

INSPECTION REPORT

Moulton Chapel Primary School

Spalding

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120417

Headteacher: Mr G. Palmer

Lead inspector: Paul Edwards

Dates of inspection: 24th – 26th February 2004

Inspection number: 260716

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	67
School address:	Eaugate Road Moulton Chapel Spalding Lincolnshire
Postcode:	PE12 0XJ
Telephone number:	01406 380440
Fax number:	01406 380440
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M Arnott
Date of previous inspection:	6 th October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a very small school with 67 pupils on roll, although the number on roll has increased steadily over the last five years. The pupils come from a broad range of social backgrounds and from a wide area. Almost all are of white British heritage. The local education authority does not have a school meal service and the proportion of pupils identified as being eligible for free school meals – which is well below the national average – does not truly reflect the likely take up. Though there is some variation from year to year, attainment on entry is generally below average. The proportion of pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs is average and one child has a statement of special educational needs.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21069	Paul Edwards	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage, mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology, music, physical education.
9837	Roy Walsh	Lay inspector	
30398	Chris Scola	Team inspector	English, science, history, geography, religious education, art and design, special educational needs.

The inspection contractor was:

Inspire Educational Ltd

The Coach House

132 Whitaker Road

Derby

DE23 6AP

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very effective school. Very good leadership and teaching combine to ensure that the pupils make very good progress during their time at the school. The curriculum is good and is enriched by a very good range of activities. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The pupils achieve well because of the very good quality of teaching
- The headteacher provides very effective leadership and is well supported by his colleagues and the governors
- The pupils' attitudes towards learning are very good and they behave well
- Assessment procedures are very good
- The curriculum is enhanced by a very good range of enrichment activities
- The pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work could be better
- Classroom assistants are used very effectively and make a strong contribution to the pupils' achievements
- Links with parents are very strong and the school plays an active part in the life of the community
- Although all staff are aware of child protection issues, some staff need to update their child protection procedures training

The school has made good progress since the previous inspection. Standards in English and mathematics continue to rise and the pupils' achievements in information and communication technology have improved. The school development plan is now a useful document that helps to drive up standards.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 6.*

Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are average in English and mathematics and **the pupils achieve very well overall**. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well and most are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1 as a result of the very good teaching and effective support.

In Years 1 and 2 all of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well in reading, writing and mathematics and most make very good progress in these aspects. In Years 3 to 6 the pupils continue to make very good progress in English and mathematics and they achieve very well. Overall standards in Years 2 and 6 vary quite substantially in English and mathematics from year to year because of the small size of each year group but over a period of years they tend to be above average. Inspection evidence points to standards in the current Year 6 that are not as high as they were in 2003. This is due to the higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs. Too many pupils across the school present their work poorly and careless writing and diagrams are too readily accepted. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs in recent years has had a significant impact, particularly by lowering the school's Year 6 test results.

Although standards in science are in line with expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, over time they are above average. Standards in information and communication technology are broadly average and the pupils achieve well.

The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Spiritual and cultural development are good and social and moral development are very good. The pupils' attitudes towards learning are very good and they behave well. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching is very good overall. As a result of the very good teaching in the Foundation Stage the children make a very good start to learning. Throughout the school teaching and learning are very good in the key areas of reading, writing and mathematics. The teachers do not demand high enough standards in the quality of the pupils' handwriting and in the presentation of the pupils' work. The school provides the pupils with a good range of learning opportunities, which are enriched by a very good number of out of school activities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, enabling these pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall and this has resulted in continued improvements. The headteacher is very well supported by his colleagues and all share a commitment to provide the pupils with the best opportunities. In such a small school the staff carry considerable responsibilities, but they fulfil their roles very well, both in raising standards and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. The governors know the school very well and are very supportive. All statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are very satisfied with the work of the school and feel that their children make very good progress. They feel very confident in approaching the school with any concerns. They enjoy the opportunity to be involved in their children's learning through homework and through the school's participation in community activities.

Most of the pupils expressed a liking for the school and enjoy their lessons. They appreciate the support they are given by staff and enjoy good relationships with other children.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do are:

- To raise the expectations of teachers and pupils of the standards of handwriting, and improve the quality of presentation of the pupils' work
- Ensure that all staff have a good understanding of the school's child protection procedures

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Throughout the school, the pupils achieve very well in relation to where they started from and what they are capable of. Standards in most subjects, including English and mathematics and science are average by the end of Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the time they enter Year 1, almost all of the children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning and they achieve well
- The pupils achieve very well in English and mathematics and well in science
- The pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work is unsatisfactory
- Standards in art and design are above average

