and pupils perform well in two or three parts.
91. The subject leader supports teachers by providing very good resources and strong guidance and demonstration. She provides inspirational leadership so that music has a high profile both inside the school and in the local community where pupils have many opportunities for performance. This subject makes a very effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
92. In all these subjects the role of the subject leaders is good overall. They collaborate together very well leading and supporting as their personal strengths are used to best effect. Each one is enthusiastic about their most dominant area of responsibility and some are very knowledgeable. Their overview of whole-school strengths and areas for development is very strong and is informed by their shared use of systematic monitoring and evaluation.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for this work in subjects such as science, religious education, health education and specific lessons for the subject as well as time spent discussing issues in circle time is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Commitment to supporting the Christian faith of pupils.
- The work and effect on pupils' self-esteem of the school council.
- The promotion of healthy eating as part of the healthy schools campaign.
- Sensitive handling of drugs awareness, sex education and ecological issues.
- In depth understanding of the safe water project for children where healthy living is difficult.

Commentary

93. Very few specific lessons in this part of the work of the school were seen during the inspection but it is covered as part of a cross-curricular approach. In scrutiny and analysis of work and in the lesson observed and in some lessons in science, pupils' development in this area is clearly supported very well. The school considers that pupils' personal development is at the heart of all of its work. Within the science curriculum there is good provision for health education including teaching about sex education and drugs awareness. Many moral and social issues are explored in religious education, which was not part of this inspection. In this work pupils' spiritual development is a central part of their progress through the promotion of their Christian faith. Pupils' understanding of working together in a safe environment is being fostered through the ongoing work of the school council and through the class discussions. These sessions inform the council representatives about what their peers wish to be on the agenda. Conversations with pupils demonstrated how well they consider themselves to be involved and included in the decision making process of the school. They are knowledgeable about being part of the healthy schools campaign but sometimes enjoy less healthy eating habits during

their work towards raising standards in their 'booster classes' in Year 6 when they have been known to test the qualities of fruit filled chocolate biscuits!

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	1
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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