

INSPECTION REPORT

ASFORDBY HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 119904

Headteacher: Mr T Taylor

Reporting inspector: Mr D J Halford
12908

Dates of inspection: 20 – 23 January 2003

Inspection number: 248057

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 – 11 Years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Roffey
Date of previous inspection:	28 October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
12908	Mr D J Halford	Registered inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. Educational Inclusion English Art and Design Music Religious Education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9798	Mrs V Ashworth	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
27677	Mrs D Davenport	Team inspector	Science Geography History Special Educational Needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
32233	Mr A Dent	Team inspector	Mathematics Information & Communications Technology Design and Technology Physical Education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Asfordby Hill Primary School is a smaller than average primary school catering for pupils between the ages of 4 and 11 years. It serves the community of Asfordby Hill and the surrounding area, including some parts of Melton Mowbray, from which pupils travel by bus. Pupils enter the reception class in either the autumn or spring term before their fifth birthday. It is served by the Leicestershire LEA. There are currently 134 pupils on roll, of whom 65 are boys and 69 are girls. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds, but an increasing number experience the difficulties of significant economic hardship. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is generally below that normally expected for their age. There is a significant proportion of pupil mobility. Almost fifteen per cent of the pupils are entitled to meals without charge and currently 22 pupils are on the register of special educational need. This is broadly in line with the national average. Three pupils have statements of special educational need. This is above the national average. No pupils have English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a school emerging from an extended period of difficulty, and although it has made progress over recent months it has serious weaknesses in important areas of its provision. Overall, although pupils make progress, particularly in their last years in school, there is evidence that many pupils under-achieve, particularly in their work in literacy. The quality of teaching varies widely, and whilst there is some very good teaching, there is a significant proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. Many recent changes in the leadership of the school have led to its development being uneven, and whilst a new headteacher has been recently appointed to a permanent post, the school carries a major deficit in its finances. Teaching and learning in classrooms are not monitored effectively and pupils of the same age but in different classes do not have equal access to the curriculum. Overall, given these weaknesses in important areas of its provision and in its current financial situation, the school provides unsatisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- There is a significant proportion of good and very good teaching in this school, particularly in the early years and towards the later years for pupils aged ten and eleven. Where teaching is good relationships are also good.
- Pupils' attitudes to school are good overall. Many show enthusiasm for their work and good levels of interest in the tasks they are given.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They receive good support and many make good progress in their learning.
- The school cares well for its pupils. There are good procedures to promote their health and welfare.
- Parents regard the school highly and believe that it has improved in recent months.

What could be improved

- The pupils' standards of work in literacy, and particularly in writing, because they are below those expected for the pupils' ages.
- The unsatisfactory teaching where it exists.
- Ensure that pupils in the same year group but in different classes have access to the same educational opportunities and experiences.
- The quality of leadership to ensure that governors, the headteacher and curriculum coordinators monitor teaching and learning effectively.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

Although this school is providing an acceptable standard of education for the pupils the inspection team consider that this school has serious weaknesses in important areas of its overall provision.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1997 when many areas of its provision were judged to be good. Since the last inspection there have been many changes to disrupt the planned development of the school's provision. In the last eighteen months it has had three headteachers, other changes in staffing, a fall in the number of pupils on roll, has accrued a substantial deficit in its finances and standards have declined. It has, however, made positive progress over recent months, has a clear and manageable plan to deal with its financial situation and has agreed a deficit budget with its local education authority. It has dealt appropriately with some of its key issues for improvement identified by the last inspection. Appropriate schemes of work are now in place and the supervision of pupils in the playground has been addressed to some extent, although this currently depends on the daily availability of the headteacher. Planning and assessment systems have improved and are now satisfactory. However, a key issue identified at the last inspection to ensure equality of access to the curriculum for pupils of the same age who are taught in different classes has not been addressed comprehensively, and remains an area for urgent attention. Taken overall, the school has not made sufficient improvement in its provision since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	D	E	E
mathematics	C	C	C	C
science	D	D	B	B

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

This is a relatively small school with small numbers of pupils in some age groups. Care must be taken in the interpretation of the statistical evidence where numbers of pupils are low. By the age of eleven, in 2002, an average number of pupils achieved the expected level in the national tests in mathematics, and this position has been maintained over the last few years. Tests results in science showed improvement in the last school year. Pupils' standards in English tests, however, have been consistently below average and show evidence of a decline. They are well below the national average and well below the average for similar schools, particularly in writing. This is seen in the work they undertake as they pass through the school, although there is some evidence of improvement in the later years in school. This under-achievement in writing has a negative effect on pupils' work in other subjects. The school generally sets appropriate targets for the percentage of pupils gaining the expected levels for their age, but the targets for pupils achieving the higher levels are quite low.

Standards of attainment for pupils aged seven in 2002 were well below average. Results in mathematics were well below average. Results in reading and writing were in the lowest five percent nationally in 2002 when compared to all pupils of this age and also when compared to the results of pupils in similar schools. The percentage of pupils assessed as attaining the expected level in science was also well below the national average. Inspection evidence indicates some improvement is starting to be made for most pupils aged seven, but much remains to be done to improve standards in literacy.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are good overall. Many pupils show good levels of interest in their work and are keen to succeed
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall. Whilst many pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and in the playground, there is a significant minority of pupils whose behaviour is unsatisfactory and sometimes poor. This behaviour, in classrooms, is disruptive to the learning of other pupils, who wish to work.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory overall. The majority of pupils show appropriate levels of understanding that their behaviour has an impact on others, but a minority do not. Overall, relationships are good, particularly between the teacher and pupils in Class 5
Attendance	Satisfactory. The school monitors attendance appropriately. Most pupils arrive punctually and lessons start on time. There has been one permanent exclusion in the last year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Satisfactory

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, although there is evidence of good teaching throughout the school. Good, and sometimes very good, teaching is seen mostly for the youngest and the oldest pupils in school. Where good teaching occurs the relationship between the teacher and the pupils is often a strong feature of its success. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is now well established leading to appropriate teaching of English and mathematics, although there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length and develop their writing skills as well as they might. The school has deployed its teaching staff with the express intention of improving the provision for the majority of pupils aged six and seven. The manner in which pupils are allocated to classes produces some classes where pupils' behaviour is difficult to manage and this sometimes has a negative effect on the quality of learning for other pupils in those classes.

Where teaching is at its best relationships are good, pupils are managed well and teachers' questioning is strong. However there is a significant proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. In these lessons there is a lack of precision and clarity in what it is the pupils are to learn, pupils' attention is not held sufficiently for them to concentrate appropriately and this leads to disruptive behaviour and, on occasion the teachers' expectations of what the pupils can do is not high enough, leading to tasks which occupy the pupils rather than challenging them appropriately.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad but lacking in balance and relevance. There is limited evidence of work in history and pupils of the same age but in different classes do not consistently cover the same work at an appropriate level.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The provision made for these pupils is good. They are well supported and make good gains in their learning
Provision for pupils' personal,	Satisfactory, overall. All aspects of personal development are covered

including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	appropriately. Pupils' self-esteem is raised by recognition of their personal achievements, most can readily distinguish right from wrong and they gain appropriate access to a knowledge and understanding of their own culture and that of others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. There are good procedures to ensure the pupils' health and welfare. There are appropriate procedures in place to assess pupils' progress, but better use could be made of this information in identifying what pupils should learn next.

Many parents hold the school in high regard. They know that the school is emerging from an extended period of difficulty and feel that it has made progress in the last eighteen months. They make a good contribution to the work of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has been in post one term and is providing stable leadership after a significant period of change in the school. He has a good understanding of the school's difficult financial position and has a clear plan to manage this whilst seeking to maintain the school's development. He is at the early stages of involving other key staff in decision-making processes.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have a very clear understanding of the school's financial position but have yet to develop their role in curriculum monitoring and evaluating.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is strong in evaluating budgetary matters, but unsatisfactory in evaluating curriculum matters. The coordinated role of governors, headteacher and curriculum coordinators is in need significant development in these areas.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Careful financial planning ensures that funds are allocated to agreed priorities. Governors check very carefully that resources are being used effectively within strict and agreed limits.