Commentary

1. National test results for Year 2 pupils in 2003 indicated that standards were in line with the national average in reading, below average in writing and above average in mathematics. Each year the number of pupils in each year group is very small and therefore the interpretation of the National Curriculum test results must be treated with caution. However, over the last five years, the trend in the school's average National Curriculum points score for all core subjects was above the national trend at the end of Year 2.
2. The results for Year 6 pupils in the 2003 national tests indicated that standards were well above the national average in English and mathematics and average in science. Although the trend in the school's average National Curriculum points score for all core subjects was below the national trend at the end of Year 6, this is not a true reflection of how well the pupils achieve. The number of pupils with special educational needs who enter the school during Years 5 and 6 affects the school's results significantly.
3. The very good quality of provision in the Foundation Stage ensures that children are given a very good start to their education. On entry to the Reception class, the children's attainment is below average. They make good progress and achieve well because their individual needs are quickly identified, and they receive very good quality teaching and help. By the time that they move to Year 1, most children reach the nationally recommended targets for this age group. The school has recognized the need to provide the children with more opportunities to undertake independent learning activities but the lack of space has hindered this goal. A small building project is nearing completion and this will enable the school to provide such activities.
4. The pupils are achieving very well in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 and they are achieving well in science. A significant minority of pupils enter the school with special educational needs, particularly in Years 5 and 6. The school has very effective systems to analyse the performance of pupils with special educational needs. There is frequent and regular communication to ensure that these pupils receive appropriate support. Support staff are fully involved. Individual education plans set out suitable targets. Parents, teachers and the pupils themselves regularly review these. This ensures that pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve very well.
5. The school has made a concerted effort to continue to raise standards in reading and writing and the pupils make very good progress in these areas. Pupils of different abilities are provided with work that is well matched to their previous attainment. The younger pupils are provided with a structured approach to reading and older pupils are encouraged to read widely. The range of strategies, including 'buddy readers' and parental help in class, helps to ensure the

pupils achieve very well and to reach high standards. The efforts to improve the quality of the pupils' writing is having a good effect and most pupils achieve satisfactory standards, writing for a wide range of different purposes and in different styles. Although handwriting skills are taught regularly they do not transfer to the pupils' other work.

6. The pupils achieve very well in mathematics because of the very effective procedures for assessing their progress and the identification of what they need to do to improve. In all year groups, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make the progress of which they are capable. The pupils learn well in science because the subject is taught systematically and regularly. In both science and mathematics the pupils are given good opportunities to carry out practical and investigative activities enabling them to achieve well in this aspect of the curriculum.
7. Standards in information and communication technology are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 because the pupils are provided with regular teaching in small groups. They use their skills effectively to help them learn in other subjects. Although the pupils do some control and monitoring work they are not given enough practical activities to develop their skills. Standards in art and design are above average in Year 6. Standards in history, geography and religious education are in line with expectations in Years 2 and 6. It was not possible to make a judgement in other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and they display good behaviour both in and outside of lessons. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils are keen to learn and enjoy being at school
- Relationships across the school are very good
- Staff teach tolerance and acceptance of differences very well

Commentary

8. All of the pupils display very positive attitudes to school and learning, although the presentation of their work is sometimes not as neat and tidy as it could be. They take an active part in classroom discussions and co-operate well when working in small groups. They are able to share books and equipment and work sensibly together. From the earliest age the pupils learn to listen and join in discussions about their learning targets. They enjoy participating in the many after-school activities organised by the school. Break-times are positive social occasions, where friendships and confidence are developed well.
9. Behaviour throughout the school is good and staff use well thought out strategies to reward good work and conduct. The pupils behave very well in lessons and their behaviour is usually well managed. The pupils report that their teachers deal quickly and effectively with any bullying. Most pupils understand that good behaviour is fundamental to good learning and they demonstrate this by concentrating hard in lessons and working quietly when asked to do so. There have been no exclusions during the last school year.
10. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. The pupils get on well with each other and there is a true community spirit in the school. Older pupils are given responsibilities to help younger ones with their reading skills, and they approach this activity very seriously and with a great deal of enthusiasm.

11. The school provides very well for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All pupils, including those from a young age, are taught the difference between right and wrong, and to take responsibility for their own actions. An effective system of rewards and sanctions is consistently applied in the school, and this supports pupils as they learn to make decisions that are socially and morally acceptable to all.
12. The pupils' understanding and awareness of living in a culturally diverse society is enriched by the study of different festivals and religions, visitors to school and trips to art and music events. The school has made good efforts to introduce activities reflecting a range of cultures across the curriculum, including an after school club that is run by an Arabic dancer.

Attendance

13. Attendance rates are slightly below the national average. This has been caused by a number of pupils undergoing long-term medical care. The school has worked hard to improve the figures, awarding certificates to pupils with above 95 per cent attendance and promoting the benefits of good attendance to parents. The school's methods for checking attendance are good and no unauthorised absences have been recorded over the last reporting year. The punctuality of pupils arriving at school has dramatically improved since the last inspection. There were no exclusions in the last school year.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.6	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall, the school provides a good quality of education.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching, learning and assessment is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in English and mathematics is consistently very good
- In most lessons, the work is challenging for all groups of pupils
- The teachers make very effective use of assessment information to plan work and to match work to the pupils' ability
- Because lessons are interesting and the teachers enthusiastic, the pupils behave well and show considerable interest in their work
- The teachers do not demand high enough standards in the presentation of the pupils' work
- Pupils with special educational needs are provided with very good support, their needs are identified clearly and they make good progress as a result

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 21 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7	14	0	0	0	0

