

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLBEACH ST MARK'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Spalding, Lincolnshire

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120549

Headteacher: Mrs V O'Brien

Lead inspector: Mr Sean O'Toole

Dates of inspection: 26th – 28th April 2004

Inspection number: 264371

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	35
School address:	Main Road Holbeach St Mark's Spalding Lincolnshire
Postcode:	PE12 8DZ
Telephone number:	01406 701266
Fax number:	01406 701266
Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C N Worth
Date of previous inspection:	10 th – 12 th June 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Located in the village of Holbeach St Mark's, the school is much smaller than most other primary schools. All of the 35 pupils (15 girls and 20 boys) are from white UK heritage backgrounds. Socio-economically, the area in which pupils live is below average. Few pupils are eligible for free school meals. The percentages of pupils with special educational needs and those with statements are well above average. Attainment on admission to the school varies but is now usually well below average overall; it has fallen since the previous inspection. The number of pupils attending the school has fallen significantly and the percentage of those having special educational needs has risen fivefold in the last few years. Since the inspection in December 2000 all of the teaching staff have changed; the headteacher was appointed in October 2003. The school achieved Investors in People status in 2002 and gained an achievement award in 2003. The school is working closely with another primary school while the local education authority carries out a long term review of provision.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20891	Sean O'Toole	Lead inspector	Mathematics; Science; Information and communication technology; Art and design; Design and technology; Music; Physical education.
14178	Patricia Willman	Lay inspector	
20911	Judy Dawson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; Special educational needs; English; Personal, social and health education and citizenship; Geography; History; Religious education.

The inspection contractor was:

Inspire Educational Ltd

The Coach House
132 Whitaker Road
Derby

DE23 6AP

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This inclusive school provides a sound quality of education. Though recent results in national tests have been below average, achievement is at least satisfactory and good in Years 3 to 6. The headteacher leads the school well. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall and the school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well
- Some aspects of teaching and assessment require further development
- Standards in speaking throughout the school and in English, mathematics and science in Years 1 and 2 could be better
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal skills are good
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively
- The headteacher shows determined and focused leadership
- This is a very caring school

The school has continued to make good improvement since the previous inspection in June 2002. The issues raised have been tackled effectively and there is more consistent and effective progress, especially in Years 3 to 6. The school has been very successful in working with pupils with challenging behaviour and has created a purposeful and positive ethos that promotes good attitudes to learning. Leadership and management have been strengthened through the work of the new headteacher, and the more effective governing body plays a helpful role in promoting the school in the community and monitoring its progress. Teaching and learning are more consistent. The school is well placed to build upon these improvements.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	D	E	E
Mathematics	E	D	E*	E*
Science	D	C	E	E

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

Almost all pupils start school with well below expected levels of skills, knowledge and understanding and are especially weak in language and communication. Pupils in the Foundation Stage achieve satisfactorily but few attain the expected goals for their age in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Most are on course to attain the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development.

In view of the very small cohorts, high mobility between Years 2 and 6 and the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, national test results must be interpreted with very great caution. Test results at the end of Year 2 in 2003 showed that standards were among the lowest five per cent of schools in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. When compared with similar schools, standards were among the lowest five per cent of schools. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily in reading, writing and mathematics although standards remain well below average. Recent changes in the teaching of reading are having a beneficial impact on standards in Years 1 and 2. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 are below average, an improvement resulting from more effective teaching. **Achievement, for pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Girls**

are much more successful than boys in English although the gap is not as wide in mathematics and science. There are very few above average pupils and they achieve sufficiently well. Pupils achieve well in ICT and religious education and standards are average in these subjects throughout the school.