The school is operating under severe financial restraints and the principles of best value are rigidly applied. Staffing levels remain high for a school of this size and teachers and assistants are deployed well. Teaching assistants offer good support in many classrooms. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. A new computer suite has been established recently, but the school grounds remain difficult for the observation of pupils at play. Learning resources are insufficient in some subject areas.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most pupils like school and make good progress The quality of teaching is good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of work pupils do at home The school could provide a more interesting range of activities outside lessons

The inspection team agree that many pupils appear to like school. There is a high proportion of good teaching. There is, however, a significant proportion of unsatisfactory teaching which the school needs to improve. The inspectors feel that overall, the amount of homework pupils are asked to do is satisfactory, although it could be offered with greater consistency. The range of extra-curricular activities, including educational visits is appropriate for the size of the school and the age of the pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. National test results need to be used with caution when assessing the standards attained by the pupils in this school, because year group cohorts are relatively small and can generate wide differences in results over time.
2. The 2002 tests in English, mathematics and science were taken by 23 pupils aged 11 and so each pupil represents almost 4.5 per cent of the school's overall scores. In terms of average points scores, standards of attainment were well below the national average in English, close to the national average in mathematics, and above the national average in science. When compared to the standards attained by pupils in similar schools the same pattern emerges. Results in the 2002 tests for 11-year-old pupils showed improvement in science, a similar standard for mathematics and a decline for English when compared to previous years. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher levels in the tests was also slightly above the national average for science, close to the national average for mathematics and well below the national average for English. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' standards are below average in English and at the level expected for their age in mathematics and science. Overall pupils are under-achieving, particularly in English, where the quality of their writing is below average. Test results in mathematics and science appear to be rather better than pupils' standards of work suggest partly because they receive a boost in Class 5, where some pupils spend two years, and where the quality of teaching and learning is often good. Overall, standards attained in these important subjects, by pupils aged 11, has declined from that reported when the school was last inspected.
3. The 2002 National Curriculum test results for pupils aged seven showed that standards of attainment were very low in comparison to the national average in reading and writing and well below the national average in mathematics. Pupils' standards in reading and writing were amongst the lowest nationally in both reading and writing when compared to the national average and also when compared to similar schools. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in science was also well below average. As for pupils aged 11, standards of attainment have declined from those reported when the school was last inspected.
4. There are several reasons for this overall decline in pupils' standards of attainment. The school is just emerging from an extended period of significant instability. Many staff changes, including operating under the leadership of three different headteachers in the last eighteen months, have led to a period when the school's development has been uneven and procedures to ensure that pupils were appropriately challenged to make progress in their work have not been followed in a satisfactory manner. Baseline assessment information indicates that the children's levels of attainment on entry to the school have also declined from the position reported when the school was last inspected. However, this period of turbulence is now past. An interim headteacher, in temporary charge over the whole of the last school year, carried out an audit to list the developments needed for improvement and a new headteacher has been in permanent post for one term, from the start of the current school year. The deployment of teaching staff has been made with the express intention of improving standards, particularly for pupils aged seven, and a positive start has been made.

5. Another factor which contributes to pupils' standards of attainment not being high enough lies in the manner in which pupils are grouped together in classes. Because the school is small it is necessary for the school to establish mixed age classes, and pupils of the same age are accommodated in different classes. The make-up of these classes varies year by year according to the distribution of numbers of pupils in each year group. Pupils in the Reception Year and pupils in Years 3 and 6 are all accommodated in complete cohorts. In Class 3, for example, some Year 4 pupils are accommodated with the Year 3 group, together with some pupils from Year 2. Where these mixed age classes occur the allocations are generally made by grouping more able younger pupils with lower attaining older pupils. In some classes this creates a very wide range of ability, and in some lessons, some pupils are not sufficiently challenged by the tasks they are given. There is evidence that this contributes to the under-achievement of some able pupils. Examples of this were seen, for example, in a history lesson in Class 3.
6. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are generally satisfactory. Most pupils, throughout the school, are attentive and listen carefully in many lessons and on other occasions. For example, many pupils listen effectively to their teachers and are keen to join in oral lessons and share their knowledge. They sing well in assemblies, as demonstrated when they whole school sung 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God' in two parts. Many pupils speak clearly and audibly and express themselves well. This was seen to good effect when older pupils discussed the climate in India. There is, however, a significant minority of pupils who do not listen well at all. They do not always engage appropriately to lessons, can be disruptive to the learning of others in the class, and some times take too much of the teachers' attention to keep them on track. Standards of attainment in reading are rather better for older pupils than for younger pupils, where they are below average. The school is trying hard to improve this. Children in Class 1 respond well to the story of going on a Bear Hunt. They enjoy the sound of the 'thick oozy mud' that they have to go through and the 'swishing' of the long grass. Pupils in Class 5 use books well for information, and pupils in Class 4 take an appropriate interest in the script used to write the Qura'an. Some pupils have favourite authors and can explain why they like them. Standards of writing, however, are well below average and remain so throughout the school. The pupils have insufficient opportunities to write at length and their under-achievement here is an important weakness since it has a negative effect on the pupils' work in other subjects as they pass through the school. The school is aware that this is an area of serious weakness and has plans to develop it. However, further improvement in writing is an area needing urgent attention.
7. In mathematics, pupils' attainment on entry to Year 1 is below expected standards and it is still below average by the time they reach the age of seven at the end of Year 2. The results of the National Curriculum tests in 2002 for pupils at the end of Year 2 were well below the national average. The results fall well short of expectations for all schools and also for schools in similar circumstances to Asfordby Hill. Standards have fallen since the last inspection, when attainment was judged to be average. For pupils aged eleven in 2002 the picture is different, with attainment in mathematics broadly in line with the national average. This is a similar pattern to that at the time of the school's previous inspection in 1997. Current inspection evidence shows that attainment by the end of Year 2 is still below average but, by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. However, attainment in lessons observed during the inspection was never better than satisfactory and in some cases fell below expectations. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in written and independent work are not consistently high enough and the school should take steps to improve this situation. Sometimes the tasks are not challenging enough or suitably matched to pupils' abilities and on occasions instructions to the pupils are not sufficiently clear.

8. In science, the attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 matches that expected nationally. This is a decline in the standards since the previous inspection, especially for the Year 2 pupils whose attainment in 2002 was well below that expected for their age. However, standards throughout the school are improving and Year 6 pupils' attainment in the 2002 tests was above that expected for their age. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
9. From the very limited evidence available, pupils' attainments in information and communications technology (ICT), by the end of both key stages are in line with national expectations and pupils' progress throughout school is satisfactory. Only a very few pupils were observed working at the computer but nevertheless it was clear that their attitudes to learning are positive and they were making satisfactory progress and achieving appropriately. Standards in other subjects are broadly in line with those expected for the pupils' ages, except for history, for pupils aged eleven, where they are below average.
10. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Their needs are identified early and appropriate action is taken. The position at the last inspection has been maintained. Classroom assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs, including those pupils with behavioural difficulties, and enable them to make good gains in their learning. The work presented is appropriately planned to meet pupils' specific needs with particular attention being given to developing their basic skills of literacy and numeracy.
11. Many pupils make positive use of their developing literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. For example, speaking and listening skills are developed appropriately in a wide range of lessons, but pupils limited skills with writing have a negative effect on their work in other subjects.
12. Overall, standards have declined from those reported when the school was last inspected in 1997, although there is a marked improvement in standards when pupils reach Class 5. Inspection evidence also indicates the impact that the good teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Class 2 is also having a positive effect on pupils' learning and standards in these classes are showing signs of moderate improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The pupils have generally good attitudes towards their school and their work. Their personal development and behaviour are satisfactory. Relationships with each other and members of staff are good.
14. The pupils show enthusiasm for their school both in lessons and other activities. Those spoken to during the inspection were able to say that they are proud of their school and like it very much. They regretted that there are now fewer clubs offering extra-curricular activities, but expressed great appreciation of the many visits including the theatre and cinema, which the school has organised. There is a positive attitude to learning from most pupils and many pupils show good levels of effort and concentration. They want to learn and try hard in lessons, particularly where the teaching is good. However some pupils find it difficult to maintain concentration and become bored and restless. This attitude was observed in lessons which were less demanding and where teaching was less good.

15. Pupils with special educational needs show good attitudes to school and to their work. Relationships are good and pupils respond well to the extra support given by teachers and classroom assistants.
16. Behaviour throughout the school is satisfactory, overall but there have been six exclusions. There is good behaviour in Reception and classes with Years 1 and 2, and also Years 5 and 6 pupils. However this is often spoilt by the unsatisfactory behaviour of a minority of pupils. There is little evidence of bullying in the school and none was observed. Pupils feel that school deals with any incidents quickly and effectively once teachers are informed.
17. The school recognises that the pupils need to be happy and secure in their learning environment. Pupils are polite to adults coming into the school and are willing to enter into conversation when given the opportunity. Pupils are taught to think about what they do and to respect each other's feelings, values and beliefs. This was particularly evident in years 5 and 6. They learn to appreciate the impact of their actions on others in lessons generally, and assemblies focusing on attitudes and behaviour.
18. Pupils are willing to take responsibility when this is offered. There are opportunities to become monitors in class to help generally and return registers to the office. There are opportunities for the older pupils to help in the library, be road safety monitors and to supervise the doors at lunchtime. Classes generally adopt their own systems for allocating responsibility. There is scope for providing more opportunities to exercise greater responsibility in class and around school. The headteacher is aware of this and is keen to increase responsibility and give the pupils a voice.
19. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average and is satisfactory. Unauthorised absence is slightly higher than the national average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Through the school as a whole there is a wide range of teaching quality from very good teaching in four per cent of the lessons seen through to unsatisfactory in almost 10 per cent of the lessons seen. In fifty-two per cent of the lessons teaching is good and in thirty-three per cent it is satisfactory. This represents a slight decline in the position reported when the school was last inspected, when in many lessons teaching was reported as very good and there was a smaller percentage of lessons where teaching reported as unsatisfactory. Teaching is frequently good in the Foundation Stage and for pupils up to the age of seven.
21. Teaching in English and mathematics is often good, particularly in Class 2 and in Class 5. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented successfully. This is having a positive impact on pupils' learning but has yet to have a marked improvement on standards, particularly in writing.
22. Where teaching is at its best, most notably in Class 5, where pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taught, relationships are very strong, expectations of what pupils can achieve are high and pupils are managed well. They respond well to the teacher, who extends their speaking and listening skills well. The pupils contributed well to a geography lesson on climate and showed effective recall of a video which they had watched. There is good teaching and learning for six and seven year old pupils, where expectations are high. Here again, the teacher uses clear

explanation to consolidate pupils' learning. This was seen to good effect in a numeracy lesson when pupils were partitioning numbers in groups of five. A significant number of pupils could readily add the numbers mentally, without breaking the numbers into groups, and took some time to get to grips with the task, but effective questioning and focussing strongly on the objective of the lesson ensured that learning was effective. Another strong area of teaching lies in the clarity of learning objectives. Pupils in Class 4 were given precise instructions about how to undertake activities, enabling them to be clear about what they had to undertake.