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

14. The teaching of children in the Reception class is very good. The teacher and classroom assistants work together very effectively and very good planning ensures the children are given a secure start to their education and that they achieve well. The teacher encourages the children and provides them with positive feedback and they make good gains in all areas of their learning. The teacher tries to provide the children with a good balance between teacher directed activities and those that the children can choose for themselves. However, the lack of space inhibits these opportunities. The teachers' assessments of the pupils' progress are very good and used effectively to identify the next steps in learning.
15. The pupils in Year 1 and 2 are taught alongside children in the Reception class. However, very careful planning and effective use of classrooms assistants and parents ensure that all children are provided with support that enables them to work at an appropriate level. This is particularly evident in English and mathematics, where the pupils make very good gains in their learning. The pupils continue to make very good progress in English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6. A particular strength of the teaching is the effectiveness of the assessment procedures in these subjects. The information from the assessments is used to set targets for the pupils and these are shared with both the pupils and their parents. The teachers also ensure the pupils develop their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects and this is a positive feature of the teaching. Good questioning by the teachers is evident in all classes and this helps the pupils to develop their ability to explain their thinking. The relationships between staff and pupils are very good. This helps to create a positive atmosphere where the pupils are always happy to respond to the teacher's questions, and this helps them to make very good gains in their learning.
16. The pupils' learning is very good overall. Most pupils work well independently, know what they have to do and organise themselves efficiently. The teachers make the lessons interesting and this helps to keep the pupils on task. The pupils improve their speaking and listening skills in most curriculum areas.
17. The teachers have been very concerned to ensure that the pupils carry out a good amount of work in all subjects. However, as a result, too little emphasis has been given to ensuring the quality of the pupils' handwriting and many pupils produce work which is not their best. The quality of handwriting in practice sessions shows that the pupils can do much better. The lack of a common policy on presentation results in the pupils' work not being dated and looking 'scrappy'. This belies the content in the books.
18. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve very well. Work is very well planned and matched very well to their needs and abilities. The teachers know them very well and their achievements are acknowledged and celebrated. Teaching assistants play an important and very effective role in supporting them. Their help and support enables individuals and small groups of pupils to work with a skilled and informed adult who reinforces and consolidates work done in a larger mixed age group. The school makes good use of outside expertise to assess pupils who have shown learning or behaviour difficulties. This ensures that the support given is totally appropriate.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum with a very good range of activities outside normal lessons. The staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of extra-curricular activities and community links enriches the curriculum
- The local area is used very well
- The accommodation limits some areas of the curriculum
- Numeracy and literacy are promoted very well across the curriculum

Commentary

19. The curriculum shows good improvement since the previous inspection. Provision for information and communication technology has improved and all pupils now have many opportunities to work with computers. The school's extra-curricular provision is good. This has also improved since the last inspection. There are now many opportunities for all pupils to take part in a range of sports and learn to play various musical instruments in after school clubs. In the humanities and the arts, the school provides a very good range of visits to support the curriculum, such as visits to museums, local industries, bird sanctuaries and trips to the theatre. All pupils have the opportunity to go on a residential trip.
20. The school has very strong links with the local village and the school is often the focus of various community and social events. Pupils from the school put on plays and events for the local community as well as participating in local festivals. The pupils have been involved in a project examining the impact of a proposed highly controversial wind farm as part of their work in science and geography, and a local expert in energy conservation visits the school regularly. The school also takes part in a range of events run in conjunction with other local schools, such as sports events and art and dance. Pupils from a local special school work with the pupils one day each week.
21. Work across the curriculum is very well planned to take account of each pupil's ability. All subjects have detailed schemes of work on which this planning is based. Recent initiatives to improve writing have been successful. Very good teaching following the national strategies in literacy and numeracy has resulted in all pupils achieving very well.
22. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The provision for outdoor play is currently being improved by building work that is now taking place. The school is aware of the unsatisfactory accommodation for indoor physical education for older pupils. It ensures that good use is made of the extensive outdoor play area and is supporting the community's efforts to secure funding for a village hall which could provide a good space for indoor gymnastics, dance and games.
23. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. It is well planned, effective and meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. Individual education plans are detailed and thorough. They contain appropriate targets, which are communicated well to all relevant staff. This ensures that pupils with special education needs achieve very well. The expertise of outside agencies is called in when necessary and used effectively to plan particular programmes that benefit individual pupils.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for the pupils' care and welfare is good. Staff provide good support and advice to pupils and the pupils' involvement in the work of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a high level of care within a secure environment, which encourages the pupils to do their best
- Personal development is carefully fostered to encourage pupils' confidence and self-esteem
- Very good relationships exist between staff and pupils
- Although all staff understand child protection issues, some need to update their training

Commentary

24. The very good level of care and welfare provided for all pupils is a strength of the school. Arrangements for supporting the pupils' personal development are very good with staff providing good role models for the pupils. Learning assistants give particular help in special daily sessions to those pupils with specific learning needs, helping to raise their confidence and self-esteem. Break and lunchtimes are well supervised and any problems are handled consistently well. Staff are very well acquainted with pupils and their families and are therefore able to provide individual pupils with very good support. Parents value and appreciate the very good pastoral care their children receive.
25. Child protection procedures are effective but not all staff, including those in administration, are fully aware of current practices. Regular health and safety inspections take place and thorough risk assessments are completed both for internal activities, outside visits and residential trips. The school also runs 'bike wise', a cycling proficiency course for those older pupils who are considering cycling to school. The car safety problem highlighted in the last inspection report still exists, although the school has reduced the risks by erecting a gate to the small school car park and obtaining a speed restriction for the road adjacent to the school.
26. The pupils report they have very good relationships with their class teachers and learning assistants and they find it easy to discuss any problems with them. From reception onwards, the pupils are keen to get involved in the life of the school. They gladly offer assistance and are very willing helpers in carrying out tasks for the benefit of the school. All of the pupils in Year 6 have specific school jobs and also help younger pupils with their reading. The pupils are consulted on their views of the school by questionnaires and informal interviews with teachers. The Year 6 pupils also surveyed the opinions of all the pupils on the design and use of the new trim trail equipment. The school is intending to set up a formal school council in order to move forward the recently started 'Healthy Schools' initiative.
27. Induction arrangements for new pupils are comprehensive. Children enter the school for a part-time session after their fourth birthday. This introduces them to other pupils and school routines. Those pupils who join the school after reception are allocated a 'buddy' who helps them to settle and integrate with the other pupils quickly. Residential activities extend the learning horizons of Years 5 and 6; visits to Scarborough are very much enjoyed and assist in building the pupils' confidence and independence.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, and the community are very good. Links with other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works closely with parents keeping them well informed about their children's progress
- Positive action has been taken to develop very close links with the local community
- Strong links with partner institutions contribute well to pupils' achievements