The staff **promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well** and the pupils are well behaved, showing good attitudes to learning and each other. One pupil was excluded last year. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school; attendance is average and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a sound quality of education. Teaching, learning and assessment are satisfactory with some very good features in Years 3 to 6 Lessons are planned well and thoroughly prepared, making use of good resources and organisation to meet the needs of pupils in mixed age classes. Support staff play an important role in supporting those with special educational needs. Basic skills in English and mathematics are taught well in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactorily in other year groups. Firm and fair discipline encourages pupils to work hard and to cooperate effectively, especially in practical subjects. Some lessons in Years 1 and 2 lack sufficient pace and not enough is expected of the pupils. Teaching and the curriculum in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory, although there are limited resources for outdoor play. Throughout the school, assessment is accurate but there are not close enough links between marking and target setting. The school's good curriculum is enriched with good extra-curricular activities and visits that rouse the pupils' interest and contribute well to their personal, social and emotional development and their awareness of life in a culturally diverse society. Links with other schools, the wider community and parents are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The good headteacher leads the school effectively, having a focused and clear vision shared with all staff and governors. She sets challenging targets for the staff linked to the pupils' performance. **Leadership and management are satisfactory.** Staff share responsibilities conscientiously and there are good strategic plans for further improvement linked to raising standards. The governance of the school is good. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Financial management is good and careful consideration is given to spending to ensure that funds are used wisely, making good use of the principles of best value when purchasing supplies and services.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The pupils are pleased with the support they receive and like their teachers, but about a quarter of younger pupils say they would like more opportunities to work independently. Parents are happy with most aspects of the quality of education provided although some would like more information about how to help their children at home and improved provision for homework.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in speaking throughout the school and improve pupils' performance in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2
- Improve some aspects of teaching to ensure quicker and more effective learning in Years 1 and 2
- Improve marking and target setting

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, achievement is satisfactory. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good. The results of recent national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Years 2 and 6 are well below average, although the results are affected by the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each year group and by high mobility. Girls perform better than boys in national tests in English.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6 and standards are rising
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in Years 3 to 6
- Pupils' speaking skills are weak
- Progress in Years 1 and 2 could be better, especially in reading, writing and mathematics
- Standards are average in ICT and religious education and achievement in these subjects is good throughout the school

Commentary

1. Several factors have influenced the decline in performance in national test results at the school over the last few years. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs has increased fivefold while the number attending the school has halved. Attainment on admission has declined and very few pupils start school with skills, knowledge and understanding which are average for their age, most being well below average. The school received an achievement award in 2002 in recognition of its work in school improvement.
2. Children in the Foundation Stage make a good start to school life and make good progress in personal, social and emotional development. By the end of the reception year they are likely to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning. However, their very poor mathematical and language skills on admission to the school hinder their progress in other areas. Although the children make satisfactory progress in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development they are unlikely to attain the expected goals for their age by the time they start in Year 1. Recent improvements in the teaching and resources for reading are beginning to have an impact on early reading skills but the children are still some way behind those of a similar age.
3. Test results at the end of Year 2 in 2003 showed that standards were among the lowest five per cent of schools in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. When compared with similar schools, standards were among the lowest five per cent of schools. This cohort had over 60 per cent of pupils with special educational needs. Inspection evidence shows a slightly improving picture but standards overall are still well below average in Year 2. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily in reading, writing and mathematics. This cohort is predominantly made up of boys and they are less successful than girls, especially in English work. This is partly due to lack of sharp targets and timescales in which to complete their work and insufficiently high expectations about the presentation of work. Recent changes in the teaching of reading are having a beneficial impact on standards in Years 1 and 2. The trend over time shows a decline in performance but this must be placed in the context of declining numbers, lower standards on entry and the increasing proportion of pupils with special educational needs.
4. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 are below average overall but are rising. The disproportionate number of pupils with special educational needs significantly affects the school's results. Inspection evidence shows that average and more able pupils achieve well and are on course to attain at least average standards in national tests in English, mathematics and science but two-thirds of the cohort have special educational needs and this has a significant impact on the overall results. Standards are

sufficiently high given the often very good teaching and enthusiastic learning of the pupils. However, an area for development throughout the school is in raising pupils' standards in speaking. Although much is done to promote technical and subject vocabulary, and pupils make good progress in this aspect, they have limited opportunities for drama and role play to enhance their conversational skills.

5. Opportunities to use literacy and numeracy skills to support work in other subjects are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Throughout the school, the pupils use ICT well to support research and learning in other subjects. Pupils achieve well in religious education and ICT because of the teachers' good subject knowledge, resources and well-paced lessons. Standards in religious education and ICT are average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and this represents good success for the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils respond well to the very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural values promoted by the school and, as a result, their attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good. Pupils are punctual and attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' good attitudes and often very good relationships help to create a positive ethos for learning
- Pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong and are consistently encouraged and praised for making the right choices
- Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are very good.