23. Despite the high proportion of good or better teaching, there is a significant minority of unsatisfactory teaching, which is all located in the same class. Pupils are not always readily engaged to listen, and therefore miss important elements of the lesson and disturb the learning of others. Sometimes, what the pupils are expected to learn is not sharply focused, and, on occasion tasks occupy some of the pupils rather than challenging them. For example, in a history lesson, on the Great Fire of London, the task of cutting out pictures and arranging them in a sequence did not offer an appropriate challenge to some of the more able pupils in the class.
24. The pupils' developing literacy and numeracy skills can be seen in work in some other subjects, although the quality of pupils' writing is unsatisfactory and this has a negative effect on pupils' work overall.
25. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are drawn up by the class teacher and incorporated into teachers' planning. Pupils are aware of their targets which are linked to the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and work is appropriately planned to match pupils' specific needs. All members of staff work hard to ensure that pupils are well supported and make good progress. However there are occasions, for example in other areas of the curriculum, when planning does not take account of their individual needs.
26. Homework is offered to consolidate learning, but its provision lacks consistency. The majority of parents are satisfied with the amount of homework and the inspection findings are that the provision is satisfactory overall.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS ?

27. The curricular and other opportunities provided for children in the Foundation Stage of Learning are satisfactory. All six nationally agreed areas of learning are covered through an appropriate range of well-planned activities. Good emphasis is placed on improving children's personal, social and emotional development and developing their language, literacy and communication and mathematical skills. As a result they make good progress and are being well prepared for the programmes of study of the National Curriculum as they enter Year 1.
28. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and is generally broad. However pupils in the same year group but in different classes do not have access to the same educational opportunities and experiences. This was a key issue at the previous inspection which has not yet been addressed satisfactorily. Appropriate time is spent on the teaching of literacy and numeracy. However, the time allocated to teaching in some subjects, for example information and communication technology, does not meet the national recommendations. The history curriculum lacks breadth and balance because there is

not enough time allocated to it. For example, in the Year 5 and 6 class pupils do not study the subject until the last half term of the summer term. There is also insufficient time spent on the teaching of geography for pupils in Year 2. Checks are not carried out by the management of the school nor the subject co-ordinators to evaluate whether the curriculum is adequately covered.

29. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been fully implemented but are not yet having sufficient impact on raising standards, particularly in English, as pupils move through the school. There are no up to date curriculum policies in place but teachers now use the nationally agreed guidelines to plan their work. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Long term planning provides an overview of the topics and units of study to be followed each year. Medium and short term planning identifies the objectives for learning but these are not always suitably matched to the different ages and abilities of the pupils within each class. Religious education is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus and daily acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements.
30. The school is not successful in ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum because the provision for the more able pupils is unsatisfactory. Much of the work given lacks appropriate challenge and, as a result, these pupils do not make the progress or achieve the standards of which they are capable. Pupils of higher attainment have been identified but are not being appropriately catered for because work is not planned well enough to meet their needs. All classes have pupils from different year groups within them, but on many occasions they are all working at the same tasks and topics particularly in subjects such as science, history and geography. This results in pupils within the same year group but in different classes not having access to the same educational experiences and opportunities. However the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and these pupils make good progress because of the good quality support provided by classroom assistants. Both boys and girls have access to extra-curricular activities such as football and netball.
31. The provision for pupils' personal social, health and citizenship education is satisfactory. Although there is currently no policy or scheme of work in place, opportunities are built into lessons to promote this area of learning. For example in circle time and assemblies pupils are encouraged to reflect on a range of moral and social issues such as caring for others and for the environment. Visits to places of educational interest such as museums and theatres, the annual residential visit for pupils in Years 5 and 6 and visitors to the school make a valuable contribution to pupils' personal and social development as well as enriching the curriculum. Pupils are helped to develop a healthy life style through their work in science topics. The school is supported by visits from the school nurse who also plays an important role in the provision for sex education for older pupils. The dangers of misusing drugs and other substances are taught through science lessons. Visits from the road safety officer and the fire brigade develop pupils' awareness of personal safety.
32. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy the good range of educational visits which enrich the curriculum by providing further learning experiences. Residential visits to Beaumanor Hall and participation in sporting competitions such as football, netball and cross-country running enable pupils to work as a team and develop attitudes of fair play. Visits to the theatre, being part of the choir and school productions help to develop pupils' creative interests. All this makes a positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are weekly football and netball practices.

33. The school's satisfactory links with the community positively enhance pupils' learning and personal development. Representatives from local churches lead assemblies in school which deepen pupils' understanding of religious education issues and promote spiritual development. Members of the business community, coaches and parents provide first hand experience for pupils as, for example, they provide play equipment, listen to them read or take netball and football practices. Opportunities are provided for pupils to sing and perform at local churches and to support local as well as national charities. There are appropriate links with nearby high schools that successfully prepare pupils in Year 6 for their transfer. However links with pre-school providers are under-developed.
34. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.
35. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. It is promoted through assemblies, acts of collective worship and religious education lessons and enhanced by the visits from the local church representatives who come into the school to lead assemblies. Teachers raise pupils' confidence and self esteem by displaying their work and praising their efforts in school. Through circle time activities pupils are encouraged to think and reflect on a range of issues that affect themselves and others. Spiritual development is satisfactorily addressed in subjects such as art and design and music. However, in assemblies opportunities are missed for pupils to develop a deeper personal response, and music is not used to focus pupils' attitudes as they enter and leave the hall.
36. Provision for pupils' moral development is satisfactory. The pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and about the impact their actions have on others. The school expects all those involved with it to follow its clear code of conduct and the staff provide good role models for the pupils. The school tries hard to create a 'family' ethos and to promote care and respect for property and to be tolerant to the beliefs and values of others. This, together with the good relationships between staff and pupils and generally amongst pupils themselves, helps promote a positive learning environment in which pupils feel safe and secure.
37. Provision for pupils' social development is satisfactory. The good range of visits out of school, for example, to the Jewry Wall and the Space Centre and the annual residential visit to Beaumanor Hall effectively promotes social development as well as enhancing pupils' learning. Appropriate opportunities are presented during lessons to work collaboratively in pairs and in small groups. The making and selling of biscuits by Year 5 and 6 pupils makes a positive contribution to the pupils' social and moral development as they donate the profits to charity. Pupils take on responsibility within the school, for example as class and library monitors and road safety officers. However this is an area which could be significantly extended and is one which the school has already recognised. There are also too few purposeful activities provided at playtimes and lunchtimes further to promote pupils' social development.
38. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Visits to the school and visits out of school successfully introduce the pupils to their British heritage and extend their learning across other areas of the curriculum, for example, history, geography and science. This, together with singing in the local church, taking part in school concerts and looking at the work of famous artists, makes a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' awareness of the world around them. The study of major world faiths enhances pupils' knowledge and understanding of the values and beliefs of other cultures and faiths. However the school does not prepare pupils as well as it could for life in today's multi-cultural British society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school takes good care of its pupils. Procedures for child protection are well established. The headteacher is the designated person responsible for child protection and he receives regular updated training. The school follows the local authority guidelines and is in contact with the education welfare officer. There are effective procedures in place to check on the health, safety and well-being of all those in school.
40. There is satisfactory monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development, although better use could be made of assessment data to guide teachers' planning. Individual records of achievement are compiled from work chosen by the pupil and class teacher. Although the teachers know their pupils and information is shared, the monitoring of personal development is not fully recorded. There is satisfactory educational and personal support and guidance for pupils. Throughout the school day, achievements are recognised in lessons and around the school, through praise and encouragement.
41. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The school is now recording and monitoring attendance electronically which greatly assists the process. Parents and pupils understand that punctuality and attendance are important and that school marks attendance rigorously. Registers are completed quickly and efficiently and returned to the office twice a day. Excellent attendance is rewarded. Unfortunately, however, some pupils are not punctual and some parents continue to take family holidays in term time. This loss of teaching and learning time does affect the attainment and progress of the pupils.
42. There are good procedures to support and promote appropriate standards of behaviour. The behaviour policy has recently been reviewed and generally works well, although the school is looking to refine it further. There is, however, a lack of consistency in how rigorously it is applied, particularly in the playground and at lunchtime. Pupils contributed to their own class rules and are fully aware of the sanctions if behaviour is not good. Behaviour is monitored and incidents recorded when necessary. Good behaviour is rewarded and celebrated each week in assembly. The school is successful at eliminating oppressive behaviour. The accepted practice is prevention rather than cure. Pupils are taught and encouraged to behave well in order to sustain an orderly community.
43. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Their needs are identified early and the relevant extra help is planned to ensure they make good progress towards the targets set in their individual educational plans. Their work is regularly monitored and assessed and their individual education plans are updated termly to take account of their rates of progress. External help is sought where necessary and the statements of pupils with special educational needs are reviewed annually in accordance with statutory requirements.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The school is keen to develop strong links with parents. The survey of parents' views before the inspection and the pre-inspection meeting show that parents are largely very satisfied with the school's provision. They feel that the school has improved over the last eighteen months and they are positive in their support for the school in its endeavours. All of those who responded stated that their child likes school to a greater or lesser degree and it was felt that behaviour is good and that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible. A very small number of parents do not know whether their child has the right amount of

homework and a small number of parents do not feel that school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The school acknowledges that there is little choice of activities for the younger children and it is hoped to expand the provision at Key Stage 2.