Commentary

28. The school uses questionnaires, formal evenings and informal chats to create a strong partnership with its parents and to canvass parents' views. School and inspection evidence shows that parents have positive views of most aspects of the school's work. Parents like the fact that the headteacher and staff have high expectations for their children and they feel that the school is well led and managed. The parents feel that the recently introduced class topic sheets are extremely useful to them and they also appreciate the support their children receive, both academic and personal. The pupils' annual progress reports are well written and informative and clearly state the children's targets for future improvement. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are consulted on their children's individual educational plan and are kept informed of their child's progress. Parents are welcome to help out in school and a number do, which not only benefits the pupils' learning but also adds to the sense of community. A small number of parents feel that the behaviour of some pupils affects the learning of the majority. However, this is not borne out by inspection evidence. Teachers manage the behaviour of the more challenging pupils very well and do not allow it to affect the learning of others.
29. The school encourages parents to become involved with the life of the school and to provide support for their children's education at home. A number of parents help in school organising the library, listening to readers, supervising swimming, and helping with after school clubs. This assistance is much appreciated by the school and contributes to the achievement that the children make. Many parents also become involved with raising extra funds, and helping with their children's homework.
30. The school has recently completed a mathematics information evening for parents in order to outline the curriculum and current teaching methods. This activity was considered to be very successful by those parents who were able to attend.
31. The school has developed good links with its partner secondary schools; visits help Year 6 pupils' gain confidence and make contact with new teachers. Combined staff training and other activities also help to ease the transfer of pupils. A number of the older pupils attend an after school club at a larger primary school which not only provides them with interesting activities but also allows them to make friends with pupils from other schools. The school has two pupils from the local special school to join in lessons each week.
32. Links with the local community are very good, with visits from local religious leaders, and volunteers working in school with readers. The school organises and participates in a number of village events, the next being the Tulip time festival, for which the school enters and decorates a float, and the pupils provide a country dancing display. The children also contribute to the efforts the community makes to win the best-kept village competition.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, which is well supported by staff and governors
- The headteacher and the two key personnel work very effectively as a team
- The governors know the school well and give good support

Commentary

33. The high standards of leadership and management judged by the previous inspection have been maintained. The headteacher is very well supported by the staff, all of whom have many roles and work in a very flexible way that benefits the school. The school has a very caring and inclusive ethos. This is reflected in the number of pupils who have had difficulties at other schools and yet succeed in this one. Expectations are high, which is why all pupils achieve so well and staff and pupils alike enjoy working in the school. All share a common vision and purpose, and the atmosphere, ethos and morale are very good. The school engenders great loyalty from many parents and governors who give a great deal of their own time to help in school.
34. The leadership of important areas of the curriculum by teaching and other key staff is very good. Despite the small number of staff, the effectiveness of teaching and learning and the work of teachers is monitored by the three subject leaders, who all have a heavy responsibility. This is helped by a very strong team approach; all members of the teaching staff feel equally empowered and able to challenge and support their colleagues. The team takes responsibility for tracking the pupils' progress and achievement and setting individual pupil's targets. This is a significant strength of their management.
35. Standards in writing, particularly for the younger pupils, have been a concern but very effective action has been taken to raise standards and this is now showing good results across the school. The school development plan sets out how this will be achieved and identifies areas for further development. Targets are clearly set; there are clear definitions of roles and a very good understanding of current performance and what is needed to improve. All staff and governors are involved in the formation of the plan. All staff are given opportunities to participate in relevant training that links into targets set in the school development plan. There have been improvements to school development planning and the current document extends beyond the current year and gives a clear indication of how progress towards targets will be monitored.
36. The governors know the school well. They regularly check the school's results and have a good understanding of the standards achieved. They value the school and are part of the reason why the school and the community work so well together. They understand the challenges of a small school and are closely involved in checking its work and planning for the future. They have, for example, been closely involved in planning the improvements to the buildings and have long-term goals to improve them further.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	168,802	Balance from previous year	34,880
Total expenditure	166,899	Balance carried forward to the next	35,840
Expenditure per pupil	2,568		

37. The use of financial resources is very well managed. The headteacher, staff and governors work together well to set short-term priorities and to support them with an appropriate allocation of resources. The governors regularly monitor the implementation and progress of initiatives and their associated expenditure. Information is made available so that all staff and governors are kept well informed. A recent local education authority audit confirmed the strengths of the financial systems. Resources are carefully directed to priorities within the school improvement plan and appropriate care is taken in planning contingencies, for example for any potential change in the number of pupils on roll.