Commentary

6. Pupils' good attitudes to school are reflected in the improved attendance which is now broadly in line with that found in most primary schools. They are rarely late to school and this enables the school day to start on time. There are very good formal and informal systems to monitor and improve attendance and most parents understand the importance of advising the school about absence.
7. The very good provision for spiritual development has a significant impact on pupils' enthusiasm and interest in their learning. Pupils are urged to reflect on moral and spiritual issues in assemblies and to respect the feelings and beliefs of others. The spring bulbs which pupils planted in the new garden have been a source of delight and wonder and the recent visit of the lambs allowed them to enjoy the excitement of new life. Pupils feel valued because teachers always listen to their responses and ideas in lessons and this encourages them to participate. They speak with enthusiasm about the after school clubs and value these opportunities. Because pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons, they take part in discussions and are involved in the activities. As a result, pupils have good attitudes to their learning and try hard to improve their work.
8. Moral and social development is promoted very well and this ensures that pupils clearly understand the boundaries of acceptable behaviour within the school community. Most comply with the expectations of their teachers and become sensible and useful members of the community. The very good systems the school has introduced to encourage good behaviour have been very effective and behaviour has improved significantly since the last inspection. Pupils learn that poor behaviour incurs consequences and, as a result, many have developed a sense of responsibility and self-discipline. All staff consistently praise pupils' good work and behaviour and this motivates them to try to live up to their teachers' high expectations. In personal, social and health education lessons pupils have opportunities to discuss issues important to them and to share their ideas and solutions. Because of the often very good relationships between most pupils, there are few concerns about bullying and pupils trust the staff to deal with any unkind behaviour fairly and effectively. Pupils are encouraged to respect and value each other's beliefs and ideas by listening quietly in class. Most respond well to this encouragement, although there

are a small number who persist in calling out inappropriately. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills on visits to local amenities and during the residential visit. Many older pupils willingly take on responsibility when opportunities arise and show good levels of initiative in carrying out these responsibilities. For example, Year 6 pupils organise a library on Fridays. Although there are no formal channels through which pupils can express their views and ideas for improvement to school life, the nature of the school community and the very good relationships that exist between pupils and teachers promote a very good level of informal communication. During the current year one pupil has been excluded twice for a total of ten and a half days as a result of unacceptable violence towards staff and pupils.

9. The provision for cultural development is good and this makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. They learn about the cultural and religious traditions of others through many of their lessons and visits to places of interest, including a mosque. A range of music, art, history and literature is studied and pupils learn about the lives of others through their geography studies. The location of the school and lack of funds inhibits the school's ability to expose pupils to first hand experiences of other cultures.
10. The children in the Foundation Stage make good progress towards achieving the levels expected for their age in personal, social and emotional development. They are encouraged to work and play constructively and happily together and learn to make sensible choices. They listen carefully to instructions and try hard to please their teacher and the other adults who work with them. They generally behave well.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.2	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
35	2	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school's provision of a sound quality of education enables the pupils to achieve satisfactorily. Very good levels of care promote pupils' health and well being effectively. Teaching and learning are at least satisfactory. The curriculum is good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, and good with some very good features in Years 3 to 6. Assessment is satisfactory and staff are improving its use to plan work. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is matched very well to pupils' needs, ages and abilities

- Some lessons lack sufficient pace and challenge
- Marking is not linked well enough to pupils' targets
- Support staff contribute much to pupils' learning and personal development