45. The school's links with parents are satisfactory and developing. They start with the induction process for new pupils and parents. There is an open door policy and the headteacher is looking forward to more consultation with parents, including homework provision. He hopes to involve them more generally in the life of the school. Parents are welcome in the classroom both at the beginning and end of the school day to discuss concerns. The Friends of Asfordby Hill is a well-supported parent-teacher association. It is successful in raising money for the school from its many fund raising events which are popular with the pupils. The association also gives opportunities to develop links between the staff and parents. There are at present four parent governors who provide an effective link between school and parents. A small number of parents help in the school voluntarily, including a football coach and trained nursery nurse. Parents support their children's learning well. Parents are encouraged to hear their children read on a daily basis and record their progress. They also give support at home in learning tables and spelling. The school is appreciative of all the support parents are able to give and the effect it has on teaching and learning.
46. The special educational needs co-ordinator liaises with parents before and after the termly meetings to review the targets within pupils' individual education plans and are kept informed of their progress throughout the year. Parents of pupils with behavioural difficulties have more frequent contact with the school on a more informal basis. The special educational needs co-ordinator and class teachers have built up good relationships with parents, who are supportive and appreciative of the work done with their children.
47. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. There have been three newsletters during this academic year and letters are sent to parents whenever necessary. The written reports to parents are satisfactory but do not give very full information on progress and targets. There are, however, feedback opportunities for parents to discuss their children's academic and personal development and to share targets in literacy, numeracy and behaviour. The school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are informative and clear and there are home school agreements in place. The headteacher is anxious to develop the quality of information to parents including the website which is still in its initial stages.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The leadership and management of the school show some satisfactory features but there are weaknesses in some important areas. The headteacher, who is providing satisfactory leadership, has been appointed to a permanent post from the start of this school year and is at the start of his second term. He has taken the post at a time when the school is just emerging from an extended period of difficulty. Standards in core subjects show evidence of decline since the school was last inspected, the school has a large budget deficit, the leadership of the school has undergone many changes in recent years and the school has a detailed development plan, written essentially by the interim headteacher, and containing many points for development across the whole of the school's provision. The headteacher, assisted by a small group of knowledgeable governors, has quickly come to terms with the school's financial position and is in process of agreeing a deficit budget with the local education authority. In this area, progress is good. A management plan has been agreed outlining the development of the

staffing which will enable the school to operate within its financial means over a five-year period.

49. The school does not currently have an effective school development plan which accurately identifies a manageable number of areas for development. The document produced under the direction of the interim headteacher is a useful audit of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, but it lacks sharpness and focus to be a realistic working document for school improvement. The school has identified the provision for pupils up to seven years of age as an area where improvement is required, and has deployed the deputy head to coordinate this area and teach most of the pupils in Year 2 as they progress towards their national tests for seven-year-olds.
50. The leadership and management of special educational needs by the co-ordinator are good. She is a well qualified, knowledgeable co-ordinator who has a good overview of the work being done. She keeps detailed records of the provision made for pupils on the special educational needs register. She ensures that copies of appropriate individual educational plans and other details of pupils' progress are accurately maintained. The effective partnership between the co-ordinator, the class teachers and classroom assistants contribute well to the good progress that pupils make and has a positive impact on their attitudes and behaviour throughout the school. There are appropriate systems in place to ensure continuous progress for pupils with special educational needs as they transfer to High School. The school has good links with external agencies involved in supporting pupils with special educational needs and it ensures they are used well to help pupils address specific weaknesses in their learning and behaviour.
51. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance are unsatisfactory. There is an urgent need to improve this area of the school's provision. Teachers' planning is monitored appropriately and statistical evidence of pupils' performance over time is being gathered. However, there is little effective monitoring of teaching and learning by governors, the headteacher or curriculum coordinators. Closer monitoring of pupils' work would highlight those areas of difference in target setting and curriculum coverage, where inconsistencies can currently be found. There is a need to develop the role of subject coordinators to enable them fully to implement their comprehensive job descriptions.
52. Governors have a good understanding of their role in monitoring the finances available to the school, but are less certain about their role in monitoring the curriculum. They have an appropriate range of committees and there is a good balance between experienced and new members of the governing body. They have responded positively to the need of monitor finance closely but now need to extend their interest and influence into actively shaping the direction of the school in other areas of its work.
53. The school's finances are now controlled effectively. They are managed prudently and whenever opportunities arise the governors make every effort to ensure that they gain the best value for the money they spend. A number of years of financial stringency lie ahead and governors need to maintain this close monitoring of the school's budgetary position.
54. The accommodation is satisfactory and provides an appropriate learning environment for the pupils. The school grounds are quite extensive. Work has been undertaken in the past, with the support of parents to make greater use of the grassed area which runs parallel to the playground. The hard play area has many corners which are difficult to supervise. Extensions to the original buildings have created a space where the supervision of pupils is difficult. This

was identified as an area for improvement when the school was last inspected. The school has attempted to remedy this, but as numbers of pupils on roll have declined so have the number of lunchtime supervisors. Currently the school is relying on the availability of the headteacher to provide regular lunchtime supervision. There are plans to zone the playground, which may be a positive development, but this has not yet been undertaken.

55. The school is generously staffed, with a high proportion of experienced teachers. This has a negative effect on the school's financial position. Appropriate performance management procedures are in place. There is a good level of teaching assistants, who are generally well deployed. Overall, however, staffing costs currently are very high for a school of this size. The school has recently established a new computer suite which has good potential to develop the pupils' skills in ICT. Unfortunately, due to a recent theft, it was not in operation during the inspection. Overall, learning resources are not adequate in many subjects.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. In order to improve further, the headteacher, governors and staff should take steps to address the following serious weaknesses:
- (1) improve the pupils' standards of work in literacy, and particularly in writing, because they are below those expected for the pupils' age;
 - (2) improve unsatisfactory teaching where it exists;
 - (3) ensure that pupils in the same year group but in different classes have access to the same educational opportunities and experiences;
 - (4) improve the quality of leadership to ensure that governors, the headteacher and curriculum coordinators monitor teaching and learning effectively.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	22	14	4	0	0
Percentage	0%	5%	52%	33%	9%	0%	0%

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	134
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	20

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	22

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance 94.2%

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1%

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7%

National comparative data	5.4%
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National comparative data	0.5%
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	9	12	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	11	14	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	52 (57)	67 (57)	76 (67)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	10	12	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	48 (62)	57 (81)	76 (90)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	10	13	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	9	9
	Girls	9	9	12
	Total	16	18	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (73)	78 (81)	91 (96)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	9	10
	Girls	11	8	11
	Total	21	17	21
Percentage of pupils	School	91 (81)	74 (88)	91 (88)

at NC level 4 or above	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)
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Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	118
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	6	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6 134 pupils**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.97
Average class size	26.8

Education support staff: YR – YR

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	103

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a
Total number of education support staff	N/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	Na/
Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/a

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year 158 pupils on roll	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	273 341
Total expenditure	307 603
Expenditure per pupil	1 730
Balance brought forward from previous year	19 636
Balance carried forward to next year	-14 626 overspend

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate: 24.2%

Number of questionnaires sent out	134
Number of questionnaires returned	18

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	50	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	50	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	61	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	56	17	5	0
The teaching is good.	44	56	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	22	56	17	0	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	44	50	0	0	6
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	39	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	28	50	11	0	11
The school is well led and managed.	39	50	11	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	61	6	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	44	17	11	0

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

57. There are currently 20 children in the Reception year. They work alongside six pupils from Year 1. There are two intake periods for the Reception year. Children born in the autumn term start in the September of the school year in which they are five and those born in the spring or summer terms enter the reception year in January. This means that some of the children had only recently started school at the time of the inspection.
58. Many of the children have had some pre-school experience and appropriate systems are in place to ensure that children settle quickly into their new routines.
59. Assessments undertaken shortly after the children start school indicate that the attainment of the majority of pupils is below that normally expected for their age in each of the areas of learning. Overall, children make good progress during the year, and this progress is similar to that reported when the school was last inspected. However, the overall levels of attainment on entry to the school are rather lower than reported in 1997.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. When children start school they display a wide range of personal skills. A significant number show below average skills in this area of learning. They do, however settle into the school routines well. They begin to be able to share equipment and take turns, as seen in the playground when tricycles were available for them to use. The majority are able to play amicably with each other, share resources and cooperate with adults. Most show good attitudes to their lessons and follow instructions appropriately. Overall, they make satisfactory progress towards attaining these early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

61. Most children start the reception year with below average levels of reading and communication skills for their age, but they make appropriate progress. The majority soon get into the habit of listening carefully, but their speaking skills are more limited. A significant minority were reluctant to take a turn at speaking when the teacher gave every child the opportunity to speak in circle time. Most children listen to stories well and contribute successfully to the reading of 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt'. The teacher questions pupils well to ensure they are developing appropriate understanding from the text. Many are developing a clear idea of how to hold a book and are becoming aware that print is read from left to right. The majority recognise their own name and some can recognise short phrases by identifying the first letter of the first word. They use an appropriate range of implements for drawing and writing. Appropriate progress is made, but not all the pupils will attain the early learning goals by the time they begin Year 1.