38. Staff and governors are implementing the principles of best value well; for example, they continually check whether the contracts they place offer the best cost-effective return for the school. Such undertakings include grounds maintenance, the purchase and servicing of computers, and improvements to premises. The large underspend is to be used to fund the major building project that is underway to improve facilities for the Foundation Stage children, the office and the computer room.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development
- The teaching is very good overall
- Very good use is made of assessment to monitor the children's progress
- Learning support assistants provide good support for the children
- The accommodation limits the range of work the children can do

Commentary

39. At the time of the inspection there were six full-time Reception children. The Reception children are taught with the Year 1 and Year 2 pupils for most of the time. On entry to the school, their attainment covers a wide range but it is below average overall. By the time they enter Year 1, most children attain the Early Learning Goals in all of the areas of learning. The children achieve well in all areas of learning.
40. The staff work hard to ensure the activities for the children match their age and level of maturity. Very good use is made of classroom assistants and parent help to enable the children to be taught in a small group when this is appropriate. The teacher is very effective in ensuring that work is well-matched in this respect and that classroom assistants and parent helpers are well briefed. However, space at the school is currently at a premium and there is little room for the children to undertake structured play activities. The school has identified this as an issue and an extension to the building is almost complete. This will provide an area for sand and water play and for painting activities. Links with parents are very good and they are kept well-informed about their children's progress. The 'family' atmosphere at the school helps young children to settle to school very quickly and to develop confidently.
41. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. The teacher has developed her role since the previous inspection and now manages the mixed Year 1 and 2 and Reception class very effectively, providing work that is well matched to the children's ability. Because of this, the overall provision has improved since the time of the last inspection.
42. In the area of **personal, social and emotional development**, the children achieve well, and teaching is very good. The children quickly learn from the good examples set by their older classmates. At playtimes and at the end of the day, the children dress themselves and can ask for assistance when they need to. The learning support assistants play a crucial role in providing support for the children during small group activities and this helps the children to develop confidence. The classroom is relatively small and there are currently no areas which can be set aside for role-play, sand and water activities. As a result, the children do not develop their independence as well as they might. There are good induction arrangements in place with parents visiting the school prior to their children starting.
43. The children achieve well in **communication, language and literacy**, and the teaching is very good. Children enter school with standards below those expected for their age group. The very good teaching, however, ensures they make very good progress and most children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. All adults engage the children in conversation and discussions and this improves the range of the children's vocabulary. The children's reading and writing skills are improved through the opportunity to work alongside the

older pupils. This 'family approach' is developed through a 'buddy' reading system, whereby older pupils share books and help the younger children to develop a love of books. There are limited opportunities for the children to carry out role-play activities. Good use is made of parent helpers to ensure whole class topics are appropriate for the age of the children. For example, work on Goldilocks and the Three Bears was made more interesting through enabling the children to make the porridge. Good questioning helped to develop the children's vocabulary. By the end of the Reception year, the children have a good appreciation of books, and understand that writing conveys meaning. Reception children have their own reading books and 'target words' that they take home regularly. There are regular opportunities for them to read in school and this, together with the good support from home, ensure that the children achieve well in this aspect of their learning. The development of the children's early writing skills are good and staff provide the children with good guidance in this aspect of their work.

44. In terms of their **mathematical development**, the children achieve well and the quality of teaching and learning is very good. By the end of the Reception year, most children have a secure understanding and knowledge of number. The children develop good counting skills. Most count to ten and the more able children are secure with numbers to 20 and above. Every opportunity is taken to develop these skills, for example during registration when the children count the number present. Mathematical vocabulary is introduced well and the children have a good understanding of 'more than' and 'less than'. For example, during work on Goldilocks and the Three Bears, the parent helper encouraged the children to use a range of mathematical vocabulary when referring to the amount of porridge each bear had in their bowl. The teachers provide the children with a good introduction to the national numeracy strategy. Each lesson begins with a mental arithmetic session that moves on to a range of suitable practical activities. The children's mathematical skills are developed well by the learning support assistants who frequently teach them as a small group. A good range of games and activities are used to help develop the children's mathematical skills and understanding. The lack of space means that sand and water activities cannot take place on a regular basis and this limits the children's understanding of volume and measure.
45. The children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** is secure by the time they transfer to Year 1. Teaching is very good overall and the children's learning is enhanced by the work of the support assistants and parents, enabling the children to be taught in a small group. The children make regular use of the computer suite and classroom assistants and parents help the children to develop satisfactory skills in using computers to draw pictures and to carry out simple writing activities. There are some opportunities for the children to have free access to computers during the day. History and geography elements of this aspect are well matched to the children's level of ability, but there are too few opportunities for the children to find things out for themselves. The children are developing a good awareness of the passage of time and the staff make good use of grandparents to develop this aspect of the children's knowledge by enabling them to provide an insight into what life was like in their younger days. Religious education is taught regularly, and the children gain an appropriate understanding of the Bible, and key characters and events. Special events are celebrated which give the children a good insight into the Church, for example following a child's baptism in the village church.
46. Good teaching helps children achieve satisfactorily levels of **physical development**. The children normally have access to a designated outside play area but this was not available during the inspection due to the building project. Although the school has some wheeled toys, they can only be used when the weather is suitable as the outside area is not covered. However, the staff make good use of the extensive grounds and the 'trim trail' equipment to help develop the children's climbing and jumping skills. Where appropriate, the children join in physical education sessions with the older pupils and they learn from watching and joining in with these lessons. Fine motor skills are often taught well, and the children quickly learn how to use scissors and cutting tools. They show good control of brushes and pencils and they are given good opportunities to develop these skills.