Commentary

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. There are well established classroom routines which help the children to settle quickly into school life and contribute effectively to their personal, social and emotional development. This aspect of children's learning is taught well and good care is taken to encourage the children to work and play alongside each other and to learn to share and respect each other and the school's resources. Staff work together well to meet the needs of the children in a mixed age class and most work is matched appropriately to the needs of the children although on some occasions the work is too hard for the Foundation Stage. The most successful learning is through practical activities, as when the children explored their senses by smelling, tasting and feeling fruit. This lesson was used well to extend the children's vocabulary. Literacy and mathematical skills are systematically taught satisfactorily. The development of reading skills has received a boost through the introduction of a new reading scheme and regular practice is helping the children to gain confidence in early reading and phonics. Most lessons in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development begin with work with the whole class and this works satisfactorily in most cases, although sometimes the questions are too hard for the Foundation Stage. Some aspects are too formal and there are limited opportunities to take part in role play. Although practical opportunities exist they are not used widely enough to extend the children's experiences through play and this hampers the development of language skills. The teacher and support staff have very good relationships with the children and manage their behaviour very well. There is a good atmosphere of care and children's personal needs are met well. Records of progress are kept and assessment is satisfactory but the information is not used as well as it might be to pinpoint the next steps in learning.
- Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. English and mathematics are taught satisfactorily. The teacher has some good ideas and develops basic skills effectively, especially in the teaching of reading. However, the work is not always challenging enough and the teacher does not insist on good presentation. Lessons are planned thoroughly but the planning does not always take sufficient account of the needs of individuals and sometimes the work is too demanding. This discourages some pupils, especially boys, who find it hard to focus on tasks for extended periods and results in often incomplete work. The pace of these lessons is too slow. Although the teacher assesses the pupils' work accurately there is insufficient link made between marking and target setting so pupils are often unsure what to do to improve. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is at least good and often very good. English, mathematics and science are taught very well. Much is expected of the pupils and they are given very clear instructions and time limits in which to complete their work so that productivity levels are good. High expectations of pupils' work have led to a marked improvement in writing, presentation and spelling in pupils' English work and, as a result, pupils show much pride in what they do. There is very good teaching of swimming as the teacher has very good skills and expertise in this subject.
- Throughout the school staff make good use of homework to promote learning and pupils respond well. Very good relationships and effective behaviour management help to create a positive climate for learning. Pupils listen well, work hard and most are eager to please their teachers. A good success in the teaching has been the way in which staff have raised pupils' self esteem and helped to create a positive climate for learning. The teachers mark the pupils' work regularly and use praise and reward effectively. At the start of lessons in Years 3 to 6 the teacher reviews what the pupils have learned and picks up on any weaknesses before moving on to the next challenge. This ensures that pupils make good progress in learning new skills. There is some inspirational teaching of older pupils in science where observations of the natural world are linked to ICT with the result that pupils learn very effectively about decay. The teaching of ICT and religious education is good throughout the school and staff have good subject knowledge which they use well to move learning on at a good pace. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall and very good in Years 3 to 6. Support staff contribute much to learning and

are especially successful in supporting pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are well written and provide sharp targets which are followed up regularly and reviewed. Patient and thoughtful teaching is given to those with statements and has enabled these pupils to make very good progress, especially in reading. The procedures to assess the pupils' achievements and progress are satisfactory and improving. Staff record pupils' progress although the assessment is not always linked to National Curriculum levels. The staff have a very clear picture of the personal needs of the pupils but target setting for academic performance is underdeveloped.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 19 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	6	9	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of the pupils and includes good opportunities for enrichment. There are good extra-curricular activities. The provision for and assessment of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school makes good provision for personal, social and health education
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good in Years 3 to 6
- There is limited outdoor play provision for the Foundation Stage

Commentary

14. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and has improved since the previous inspection, with recent developments in planning which provide good guidance on developing skills, knowledge and understanding consistently. Staff regularly review subject teaching and have developed good policies and schemes to support teaching and learning. The governors monitor these initiatives. The school makes good use of national guidance for the subjects and uses the literacy and numeracy strategies in a way which meets the needs of pupils in mixed age classes. The staff are developing links between subjects and this makes the curriculum relevant to the pupils. The curriculum includes good provision to promote responsible attitudes through a good programme of personal, social and health education that includes lessons in sex and relationships and the use and misuse of drugs.
15. The curriculum is enriched through visits and visitors and pupils say they particularly enjoy these aspects of learning. This is reflected in their excellent attitudes shown during assemblies. The staff make good use of the locality to interest and motivate pupils. The staff provide a good number and range of out of school activities to enhance learning. All pupils are welcome to these extra-curricular activities and participate with enthusiasm. The use of a residential visit to extend pupils' learning in a variety of subjects also contributes much to personal, social and emotional development. The school works hard to promote tolerance and understanding through its curriculum and visits and these opportunities help pupils to develop a good awareness of cultural diversity and the richness of cultures found in Britain and around the world.
16. This is an inclusive school and staff work hard to meet the needs of individuals. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs are supported very well overall in their personal, social and emotional development and this is reflected in calm and orderly behaviour and an improvement in pupils' self esteem. Overall the provision for special educational needs is satisfactory but very good in Years 3 to 6 where there is a very focused programme of

support and learning for these pupils that has a significant impact on progress. All staff provide caring support and guidance for pupils with special educational needs. The individual education plans are well crafted and contain clear objectives that are shared with pupils and their parents. The needs of those with statements of special educational needs receive particularly good attention and individual support is of high calibre. Although girls generally attain higher standards than boys the school provides equal opportunities effectively and staff are to attend training on learning styles to extend their skills, developing systems to ensure that learning for boys is more effective.