Mathematical development

62. As with the other areas of learning children start in reception with a wide range of experiences and abilities in dealing with number. Overall, they make satisfactory progress. Many can count appropriately to ten and some can count back to zero. In a good lesson, children show that they can count up to twenty as the teacher drops coins into a tin. They are able to say there are less coins in the line when some are removed. In response to careful questioning by the teacher the majority of pupils are able to make a number sentence ($20 - 4 = 16$). They show appropriate knowledge of colour and shape and develop good mathematical language in outside play as they travel 'over' and 'under' the apparatus. During their time in reception a significant number will come close to achieving the early learning goal by the time they begin Year 1.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. Most children begin the reception year with limited general knowledge but make satisfactory progress in this area of learning. The majority progress towards the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1. Overall, good teaching stimulates the children's interest and helps them develop their observational skills and encourages them to ask questions. The children have constructed a collage of a Gingerbread Man and have made some effective skeletons with movable joints. Several have names on them which have been compiled using computer technology. Hand puppets have been constructed and a corridor display outside Class 1 shows simple designs from which the hand puppets have been constructed. Appropriate use is made of the local environment to stimulate the children's interest and growing knowledge of their locality. In their outdoor play the pulling and pushing actions of some of their equipment enables children to explore differing types of forces and movement. The grounds of the school are used for children to plant seeds, look after the garden areas and look for mini-beasts. Children are able to make use of the computer and gain experience of manipulating the mouse and clicking on icons on the screen. Overall, the children concentrate well and show interest and enjoyment in their learning.

Physical development

64. Children make appropriate progress overall in developing their physical skills and the majority progress towards the early learning goal by the time they enter Year 1. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their manipulative skills using pencils, scissors and jigsaw pieces and also small construction apparatus. Overall, they use equipment carefully and can share it appropriately. In a physical education lesson in the hall the children demonstrated different ways of moving, and when together at outside play, they used fixed apparatus carefully to travel over and through it. The school does not have a dedicated outdoor play area for reception children, but use the playground regularly at times when other pupils are not using it. They have an appropriate selection of wheeled toys – mostly tricycles - which improve their coordination skills. Children are well supervised when outside and they play well together

Creative development

65. The majority of the children make appropriate progress towards the early learning goals in this area of learning, but not all will achieve them by the time they begin Year 1. The children have many opportunities to develop their creative skills through drawing, painting, music and play. They sing well and are appropriately accommodated in singing with the whole school. Songs are carefully chosen for young children to be able to join in successfully. Some clearly enjoy painting and are quickly on-task when their turn comes round. They cooperate well with

each other. Many show good levels of enjoyment in this area of learning and make satisfactory progress.

Teaching, learning and the curriculum

66. The quality of teaching is good overall and has maintained the position outlined when the school was last inspected in 1997. The teacher and teaching assistant work effectively together and relationships are good. This is particularly so for the children who have only been in school for a very short time. The children soon become readily established in their routines and demonstrate that they are secure in their learning environment. Children with special educational needs are accommodated well and are often engaged on the same tasks as their peers.
67. Planning is satisfactory and highlights all the areas of learning in accordance with the early learning goals. Suggestions for activities linked to these areas are included appropriately. Tasks are regularly differentiated into five groups. Daily assessments are made and groups changed accordingly. Pieces of past work are kept for all activities to record how well children are achieving over time. Children have individual profiles from the local education authority, which are regularly updated to highlight what children can do.
68. Links with parents are satisfactory and there are appropriate procedures to ensure that children settle quickly into school. Teachers communicate regularly with parents both formally and informally and parents expressed their satisfaction at the parents' meeting.

ENGLISH

69. Results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged eleven showed that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was below the national average and the percentage of pupils gaining the higher level was well below the national average. In comparison to similar schools, the pupils' performance was well below average. Inspection findings indicate that although pupils' work shows significant improvement toward the end of the key stage, and particularly in Class 5, overall they do not achieve as well as they might, particularly in writing, where progress is unsatisfactory.
70. Results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged seven showed that the percentage of pupils gaining the expected level in reading and writing was very low in comparison to the national average, and in the lowest five per cent nationally. No pupils gained the higher level in either reading or writing. The school has made changes to its provision for the current school year and has placed an experienced teacher in the class accommodating most pupils in Year 2. Inspection evidence indicates that this change is having a positive impact, but although many pupils are making progress, levels of attainment in reading and writing are still below average. This is particularly so with writing.
71. The majority of children enter the Reception Year with literacy skills which are below that for their age and whilst many make appropriate progress through the Foundation Stage, their skills, particularly those in writing, do not improve sufficiently. Most display appropriate skills in speaking and listening. Work in Class 2, with pupils in Years 1 and 2 builds upon this positive start and some pupils begin to develop their skills to read unfamiliar words. Letters are often printed clearly and some are beginning to spell simple words correctly. In Year 2, the average

attaining pupils are beginning to read with increased confidence and have access to a satisfactory range of books of appropriate difficulty. Some can talk about what they like or dislike in stories. Some write in sentences and are starting to use full stops and capital letters in order to punctuate them. The higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are placed in Class 3, working with pupils in Years 3 and 4. Here they are not always challenged sufficiently in the tasks they are given and there is evidence of under-achievement, particularly in their written work. By the age of seven, whilst most pupils are developing their literacy skills, not enough of them attain the levels expected nationally.

72. Much of the teaching in Class 2 is good. The scrutiny of past work undertaken over the autumn term indicates that the good teaching is having a positive impact on the pupils' learning. Expectations are appropriately high and the National Literacy Strategy is taught confidently. Lessons are well prepared and plans clearly demonstrate what pupils are expected to learn. In one lesson, for example, the teacher uses a big book to show the 'ou' sound. The lesson aims are clearly described and most pupils are able to pick out and mark the sound. She makes good use of a 'pop-up' book and the pupils are very interested. She is well supported by a teaching assistant who offers good help and support to the pupils. The Year 2 pupils accommodated in Class 3 do not have access to the same literacy teaching and learning. In one lesson the teacher reads a text and adjectives are added to it. For example, the word 'dark' was added to the sentence 'He went into the forest'. Groups of pupils were asked to contribute words and the Year 2 pupils contributed to this. When the task was allocated there was some disruption to the start – pace was lost as pencils were sharpened – and the task did not progress as well as it should. The impetus to learning was lost.
73. In Class 4, some Year 4 pupils work alongside some Year 5 pupils. In this class most pupils make appropriate progress with their work in English. An increasing number are punctuating their sentences accurately and there is an increasing level of accuracy in the use of speech marks. In Class 5, most pupils in Years 5 and 6 make significant progress. Handwriting is developing well and sometimes is seen to be of a good standard and some story writing is lively and imaginative. For example, a piece written by a Year 6 pupil illustrated effective choice of vocabulary: 'The first day at school (I was eight) and I stood with fear in my eyes and butterflies in my stomach'. This able pupil developed some good writing techniques. Another example, in a longer piece of written work – 'He yanked open the chipped, creaky boot and scowled at me with cold, grey eyes' – demonstrated a good control of adjectives. Again, 'I am sitting totally tranquil. ... I can feel things coming with my heart'. This is writing of a good standard, showing potential above the level expected for her age. Overall, however, the pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to write at length, and as a result, the overall standard of written work is below average. This also shows in the limited manner in which the pupils' literacy skills are transferred to work in other subjects.
74. The school includes in its timetabling a 'school focus' period, just before lunchtime, where pupils throughout the school have a concentrated period of time working on handwriting or spelling. In one session in Class 5, the older pupils concentrated on nouns, thinking specifically about words ending in 'ian', such as musician, technician and mathematician. They moved on to concentrate later on changing the ends of words such as 'technology' to 'technologist' and 'geology' to 'geologist'. This was a useful period of time provoking useful discussion around the derivation of some of the words selected. It promoted good speaking and listening skills, gave some pupils increased confidence in spelling strategies and gave the impetus to an appropriate task for homework.