47. In the **creative development** area of learning, teaching is good overall. There are regular opportunities for the children to develop their painting skills when there are whole class activities with the Year 1 and 2 pupils. However, it is not possible to provide these opportunities throughout the day due to the limitations of space. The children use dough for modelling, and take part in a satisfactory range of craft activities. They learn and perform a good range of songs and the children enjoy playing musical instruments as part of whole class music lessons.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The pupils achieve well in reading
- The quality of the pupils' writing is improving but their handwriting and presentation should be better
- Teachers plan work very well to meet the needs of all pupils
- There is some very good work in poetry

Commentary.

48. Standards for Year 6 pupils in the national tests in 2003 were well above average. In the present Year 6 standards are average, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well. The pupils who have entered the school in the previous two or three years make very good progress and achieve very well. In the 2003 national tests standards for Year 2 pupils were below average. In the present Year 2 standards are average and all pupils achieve very well and make very good progress. The variation in these results reflects the small numbers of pupils in each cohort.
49. Achievement in reading is high across the school because of very effective teaching. The younger pupils benefit from a very structured approach to the teaching of reading where the early skills are very well taught. The infant pupils, for example, take great pleasure in joining in with the choral speech in, 'We're going on a Bear Hunt.' They appreciate the story even more because of drama work they have done. The use of a 'Big Book,' develops their word recognition skills and makes the story even more exciting and memorable.
50. The older pupils are encouraged to read and understand a wide variety of stimulating texts that are appropriate to their level. The work of authors such as Robert Westall is used to make links with the work in history when studying the Second World War. Very good leadership of the subject ensures that there is a wide variety of books that appeal to all pupils, particularly boys. Reference skills are well developed and the pupils make good use of the small school library. Many of them use the mobile library, which visits the school and the village. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Paired reading sessions with younger and older pupils working together contribute towards rapid progress in reading. Book fairs and visits and talks by such authors as Christopher Awdry ensure reading has a very high profile.
51. Very good tracking and assessment of the pupils' reading in both the infants and the juniors ensures that the pupils read at an appropriate level and are constantly checked and encouraged. Parents play a strong role and some regularly come in to school to support the pupils in their reading. Teaching assistants are deployed very well to support and encourage good reading.

52. The school identified that standards of writing were too low and introduced a number of key initiatives to raise standards. These are now having an effect. Standards are rising and the pupils' achievement is very good. Because of this, in both infants and juniors a greater proportion of pupils are now attaining at the higher levels. Teachers plan work very well to take account of the wide range of ages and abilities in both the infants and the juniors. All of the pupils have individual targets that are set each term and identify how they can improve their work in writing. Lessons are very well planned with a good balance of teacher input and pupil activities and they proceed at a fast pace. Grammar and spelling are very well taught and pupils are motivated to improve their spellings. Much work is word processed and attractively displayed. The only weakness is that, although the skills of handwriting are taught, these do not transfer into the daily writing of the pupils. There is not enough emphasis on ensuring that the work the pupils produce in their own books is of the same high standard that is found in the work on display.
53. The writing of poetry is given a high profile. The pupils are introduced to a very wide and rich variety of poems. The younger pupils' fascination with rhyme is fully exploited and the structure and language of poems is very well studied. The older pupils learn that the use of alliteration, personification, metaphor and simile are one of the poet's key crafts. The ethos of the school enables the pupils to use poetry to express and share personal thoughts and feelings very successfully.
54. The leadership of the subject is very good. The areas highlighted for development, such as writing are very relevant and this reflects the strength and direction of key personnel.

Literacy across the curriculum.

55. Good planning means that the pupils extend their skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing in other subjects apart from English. Discussion is a feature of most lessons and this helps the pupils to become confident and articulate. Other subjects such as religious education, information and communication technology, history and geography are used very effectively to develop and consolidate skills in literacy.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils have a good understanding and recall of number facts
- The pupils' achievement is very good overall
- Staff analyse assessment information well to set targets for groups and individual pupils
- Teachers plan well for different ability groups in the lessons
- The leadership of the subject is good
- The pupils' work is frequently untidy and not well presented

Commentary

56. Standards for Year 6 pupils in the national tests in 2003 were well above average. In the present Year 6 standards are average and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well. In the 2003 national tests standards for Year 2 pupils were above average. In the present Year 2 standards are average and all pupils achieve very well and make very good progress. The variation in these results reflects the very small numbers of pupils in particular year groups and the significant differences of their attainment on entry to the school.