17. Staffing levels are good and teachers and support staff form an effective team. The school has a team of enthusiastic and well qualified staff. Training is used well to enable teachers to meet the school's objectives and to improve teaching. Support staff play a successful role in supporting pupils with special educational needs and contribute much to learning. The school's accommodation is good and well cared for. Resources have improved much since the previous inspection and are now good. The very good resources for ICT contribute much to the standards achieved. Pupils benefit from a good library and the new reading scheme is making a good impact on standards.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes very good provision for the welfare of all pupils. The strong relationships in school ensure that pupils receive good quality support and guidance and have the confidence to be involved in initiating and contributing to plans to improve school life.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The kindness and commitment of all staff ensure that parents and pupils feel confident that any problems will be handled fairly and effectively
- The personal support and guidance for each individual is very good
- Pupils trust their teachers and know that they will help them if they are unhappy
- Not all pupils are clear about how to improve their work

Commentary

18. Good policy documents governing the welfare, health and safety of pupils support the staff's good awareness of these issues. Fire drills are carried out regularly and there is very good provision for first aid. The premises are checked regularly and good risk assessments are conducted for visits outside school. The headteacher is responsible for child protection issues and is due to undergo appropriate training in the near future. All staff are aware of their duty of care in this aspect of pupils' welfare and locally accepted guidelines and procedures are followed rigorously. Pupils learn about the benefits of a healthy diet through their science lessons and older pupils are given appropriate information about sex and drugs. This has been extended well through the work on the Healthy Schools initiative. In their personal, social and health education lessons pupils learn strategies to keep themselves safe and teachers emphasise the safe use of resources in lessons. All pupils have the opportunity to learn to swim and, in view of the nature of the area in which they live, this is of particular relevance.
19. Because there are very good relationships between most pupils and the adults who work with them, pupils are confident that someone will help them if they are unhappy or worried about something. One member of staff greets pupils at the gate at the beginning of each day and this gives parents the opportunity to pass on any small matters of concern. Personal, social and health education lessons provide good opportunities for teachers to informally monitor and support pupils' personal development and to identify any specific issues that may be troubling them. Educational support and guidance is good overall, but some pupils, particularly in Class 1, are not involved in setting their targets for improvement and do not clearly understand what they have to do. Prior to the inspection, a small number of parents raised concerns about the induction process. There are good opportunities for parents and children to spend time in

school prior to joining and there is appropriate written information for new parents. Staff are easily accessible and very willing to answer any questions and, overall, the induction process is good.

20. Pupils' involvement in school life is good. Although there are no formal structures through which they can contribute, many have the confidence to put forward ideas to the headteacher who is very receptive and supporting. Currently, there is a small group who are organising a "Pop Idol" event. Pupils have been fully involved in working towards the targets in the Healthy Schools programme, designing the garden and playground.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a good partnership with parents, the community and with other schools. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have positive views about the work of the school
- Parents feel welcome in the school and are confident that any concerns will be dealt with effectively
- The work of the school is very well supported by the Friends of the School and the local village community
- A small number of parents are not involved in their children's learning

Commentary

21. The parents who took part in the consultation before and during the inspection expressed positive views about the work of the school. They are particularly pleased with the behaviour in school and the way in which the school encourages their children to become sensible and mature individuals. They are confident that the school listens to them. They are provided with good information through the prospectus, the annual governors' report, regular newsletters and the reports on the progress of their children. Consultation evenings are well attended and give parents a clearer picture of their children's progress. Most parents encourage their children to complete their homework and evidence in the reading records indicates that many parents regularly read with their children. Parents willingly help with visits and attend the performances and celebrations held in school. The Friends of the School organise a number of activities and are well supported by both parents and members of the village community. Significant funds are raised which have most recently been used to purchase playground equipment. Parents contributed to a Best Value Review last year, which elicited positive feedback about most aspects of the school's work.
22. There are good links with the local community and this has a beneficial impact on the work of the school. Pupils visit the church as part of their religious education and the local clergy are regular visitors to the school. The development of the delightful garden area benefited greatly from the help and support provided by a nearby garden centre and a construction company. Local businesses provide raffle prizes for the social events and the Church provides a regular substantial sum of money which is used to supplement resources and subsidise visits. A local farmer generously funded the purchase of the new reading scheme. There are good systems to ensure effective transfer to secondary education and pupils are prepared well for the next stage of education. Links with nurseries and other schools are well developed and effective.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides good leadership; she is enthusiastic and leads her team with a sense of purpose. The governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is supported very well by other staff in promoting a positive ethos
- The governors are supportive of and knowledgeable about the school
- More work is needed on ensuring consistency between classes in the quality of teaching
- The school's intentions are clearly stated and monitored effectively through the effective implementation of the school development plan
- Administration, financial planning and management are good