75. The quality of teaching is good in Classes 4 and 5. Again, what pupils are expected to learn is clear to them and in Class 5, English books carry simple but explicit targets for individual pupils to aid their improvement. This is good provision, but it is inconsistently applied through the school. In both classes pupils are managed well and in Class 4 this is a difficult task as some of the older pupils display challenging behaviour which can be disruptive to the learning of others. The teaching, however, is strong and the teacher has good strategies to maintain control.
76. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their English lessons. They are provided for well and are supported by able teaching assistants who have a clear understanding of their needs. They are given tasks which challenge them appropriately and expectations of success are high.
77. The subject is managed appropriately. The coordinator has been in post for some time and has a good grasp of the National Literacy Strategy. She has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school's provision and there is an appropriate literacy development plan in place. She is aware of the greater areas of weakness in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2, and also that writing needs significant improvement throughout the school. There is also an awareness that the weakness in pupils' writing skills has a negative effect on work in other subjects. She monitors colleagues' planning on a regular basis, but does not monitor teaching and learning. This is an important area of weakness which is currently not being dealt with in a satisfactory manner. Were it to be so, the inconsistencies in the current provision for pupils of the same age but in different classes would be apparent.
78. Overall, pupils' standards of attainment in English have declined from those reported when the school was last inspected, but the school has identified some areas of weakness and has already taken some steps to remedy them.

MATHEMATICS

79. Pupils' attainment on entry to Key Stage 1 is below expected standards and it is still below average by the time they reach the age of seven at the end of Year 2. The results of the National Curriculum tests in 2002 for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 were well below the national average. The results fall well short of expectations for all schools and also for schools in similar circumstances to Asfordby Hill. Standards have fallen since the last inspection, when attainment was judged to be average.
80. For pupils aged eleven in 2002 the picture was different, with attainment in Mathematics broadly in line with the national average. This is a similar pattern to that at the time of the school's previous inspection in 1997. Current inspection evidence shows that attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is still unsatisfactory but, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils at the school are attaining at an acceptable level. However, attainment in lessons observed during the inspection was never better than satisfactory and in some cases fell below expectations. In these lessons teaching had unsatisfactory features. Expectations of what pupils can achieve in written and independent work are not consistently high enough and the school should take steps to improve this situation. Sometimes the tasks are not challenging enough or suitably differentiated by ability and on occasions instructions to the pupils are not sufficiently clear.
81. The school has taken some steps to bring about improvement in pupils' progress, particularly for pupils aged seven, where the need is greatest. A senior member of staff has been re-

deployed into a key role and although there are examples of good teaching and learning at Key Stage 1 these have yet to make a significant impact on standards of attainment at this relatively early stage.

82. Pupils with special educational needs receive some good support within lessons often from either a teaching assistant or a parent helper. These pupils make good progress throughout the school. Progress made by gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory. These pupils have been identified but provision made for them is less clear than that for children with special educational needs.
83. Pupils in all classes undertake an appropriate variety of work which is clearly linked to the National Numeracy Strategy. However, the quality of presentation in the pupils' mathematics books is inconsistent and the subject would benefit from a whole school approach to improvement in this area. Similarly, teachers' marking of work is also inconsistent. Too few written comments are made that would help pupils to both reflect on their mistakes and know how to make progress. In some books short-term targets are set to help individual pupils to move forward. Although this is a good strategy, it is not consistently applied across the whole school. Neither is there any evidence that progress towards these 'next step' targets is either monitored or celebrated.
84. The quality of teaching observed in Mathematics lessons is good in Classes 1 and 2 and satisfactory overall in the other classes, where, although some good teaching was observed, there were examples of unsatisfactory teaching. In the best lessons observed there was a clear focus on teaching and learning, good quality questioning skills, effective classroom organisation and the provision of relevant resources of good quality. Tasks provided are appropriately challenging and suitably differentiated for different ability groups. For example, in a good lesson observed at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils were asked to write cheques in a task to help them learn the about working with words for numbers. Instructions were clear, good resources were to hand and tasks were clearly well differentiated to provide for the needs of different ability learners. The skills of the support assistant were well utilised. Where teaching and learning were judged to be less than satisfactory the pace was slow and the work unchallenging. Sometimes the make-up of the class makes it difficult to provide suitably differentiated activities and this is an impediment to learning. In one lesson observed for a class containing three different age groups, some pupils were obviously, bored, restless and disinterested. The work provided was clearly inappropriate for the needs of some of the pupils. Issues concerned with classroom organisation, lesson planning and delivery for mixed age classes need to be urgently addressed by the school.
85. Delivery of oral and mental activities at the start of the numeracy lesson is generally a stronger feature of mathematics lessons for all age groups. The school now needs to demand a higher standard of work from pupils in independent and group activity where expectations are not as high and activities not differentiated clearly enough for different ability and age groups within the same class. An over-reliance on activities differentiated by outcome should be addressed.
86. The majority of pupils enjoy numeracy lessons and have a good attitude to their work. With some notable exceptions they behave well, listen attentively and show an interest in the tasks they are given. This is particularly so for pupils aged eleven where good teaching and learning is taking place in mathematics lessons. However, in some lessons observed in Class 3, a minority of disruptive pupils some with shorter concentration spans, are not always well - managed by the staff and this has an adverse effect on their learning and that of the whole

class. At its worst this leads to teaching and learning which is less than satisfactory. Pupils in all year groups usually form constructive relationships and work collaboratively when required.

87. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory although there is a clear need for some improvements to be made. The policy for mathematics should be reviewed and re-written so as to include clearer provision for pupils with special educational needs, those who are gifted and talented and it should provide guidance on subject coverage for pupils of the same age taught in different classes. Since the last inspection, the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented. The mathematics curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Whilst assessment procedures are in place and analysis of data in undertaken, the school now needs to do more to ensure that there is a corresponding impact on planning for pupil progression. In particular the monitoring and evaluation of mathematics lessons are not yet satisfactory. This is a clear requirement of the subject co-ordinator's job description and should be developed as soon as possible so as to impact on improving standards. The school should develop a clear and consistent policy for record keeping and tracking progress and this should include clear procedures for setting and monitoring short-term targets to help pupils make progress. There are elements of this across the school and it forms part of the current school improvement plan but it is yet to be consistently and clearly applied across the whole school.
88. Appropriate use is made of existing resources but the school should recognise that both the quantity and quality should be reviewed. The use of information and communication technology is underdeveloped to support teaching and learning but this situation could be rectified when the new computer suite at the school is reopened following a recent break-in.

SCIENCE

89. The attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 matches that expected nationally. This is a decline in the standards since the previous inspection, especially for the Year 2 pupils whose attainment in 2002 was well below that expected for their age. However, standards throughout the school are better than these results would suggest and Year 6 pupils' attainment in the 2002 tests was above that expected for their age. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
90. Pupils in Year 2 have a sound scientific knowledge of the human body as they explore their senses, learn about healthy foods and the importance of exercise. They study the human skeleton and carry out simple investigations to see who has the longest or biggest bones. They record their findings in a variety of ways, using charts and labelled diagrams. As they move through the school pupils develop their skills of how to make a fair test, for example, in Class 4 when pupils investigate distances at which a sound can be heard. Pupils discussed and evaluated each other's ideas in order to ensure the best conditions and equipment for their test. Pupils in Class 5 predict outcomes of their tests, for example as they measure pupils' pulse rates and lung capacity. The majority of pupils in Year 6, including those with special educational needs, have a good understanding of science topics such as light and sound, life processes and materials.
91. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good features seen in most lessons. Pupils are clear about what they are to learn because teachers explain the learning objectives well. Good use is made of time at the beginning of lessons as teachers use questions effectively to assess what pupils already know and to extend their thinking skills. This was seen in Class 5 when pupils used their prior knowledge of solids, liquids and gases to

demonstrate how sound travels through a solid. Pupils are managed well in most classes and this results in them having positive attitudes to their learning and behaving well. They enjoy their science work and demonstrate good levels of curiosity. This was seen in the good lesson for Year 1 and 2 pupils when investigating a range of materials to see which would let light through. Pupils join in discussion, work well together and use resources appropriately. However in some lessons, for example, in Class 3 where pupils have a clear understanding of habitats, they lose interest because the follow up activities rely on low level worksheets which lack challenge and are at an inappropriate level for a significant number of pupils within the class. This results in some inappropriate behaviour and pupils not making the progress they should. Evidence shows that pupils in the same year group but in different classes do not cover the same ground. Teachers' planning is not effective in ensuring that all pupils learn as well as they can because, in most of the work seen, all pupils complete the same tasks irrespective of age or ability. This leads to underachievement, particularly for the higher attaining pupils, throughout the school.

92. Although, throughout the school appropriate emphasis is placed on the correct use of scientific language as pupils discuss their work, there are too few opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in the follow up tasks. For example, in the class for Year 5 and 6 pupils, pupils are only required to write up the outcomes of their experiments. Because of this they are not being sufficiently prepared for the next steps in their learning. There are inconsistencies in the presentation, spelling and punctuation in all classes within the school and marking is not used appropriately to correct work or improve presentation. For example, a Year 4 pupil in Class 4 wrote "Mr smith hade". These mistakes went uncorrected, even though "hade" was used several times in the same piece of writing. Follow up activities particularly for pupils in Years 1 to 4 rely too much on photocopied worksheets which often lack challenge and are not suitably matched to the different abilities of the pupils. Pupils apply their mathematical knowledge satisfactorily as they make bar graphs of their shoe sizes in Years 1 and 2 and use tally charts in Years 5 and 6 to measure pulse rates. Pupils make satisfactory use of information and communication technology to record, interpret and present data in the form of graphs and charts, particularly in Class 5. However it is not used enough to research scientific information. There are examples of art and design being used to enhance pupils' work in science, for example, through portraits, through healthy eating posters and through movement skeletons. The pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is promoted satisfactorily in this subject.
93. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, has good subject knowledge and gives appropriate support and guidance to teachers when necessary. There is no clear up-to-date policy in place but teachers use the national guidance for this subject satisfactorily when they plan their work. There has been no checking of teaching and learning nor has planning been checked on any regular basis. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but are not used well enough to inform teachers' planning in order to cater for the different abilities of all pupils across the school. Tests results are analysed to identify strengths and address weaknesses and although there is some recording of pupils' progress it does not ensure that their learning is continuous as they move through the school. The subject co-ordinator has a clear action plan which includes developing independent and investigative skills across the school, extending cross-curricular links and acting as a good model for staff. Resources are satisfactory and are supplemented by resources from the local High School. Good use is made of visits, and studies of the local environment to enhance pupils' understanding of science and nature. For example, visits to the Space Centre, the Eco-centre at the High School, pond dipping and the use of the school grounds make a positive

contribution to their scientific knowledge. Overall, the subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.