57. Throughout the school, the pupils have good opportunities to develop their skills of calculation. There is a good emphasis placed on the pupils working out calculations in their heads. The regular mental arithmetic practice has improved the pupils' skills. The teachers are good at encouraging the pupils to improve; they know the pupils well and make them aware of mistakes that have been made, help them to improve and ensure that they are aware of their achievements. In Year 2, the pupils are provided with a good range of strategies and regular opportunities to develop their understanding of the 'place value' of numbers. Throughout the juniors the pupils quickly develop their number skills and by the end of Year 6 they convert decimals to percentages.
58. The teaching and learning, including that of pupils with special educational needs, is very good overall. The teachers assess the pupils carefully to identify how well they are learning. The information gathered is used very effectively to match the work closely to each pupil's needs. Where necessary, classroom assistants provide groups of pupils and individuals with a good level of support and this helps to ensure that all of the pupils achieve as well as they should. Mathematical vocabulary is carefully taught and reinforced in lessons. The very good relationships between pupils, teachers and teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the pupils' achievement. The pupils are keen to 'have a go' at answering questions and respond positively to help from teachers and teaching assistants.
59. The National Numeracy Strategy is well established. The teachers and classroom assistants have a thorough understanding of the guidance within the strategy and use this effectively to plan their lessons. They set out their objectives at the beginning of each lesson and, as a result, the pupils know exactly what they have to do and what is expected of them. The teachers make very effective use of questions to determine what the pupils know and can do. They make effective use of the pupils' responses to determine the pace of lesson and to identify what aspects need to be covered in greater depth.
60. The leadership and management of mathematics are good. The school is part of a national sampling project which enables assessment and test results to be carefully analysed to identify areas where the pupils are not achieving as well as they should. The information is used well to determine changes to the curriculum. Overall, information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to help develop the pupils' mathematical skills.
61. In their eagerness to cover a good range of work, the teachers pay too little attention to the pupils' presentation of their work which is often untidy and belies the actual content. There is no common policy for setting out work and no demands that the pupils should present work that is their best. Consequently, although content is good, it often looks poor.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. The pupils' numeracy skills are good and effective in supporting their work across the whole curriculum. The teachers plan good opportunities for the pupils to apply and develop these skills in many subjects. For example, in science they use graphs well to present their findings and carry out calculations competently. In information and communication technology, the pupils use databases and spreadsheets satisfactorily to present their findings.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Practical investigation is a feature of much science work
- The local area is very well used
- Assessment is used very well

- The pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching

Commentary

63. No lessons could be seen in the infants, but an analysis of work and an examination of detailed records show that by the end of Year 2 standards are average. By the end of Year 6 standards are average. In both the infants and the juniors all of the pupils achieve very well because of good teaching and the emphasis on interesting, practical work.
64. The older pupils, for example, design and install various burglar alarms around the school. The school has recently won a small solar/wind turbine in a local competition. The pupils have designed and made a model of a solar and wind turbine and investigated the use of wind power. This has helped to develop their skills of scientific enquiry and understanding in a very interesting way. The school has good links with local industries, such as growers. This provides a focus for some good work for the younger pupils on how and why plants grow. Year 3 and 4 pupils have visited a local Wildfowl and Wetland Trust to look at bird habitats. They learn what birds need to survive and the suitability of particular habitats. There are also very good links with literacy, mathematics and geography.
65. Teaching is good. In the two lessons seen, the learning objectives were very clearly set out. Lessons were very well planned to ensure that the needs of the wide range of ages and abilities within the class were met appropriately. There is a great emphasis on developing the pupils' skills of independent enquiry. For example, through practical experimentation the pupils learned that sounds are made when objects vibrate and that sound vibrations travel through many materials to the ear. The pupils were required to set up tests to show how the distance from the source affected the loudness of the sound and they enjoyed the challenge of this work.
66. The subject is very well led. For example, the school benefits from its participation in a national sampling project, which enables accurate analysis of all areas of scientific achievement. This information is very well used by the school to plan work and identify areas of the science curriculum that require more emphasis, such as forces.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils achieve well
- The subject is taught regularly and systematically
- There are a good number of computers
- The pupils need to work in a practical context to develop their understanding of control technology

Commentary

67. Standards are in line with those expected in Years 2 and 6 and the pupils are achieving well across the school. In Year 1 and 2 the pupils demonstrate good skills when using the mouse and keyboard. In Year 2 the pupils use computers for a good range of activities. For example, they research a CD-ROM to find and print information as part of their history and geography topic on transport. With help, the pupils construct simple graphs as part of their work in mathematics. They regularly use computers for drawing pictures and for simple word processing activities.

68. In Year 4, the pupils show an understanding of how to use a formula within a simple program to draw mathematical patterns. By the end of Year 6, the pupils demonstrate good skills in using a computer program to produce a presentation, for example of their work on the Alps. The presentation shows that the pupils are able to bring pictures, drawings, maps and text together to produce an informative piece of work.
69. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers have good expertise and use this effectively to help the pupils learn. The older pupils work with limited supervision in the computer suite and demonstrate a very mature attitude to the subject. The staff demonstrate a secure knowledge of the subject and whilst the computer suite is not large enough for whole class activities, good use is made of it for group sessions. On the whole, the pupils work well together.
70. Information from the assessment of pupils' progress at the end of every unit of work is used effectively. Staff keep useful detailed records of the progress pupils make. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator provides a substantial amount of training for teachers and offers good technical support for all staff. Good improvements have been made since last inspection. These include higher standards being achieved by pupils, computers being used more in other subjects and more use is now made of the Internet and e-mail under staff supervision. However, pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to use control and sensing technology.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. Information and communication technology is being used well to illustrate and improve learning across the curriculum. During the inspection, there was evidence of word-processing, graphics and artwork. The pupils make good use of their computer skills in mathematics and science to record data and plot graphs. For example, as part of their geography work the pupils in Years 3 and 4 were conducting a survey on litter and made effective use of a database to record the information. Opportunities to use control and sensing technology in subjects such as science and geography, however, are overlooked.