Commentary

23. The biggest challenge facing the leadership of the school has been raising standards, and in this it has been partially successful. The changes to the school's intake and the fall in numbers have been especially challenging and the headteacher has coped well with these problems. The school has tackled the issues raised in the previous inspection report effectively. The positive ethos, commitment by staff and governors to inclusion and equal opportunities are contributing much to school improvement. Governors have worked hard to ensure that the school meets its statutory responsibilities and have implemented good procedures and policies for race equality, equal opportunities and access for the disabled. The headteacher is the driving force behind the school's improvement and other staff and governors have supported her very well. Their main successes have been in establishing a strong system of pastoral care, creating a purposeful ethos and a positive climate for learning in which pupils enjoy school and develop good personal, social and emotional skills.
24. The headteacher provides good leadership and has a supportive and hard working team. She successfully balances a large teaching commitment with her management responsibilities and is ambitious for the pupils' success. Parents and pupils speak positively of the recent improvements and governors are well aware of the progress made in raising the profile of the school and improving pupil performance. Leadership of the subjects is shared among the staff and they have made good progress in developing schemes and policies but more remains to be done to ensure consistency in the quality of teaching and learning. There have been regular reviews of the school's curriculum and changes in practice have been managed well. Specific needs such as resources or further training are clearly identified and acted upon. The headteacher has started a monitoring programme and this is linked to performance management targets measured against the pupils' performance. The provision for special educational needs is managed effectively and is especially good for pupils in Years 3 to 6 because of high quality support. All statutory requirements for special educational needs are met. Appropriate management systems ensure that all staff are kept up to date on changes and developments at the school.
25. The governors have improved much since the previous inspection and have a shrewd grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They play an active part in the life of the school and are keen advocates for it in the community, having good strategies to attract new pupils. They have a positive approach to monitoring the work of the headteacher and her colleagues and call them to account for their performance, discussing innovations and targets knowledgeably. They are fully involved in setting, monitoring and reviewing the school's priorities and have increased their involvement in school development planning and in monitoring its success.
26. Financial management and control are good and effective systems are used to track spending. The administrative staff are very knowledgeable and contribute much to the school's smooth running and organisation, freeing valuable time for the headteacher to be more involved in teaching. Spending is monitored well and, although the school currently has a substantial surplus, this will disappear this year as funds are clawed back following the decline in numbers at the school. Prudent financial management has led to the provision of good resources and

suitable staffing levels. However, the school lacks suitable outdoor equipment for children in the Foundation Stage as the local education authority has held back capital funds for this. The governors are keen to maximise the impact of spending by making good use of best value principles. For example, careful consideration was given to the purchasing for the ICT suite to ensure that the best equipment was obtained. In view of the high costs of educating the pupils the school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	210,368
Total expenditure	178,545
Expenditure per pupil	3,644

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	17,260
Balance carried forward to the next	32,693

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

SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The school admits children in the September after their fourth birthday. Most have attended the neighbouring playgroup. The part time nursery nurse also works at the playgroup, providing valuable continuity as children start school. There are four reception children this year accommodated in a mixed aged class with pupils in Years 1 and 2. At all times the teacher is supported by the nursery nurse or a teaching assistant. The teacher has a sound knowledge of the areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage and plans work that helps the children make steady progress towards the early learning goals. Although children are taught methodically and are provided with exercises and games to consolidate their learning, there are too few opportunities for them to apply their learning to role-play and real life situations. The classroom environment does not support, for example, theme areas such as shops, offices or surgeries where children book appointments, buy, sell and handle money or make lists. Access to modelling materials, writing activities, sand and water and role-play are limited to times planned by the teacher. This means that children are not learning in the most effective way and have few opportunities to apply their skills and develop new ones through independent learning. Children do not have easy access to outdoor play activities. The school has plans to improve this but the Local Education Authority has withheld the funds put aside for this purpose. The teaching is satisfactory overall.