ART AND DESIGN

94. No lessons were observed during the course of the inspection and so judgements are based upon the scrutiny of pupils' past work and a consideration of the artwork currently on display around the school. Using this evidence, standards of attainment throughout the school are judged to be average. Pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve appropriately.
95. Pupils aged six and seven paint effectively and can produce work in the style of famous artists. Pupils currently in Class 2 have produced art work of good quality in the style of Matisse. Their observations are careful and they have produced interesting results.
96. Pupils in Class 4 have produced clay models of people and an interesting wall display of 'Wild Creatures' shows a good level of creative flair. Older pupils, in Years 5 and 6 demonstrate a wide range of techniques over time. Photographic evidence from past work includes a winter scene in the style of Brueghel and some Aboriginal art using fine brushes and bold colours to good effect. Work with textiles, based on the poem Jabberwocky and a batik production entitled Under the Sea both demonstrate developing skills using different styles and materials.
97. There are some appropriate links with work in literacy, as with the work related to Jabberwocky, and in a wall display in which each class produced a book cover demonstrating a different genre of literature. Last year's Year 5 pupils depicted Stig of the Dump in the adventure genre. The artwork on display shows a wide range of techniques and some work of good quality. Pupils currently in Year 6 have sketch books which contain simply drawn pencil cartoon character faces. Some are brightly coloured with felt pens and depict a wide variety of expressions.
98. Having seen no lessons taught, it is not possible to reach a judgement of teaching and learning. However, the work seen reflects an interesting range over time and shows some work of good quality.
99. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There is evidence of good teacher knowledge of the subject and the coordinator maintains resources adequately. Overall, the school has maintained the position outlined at the time of the last inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. Due to timetable constraints it was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection. Judgements are made on the basis of work seen in these lessons and in pupils' workbooks, a small collection of photographs provided and samples of pupils' work on display around the school. A file containing a very useful record of design and technology work complete with photographs, has not been added to since June 2002 and the school should consider re-establishing this as a valuable record of good work done by the pupils.
101. By the ages of seven and eleven, the attainment of pupils is in line with national expectations. Pupils have appropriate experiences of handling a range of simple materials such as paper, card or textiles, of measuring, cutting and joining these materials and of working to a simple design. By the time they reach the age of eleven, pupils have experienced an appropriate

range of designing and making activities. Work seen on displays and in books clearly shows they are evaluating their work in line with the expectations of the National Curriculum programmes of study.

102. Some displays demonstrate a good standard of work. For example, in a Years 4 and 5 classroom, an effective display clearly shows the process of designing, making and evaluating a chair for King Henry V111. In the library corridor, a similarly effective display by much younger pupils shows both the design stage and the finished product in the shape of some puppets.
103. The two contrasting lessons observed demonstrated both good and unsatisfactory teaching and learning. In the better lesson, resources were well provided, the teacher's subject knowledge was good, the pupils were enthusiastic and well-behaved as they endeavoured to design and make a musical instrument. Lesson objectives and specific instructions were clearly relayed to the pupils. In an unsatisfactory lesson, attainment was well below accepted standards, the task to design and begin to make a box was too challenging and was not matched to the abilities of the pupils. Only three pupils managed to make a finished product and this was less than satisfactory. There are three age groups in the class representing two key stages and materials provided are not suitably differentiated. In a mid-lesson plenary on the carpet, not all pupils were included and this is not good practice.
104. From the limited inspection evidence it is clear that the provision for pupils with special educational needs is appropriate. The progress that they make is satisfactory.
105. The subject is satisfactorily led and since the previous inspection improvement has been in line with expectations. The school has adopted the nationally produced scheme of work meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum but should continue to develop the use of information technology to support pupils' learning. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is not carried out sufficiently well. The subject co-ordinator should seek to develop this as indicated in the job description and also as outlined in the school improvement plan.

GEOGRAPHY

106. The attainment of the pupils currently in Year 6 broadly matches national expectations and they make satisfactory progress. This is a decline in standards since the previous inspection. During the inspection no lessons were seen for pupils in Year 2 and there was limited evidence available in books. It is not possible, therefore, to make a judgement on attainment and progress. Nor is it possible to make an overall judgement on teaching.
107. From an examination of their previous year's work and their current studies pupils in Year 6 show a satisfactory understanding of the water cycle and the different uses of water. They have looked at river systems, know the appropriate geographical vocabulary linked to these and are able to use grid references on Ordnance Survey maps. They also use an appropriate range of skills to identify features on maps of the British Isles and the world. Pupils present their work in a variety of ways using maps, charts and information sheets. They use their mathematical knowledge to make tally charts and block graphs and information and communication technology is used appropriately to interpret and present this data. However there too few opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills and when they do write mistakes in punctuation and spelling are left uncorrected as, for example, a Year 6 pupil used "are" instead of "our" many times in the same exercise.

108. The way geography is timetabled means that there are terms when it is not taught or it is combined with another subject. Very little geography has been taught to Year 2 pupils this year because of other timetable arrangements and this restricts progress. The small minority of Year 2 pupils in Class 3 have looked at ways of improving the local environment through a topic on re-cycling. All pupils in this class do the same tasks which often lack challenge. There are no opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills because the small amount of written work is copied. The presentation in their work has deteriorated during the term and teachers' marking does not help pupils to improve this.
109. The quality of teaching in the two lessons seen was good. Teachers effectively build on pupils' previous learning and personal experiences as, for example, in Class 4 pupils enthusiastically discuss the uses of water in dry countries using their own holiday experiences. Lessons move at a good pace and as a result pupils are well motivated and show good levels of interest. This has a positive impact on their learning. Teachers use questioning well to extend pupils' thinking and assess their levels of understanding. This was effective, particularly in Class 5, as pupils were able to recall many facts about the country and climate of India and make appropriate comparisons with other countries. The teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and pupils respond well by listening attentively, concentrating on their tasks and behaving well. Satisfactory links are made to other areas of the curriculum, for example, science and information and communication technology. However, although the Year 4 and 5 pupils use their reading skills well to research information, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given insufficient opportunities to improve their writing skills.
110. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. The subject co-ordinator does not have a clear overview of the standards being attained or the progress being made by pupils across the school. There is no up-to-date policy in place, although teachers use the nationally agreed scheme of work when planning their work. However, short term planning does not always identify what pupils of different ages and abilities will do and learn. Nor are assessment and recording procedures used well enough to match tasks to pupils' abilities or ensure that their learning is continuous as they move through the school. These were issues at the previous inspection that have not been satisfactorily addressed. Teachers' marking is not used well enough to inform pupils of how well they have achieved, and rarely includes comments that will take pupils' knowledge and understanding forward. There has been no checking on the quality of teaching within the classrooms or in the work that pupils have done in order to ensure that the curriculum is suitably covered. The school provides appropriate opportunities for first hand geographical experiences such as the use of the immediate environment and a visit from a local council officer to enhance the work on re-cycling. The annual visit to Beaumanor Hall provides orienteering activities which enhance the curriculum and effectively promotes pupils' social development. Pupils develop an understanding of the wider world and different cultures through their studies of India and Egypt. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' cultural development. Resources are adequate. However, there has been unsatisfactory improvement in geography since the previous inspection.

HISTORY

111. The attainment of pupils in Year 6 is below that expected nationally and pupils make unsatisfactory progress. This judgement is based on evidence in the pupils' books, wall displays, discussion with pupils and the subject co-ordinator, examination of teachers planning and the lesson observed. This shows a decline in standards from the previous inspection.

There was insufficient evidence available to make a secure judgement on attainment and achievement for pupils in Year 2.