HUMANITIES

Two lessons were seen in geography. No lessons were seen in history and religious education. It is, therefore, not possible to form a judgement about provision in these subjects. Nevertheless, in **history** there is every indication from the pupils' work and assessments by the subject leader that standards are at least average and that the pupils are achieving very well. Grandparents visit the infants to show and describe how different life was in the past. A talk by a local archaeologist to the infants followed by a 'Dig' develops the pupils' understanding of how we find out about times long ago. Good use is made of visits to various museums to develop the pupils' historical knowledge and understanding. The school's own involvement in taking in evacuees during the Second World War is exploited and provides first-hand evidence such as the school log books and talks by the original evacuees. The older pupils speak enthusiastically about their history lessons and have particularly enjoyed learning about World War 2 and the early development of the Fens.

In the pupils' **religious education** books there is a very great volume of work. From this and from looking at teachers' planning and assessments and talking to the pupils, it is evident that there is good coverage of the Agreed Syllabus. A range of visitors from various faiths visit the school to talk about their beliefs. The infant pupils enact a Christening and make 'Challah Bread.' The older pupils speak enthusiastically about their work in religious education and are particularly knowledgeable about different religions, worship and the origins and beliefs of the major world religions. There are very good links with the two local churches.

Geography.

Provision for geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses.

- There is a useful, well-structured scheme of work
- A good range of visits away from the school supports work in geography
- There are too many work sheets and some work is poorly presented

Commentary

72. Standards in geography are average. Pupils achieve very well because of good teaching and an interesting curriculum that makes very good use of the local environment. A detailed and well-structured scheme of work guides the teachers' planning. The school has also developed good assessment systems that are used to check that the pupils have developed the appropriate skills.
73. A visit to Sutton Bridge power station by the older pupils is the starting point for a study of the environmental impact of energy generation. This leads on to some very good work on examining the advantages and disadvantages of wind farms. Some very good links to speaking and listening in literacy are made when a planning meeting is enacted with various interest groups presenting their arguments. From this the pupils learn how our interaction with the environment is often controversial and will always have costs as well as gains.
74. The Year 3 and 4 pupils develop good mapping skills when investigating where and why litter collects around the school. In a very good food technology lesson in Year 1 and 2 the pupils investigated the grains different breakfast cereals are made from. There are good links with mathematics when the pupils make bar charts to show their favourite breakfast cereal. Because of the interesting and exciting journeys of 'Tom Ted' and 'Barnaby Bear' younger pupils have a very good understanding of where different places are both in the UK and further afield.
75. The subject is well led and there is a good emphasis on practical investigation and fieldwork. The pupils' workbooks contain a large amount of geography work. The only weakness is that there is an overuse of work sheets and some work is poorly presented.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Insufficient lessons were seen in **design and technology**, **music** and **physical education** to make a judgement about the overall provision. However, discussions with the staff and pupils show that these subjects are covered in appropriate depth. There are good links to the science curriculum from design and technology, for example in the design and making of a solar and wind/turbine. Although the hall is too small for whole class gymnastic and games activities, the teachers make effective use of extensive grounds. All pupils, including children in the Reception class, go swimming on a regular basis and all can swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6. The school regularly hosts sporting activities and competitions and the pupils have the opportunity to compete against other schools. Pupils are given the opportunity to learn to play the recorder and guitar through clubs organised by the staff. The pupils sing enthusiastically during assemblies and end of Year concerts are well supported by the parents.

Art and design

Provision for art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good scheme of work where art and design is closely linked to other areas of the curriculum
- The teachers are skilled at teaching the subject
- There are some attractive displays of art and design around the school

Commentary.

76. In Year 2 and Year 6 standards in art and design are above average. The subject is well used across the curriculum. The Year 2 pupils develop their design skills by working on a large collage of the three bears that closely links with their work in Literacy. Winter Haikus are set against a class collage of skiers. In a good lesson where the objective of the lesson was to reproduce the colour and texture of natural materials such as twigs and bark, Year 1 and 2 pupils make good progress in developing their ability of mixing colour and materials to match these objects.
77. The teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and teach skills well, for example the pupils use a magnifying glass to focus on the detail of a leaf to improve their observational skills. Year 3 and 4 pupils produce some very good observational drawings of fruit using chalk and charcoal. They reveal good shading and toning. When Year 3 and 4 pupils are introduced to the challenge of designing and making their own chair, they are shown a wide variety of pictures and different chairs. This enables them to develop ideas for their own chair. The works of various artists such as Paul Klee, Claude Monet and Pablo Picasso are used to show different styles of art. Year 5 and 6 pupils produce some very good pastel drawings of owls to set off their poetry. In a good lesson in Year 5 and 6, the pupils learned about the significance of headgear in various parts of the world and worked very well to produce their own designs.
78. The subject is well led. The expertise of an art specialist is well used. This has ensured that around the school there is a variety of well displayed work that exemplify various skills such as some very good self-portraits that show accurate drawing skills.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

The pupils are successfully learning to play an active role as citizens. They are well informed about the need for rules in school and the community. They are able to make decisions and discuss their ideas on issues relevant to their own lives. Although there is no school council, the pupils feel that they are listened to and that any views they express are taken into account by the teachers. The pupils have a good grasp of the consequences of anti-social behaviour and the need for laws in the wider world. They are also very aware of a variety of religious and ethnic groups and the need for tolerance.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
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	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
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	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
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).