The children's knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development were sampled rather than inspected. The teacher's planning shows that the curriculum for these aspects of learning is appropriate. **Knowledge and understanding of the world** is taught within history, geography and religious education with Years 1 and 2. The provision for religious education is good and children achieve well in this aspect of their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children have access to computers and use simple programs to support their learning. The children's work shows that they are beginning to have an understanding of time and the past and their place in their families. They have some idea of island life and are aware of features in their locality. During the week they learnt about tropical fruits and have an appropriate understanding of healthy food and the value of exercise. There is little evidence of provision for children to learn independently or to consolidate learning through play.

In **physical development** all the children manipulate tools accurately and cut their clock faces out with little support. Their control of writing tools is less well developed and some drawings are immature. For example, most children draw humans without bodies, attaching limbs to the face. In a very good swimming lesson, only the second lesson of the year, the teacher established the children's confidence so that they achieved very well. All were confident in getting their faces wet and most achieved a side entry to the pool rather than using the steps. In **creative development** children sing well in assemblies but no other music, construction work or painting was observed during the inspection. The children join in teacher-directed drama enthusiastically, for example becoming scampering, squeaking mice in a personal, social and health education lesson. There are few opportunities for independent role-play.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for the children's personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children and adults have very good relationships
- The adults teach children to take turns, share and care for each other very well
- There are limited opportunities for the children to select their activities take responsibility for their own learning

Commentary

27. The children quickly settle into the school routine because they are well supported by all adults. The children form friendships and some show a pleasing care for others. They work amicably alongside each other, share equipment and listen to their classmates in whole class discussion, although the girls rarely contribute to this. Children cope with the rigours of working alongside older pupils very well and all four show good self-control in whole class sessions. They have a strong sense of community and are beginning to understand that they are part of the village and the wider community. The teacher uses class discussion [circle time] well, helping children to empathise with the feelings of others. There are good links with religious education and children are encouraged to use the life and teachings of Jesus as a model for their own lives. The children have a secure understanding of right and wrong. The teacher has successfully enabled the children to have a good knowledge of how to keep safe. This was very evident when the children went swimming. Safety was paramount and very strict systems, combined with an expectation that the children themselves explain the impact of their actions, showed that children have a strong sense of self-care. Most aspects of this area of learning are taught well. The children have made good progress and are on line to meet the early learning goals for personal, social and emotional development by the end of their reception year in all aspects except their capacity for independent learning and exploring new ideas. This is because the teacher does not organise the children's learning to provide enough opportunities for children to work independently or to take responsibility for their learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reading is taught well and children are making good progress
- There are too few opportunities for children to write independently for practical purposes
- Children are taught to form letters accurately
- Technical vocabulary is taught well but communication skills are not developed sufficiently

Commentary

28. Most children start school with a limited vocabulary and many find it difficult to order words accurately when speaking and speaking skills are well below those expected of other children nationally. The boys in the present reception class are much more confident and have skills closer to the expectations for children of the same age but the girls are more reticent. The teacher is conscientious when teaching the children new words, especially technical vocabulary such as "author" and "illustrator", "introduction" and "phoneme". Children use this vocabulary with appropriate accuracy and understanding. Generally, however, the children rarely use complete sentences when speaking. They often use tenses incorrectly and fall back on a very limited general vocabulary in day-to-day speech. Words such as "thing" replace nouns and children often reply to questions with one word or a short phrase. Words are often shortened. No one in the class, which includes Year 1 and Year 2, for example, knew that "banana" began with "b". They referred to it as a "nana". Although children have plenty of opportunities to speak the teacher does not do enough to help them improve their communication skills on a day-to-day basis.