112. Inspection evidence shows that insufficient time is allocated to the teaching of history throughout the school. As a consequence, there are inadequacies in the amount of work covered within the topics studied. The planned timetable offers limited opportunities to develop pupils' historical skills in a continuous or progressive way as they move through the school. The curriculum lacks breadth and balance. Pupils in the same year group but in different classes do not have the same access to the curriculum. Nor do teachers plan satisfactorily for the different ages and abilities within the class. This was an issue at the previous inspection which has not been satisfactorily addressed.
113. Pupils in the Year 5 and 6 class do not study any history until the last half term of the summer term and this work is linked to the end-of-term production. The limited evidence from last year's work was based on low level worksheets which lacked challenge and depth. Discussion with Year 6 pupils shows that they have a very sketchy view of what history is. They remember studying the Tudors and Stuarts, the Romans and the Ancient Egyptians but their knowledge and understanding of these topics is very superficial.
114. In Class 4 pupils have recently studied aspects in the life of Henry V111 whilst in Class 3 pupils are studying the Great Fire of London. This illustrates the different coverage of historical topics for pupils in Year 4. An analysis of the work indicates that standards of attainment are below those expected for their age. This is because there is an over-reliance on low level printed work sheets, consisting mainly of colouring, cutting and sticking activities, which are unchallenging and lacking in depth.
115. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection in the mixed Year 2, 3 and 4 class. Teaching was unsatisfactory. This was because the teacher did not use questions and explanations well enough to hold pupils' interest. As a result a significant minority of pupils misbehaved and the teacher did not use the appropriate strategies to check this. The task given lacked challenge for the majority of pupils, some became bored and their inappropriate balance caused a distraction to others. This impeded not only their own learning but that of other pupils.
116. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The subject co-ordinator does not have a clear overview of standards within the subject because there is no monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and no checking of pupils' work. Teachers' planning does not take full account of the different ages and abilities within the mixed age classes. Nor are assessment and recording procedures used well enough to inform planning, or ensure that pupils' progress is continuous as they move through the school. This is a weakness of the last inspection that has not been satisfactorily addressed. The history curriculum is mainly about the acquisition of historical facts and there is limited evidence of the skills of historical enquiry being appropriately developed. The co-ordinator has no clear plans for developing the subject other than prioritising the budget. A suitable range of visits to, for example, the Jewry Wall and Beaumanor Hall together with visitors to the school enrich the curriculum and make a positive contribution to the pupils' moral, social and cultural development. However, there are few planned opportunities to use information and communication technology in this subject or to apply and extend pupils' literacy skills, particularly writing skills. Resources are unsatisfactory, disorganised and not readily accessible. Overall there has been unsatisfactory improvement in this subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

117. The development of a computer suite at the school represents a significant improvement in resources since the previous inspection. This is seen as a major development at the school. However, due to a recent break-in, the suite could not be seen in operation during the inspection.
118. An action plan for information and communication technology clearly outlines how the suite should be developed and there is also a clear policy for the use of the Internet. However the policy statement, dated March 1996, is clearly out-of-date and should be re-written to take account of new developments as soon as possible.
119. New Opportunities Fund training for the teaching staff is only just being undertaken but should lead to improved confidence and expertise in the teaching of this subject. Only two lessons for this subject were observed during the inspection and judgements are based on evidence found in these lessons, as there was little evidence of computers being used effectively elsewhere in a cross-curricular way. Some evidence was also found in pupils' workbooks and on wall displays around the building.
120. From the very limited evidence available, pupils' attainments by the ages of seven and eleven are in line with national expectations and pupils' progress throughout school is satisfactory. Only a very few pupils were observed working at the computer but nevertheless it was clear that their attitudes to learning are positive. They work together in an appropriate way and this makes a positive contribution to their personal and social development. The pupils treated the computers carefully and were well behaved.
121. Opportunities to take part in activities involving control and monitoring are clearly limited and the skills involved in these aspects are not well developed.
122. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory but if the use of the computer suite is to become a growing point for school improvement and development, the co-ordinator will need to become more pro-active in the leadership of the subject. Arrangements for secure assessment will need to be carefully developed to enable the school to track pupil progress effectively and set targets for improvement. The monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject is unsatisfactory overall although the quality of teaching seen was generally sound.

MUSIC

123. Only one music lesson was observed during the course of the inspection and this forms insufficient evidence upon which to make overall judgements. In the lesson observed, with pupils from Years 2, 3, and 4 the pupils responded well to a steady four beat rhythm. They were able to emphasise the first beat appropriately. They used clapping, jumping, wriggling and twisting on the first beat. They counted the other three beats in their heads. The pupils executed the beat with a good level of success. One pupil demonstrated the technique well. The pupils all had the opportunity to evaluate their movements and gave their 'best' performance. There was good behaviour and appropriate expectations of success. The pupils' sense of rhythm was further developed by adding words to the sequence.
124. The music curriculum is promoted appropriately through singing, in acts of collective worship and in other lessons. Pupils sing well in assembly, as was demonstrated by the singing of 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God' in two parts. The pupils, and the staff, clearly enjoy the singing. In a whole school singing assembly pupils sing clearly, maintaining a good sense of

timing and rhythm. Songs are well chosen within a register which is appropriate for the pupils' voices and played at an appropriate pace. They leave the assembly singing 'We shall go out with joy', which proved to be a rousing end to an enjoyable session.

125. In the lesson observed pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations for their age. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make an overall view of the quality of teaching, but in the lesson observed teaching was good.
126. The subject is coordinated by two experienced teachers who use the commercial music scheme well. As with other subjects, the coordinators do not monitor teaching and learning effectively enough. However, they correctly believe the work undertaken in music lessons contributes positively to the pupils' enthusiasm and confidence. This can be seen to good effect in the plays and concerts which the school undertakes at different times of the year. Since the last inspection the school has maintained the quality of its provision and there is evidence that pupils clearly enjoy their work in this subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

127. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations and by the time pupils reach the age of eleven, standards, whilst satisfactory overall, show good features. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls and those with special educational needs make the same progress as their peers. The school is fully inclusive and all pupils, whatever their physical disability might be, take a full part in all lessons.
128. Swimming is a well-developed activity at Asfordby Hill and all pupils beyond the Reception year are given the opportunity to reach the required standard. Pupils of all ages attend the local pool together and this is an example of good social development at the school. The pool is well staffed and there is a very good standard of instruction provided. Even the youngest pupils are very confident in the water and some are beginning to master basic techniques. Many of the older pupils have very good swimming skills. They were observed during the inspection swimming with a very well developed front crawl style. Pupils are given the opportunity to train for survival and life saving awards and certificates.
129. Pupils' opportunities in football, netball, rugby union and cross-country were not observed during the inspection but these sports are the focus for the visits of external coaches to the school and form a strong feature of a wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities. Pupils are also given the opportunity to attend a residential outdoor activity centre.
130. Teaching is good overall and ranges from very good to satisfactory. A good feature of the best lessons observed during the inspection was the importance placed on warm-up routines and the importance placed on making pupils aware of the effect of exercise on their hearts.
131. Where the teaching is very good as in one lesson seen, and involving older pupils, challenges are progressively more difficult as the lesson on balance develops. There is a clear emphasis on safety and good links through the vocabulary used, to science and literacy. The pupils approach counter-balance exercises very well and demonstrate above average attainment,

whilst the class teacher gives clear examples and very precise instructions. They show good control and work very well individually and in pairs.

132. Pupils' attitude to the subject is generally satisfactory with occasional silliness from a minority of pupils, which is handled well by the teachers. However, in the best lessons observed it is very good; pupils have a positive attitude and work hard for their teachers. The majority pay attention to their teachers and are well-behaved in lessons.
133. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory although the co-ordinator is aware that a plan to use national guidance on recording skills in physical education has not yet been implemented. In addition, monitoring and evaluation of the subject, clearly planned for in the school improvement plan, has not yet begun to take place. The policy statement for physical education is dated 1996 and is overdue for review. It contains a statement indicating a review after three years but this has not yet happened.
134. There are contradictory indications from the co-ordinator and the headteacher as to whether some fixed apparatus can now be used following building alterations to install a new door in the hall and this situation needs clarification. Following current in-service training on the role of the co-ordinator, it is planned to create a portfolio for the development of the subject. This should cover its strategic direction and development and will cover teaching and learning. This aim should be pursued as soon as possible so as to maintain developments in the subject.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

135. Judgements are based on the two lessons observed, which both involved older pupils aged eight to eleven, and in a review of pupils' past work. Throughout the school, pupils' attainment is at the expected level for their age, taking into account the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
136. By the age of seven, pupils have gained a basic understanding of the principles of Hinduism and can make simple but appropriate comparisons between Hinduism and Christianity. For example they know that the place of worship is a Church or a Temple, and that the worship is conducted by a priest or a puari. They know that Christmas is a festival of Light for Christians and Diwali is a festival of Light for Hindus. During the spring term, the content of the work moves on to consider aspects of the Jewish way of life.
137. In classes 4 and 5, pupils consider aspects of the Islamic faith. In one lesson an overhead projector was used to illustrate the Hajj as devout Muslims made their way to Mecca to worship at the Ka'aba. Good factual information was communicated by the teacher and most of the pupils listened with interest. In Class 5, where a video was shown on the life of Mohammed pupils showed good levels of understanding, recalling the five pillars of Islam. The class teacher points out similarities between Islam and Christianity and uses correct vocabulary. She has good subject knowledge. Pupils join in this lesson well.
138. In the lessons observed, teaching was good overall. Pupils were encouraged to express their opinions and used their previous knowledge effectively. Both lessons made good use of audio-visual aids. In both lessons, the pupils worked well and concentrated effectively.
139. The school makes satisfactory provision for the delivery of the religious education curriculum. The pupils gain an appropriate knowledge of Christianity and are developing a sound grasp of the principles of other major world religions. It is clear that the school has successfully

maintained the standards of attainment and quality of provision which was reported when religious education was last inspected.