29. Focussed reading sessions with the teacher and teaching assistant or nursery nurse are effective and the more able children recognise several familiar words. Children are taught to recognise letters and the sounds they make. In the class literacy lessons the children listen attentively to the stories and sometimes volunteer information about the pictures or events. They take books home regularly and some learn new words from their reading books. The teaching of writing is less effective. Children sit down with an adult to practise handwriting skills and occasionally are asked to write independently. Although one child forms letters accurately and

constructs simple words and phrases independently, he rarely uses these skills and spends time colouring in letter sounds and practising letter formation. The teacher prescribes almost all writing activities. Children rarely write for their own purposes or for practical reasons. They do not have access to materials to make books, for example, or the need to make lists, write notes and labels or write to communicate independently. This hinders the children's understanding of the use of writing and generates an impression that all writing is work and part of a lesson. The teaching and learning of communication, language and literacy are sound overall and children make satisfactory progress but will not achieve the early learning goals by the end of their reception year.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematical skills are taught methodically and build on previous learning
- There are too few opportunities for children to learn through practical and relevant activities
- Children are acquiring a sound understanding of mathematical terms

Commentary

30. The children work with pupils in Years 1 and 2 at the beginning and end of each lesson. The teacher ensures that children are involved in some aspects of these sessions and matches some of her teaching to the children's level of understanding. Adult led group activities are planned to gradually develop the children's understanding of number, shape, space and measures. In a lesson during the inspection, for example, the children made clocks and practised recognising and making "o'clock" with them. Much of the whole-class work in this lesson was too difficult for the children but they responded well to the practical aspect of estimating the length of a minute. Discussion with the children during the group work shows that they recognise numerals to 12 and order them accurately. Their counting is less accurate, although one boy's work shows he has a sound understanding of number and adds and subtracts numbers within 10 with some accuracy. Although children are familiar with mathematical vocabulary, their understanding of position is not secure. In class discussion some did not understand the difference between "up" and "down" as the teacher described the position of the minute hand on the clock at half-past the hour or o'clock.
31. Mathematical games are used to consolidate learning and children complete worksheets matching sets of objects and numerals. There are games and equipment available for occasions such as wet playtimes that help to consolidate learning and enable the children to practice their skills. The adults use class routines to extend numeracy, for example when counting pupils as they line up or during registration. In spite of this, there are too few opportunities for the children to apply their knowledge, understanding and skills in practical activities. The classroom is geared towards table work and adult led activities and the teacher does not use play as a medium for teaching and learning new skills. As a result, concepts are taught rather than discovered through independent problem solving. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and children make sound progress. The majority of children will not achieve the early learning goals by the end of their reception year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

The school's provision for English is **good** for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 and **satisfactory** in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well below average in Year 2
- The teaching is good and sometimes very good in Years 3 to 6 and pupils make good progress
- Pupils' speaking skills are well below average throughout the school
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in Years 3 to 6

Commentary

32. Most join Year 1 with well below average language skills. Their speech is underdeveloped and most pupils have a limited vocabulary and little understanding of the structure of spoken speech, using incorrect tenses and sentence construction. The teacher and teaching assistants in Class 1 have good relationships with their pupils, helping to develop confidence in speech. They teach technical vocabulary well, ensuring that the pupils use it appropriately. For example, most pupils understand what an illustrator does and use the word in their lessons. In English lessons pupils are encouraged to extend their vocabulary, replacing "things" with more specific nouns, for example, and "nice" with interesting adjectives. Little is done to improve communication skills, however, and pupils rarely use complete sentences when replying to questions or in general conversation. Debate, "hot-seating" and drama are used extensively in Years 3 to 6. Technical vocabulary and a mature general vocabulary are promoted effectively. Pupils make good progress in their lessons and make an effort to use their skills when communicating. However, they tend to slip into less disciplined sentence construction and use a mundane vocabulary in their day-to-day communication, and grammatical conventions are not maintained. More could be done to promote good speaking skills throughout the school day.
33. There has been an improvement in the teaching of reading and pupils make good progress in relation to their abilities. The new reading scheme is popular with the pupils, and the systematic teaching of new words and letter sounds is helping the pupils to improve their skills. Regular reading at home supports learning well. However, the large number of pupils with special educational needs and the newness of the amended provision result in standards in reading that are still well below average in Year 2. Pupils, especially the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, make good progress in reading in Years 3 to 6. Pupils are expected to read for research and to support learning in other subjects. In a science lesson, for example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 used both observation and books to find the answers to their questions about plants. This independent learning has led to increased confidence and greater motivation. Pupils are taught the skills they need and have clear targets for learning. Older pupils maintain the good progress and achieve well. Pupils in Year 6 are reading as well as they should be. A pupil with a statement of special needs has made very good progress this year and is now reading simple texts with confidence. Pupils with average abilities are achieving the expected levels for their age.
34. The beginning and end of literacy lessons in Class 1 are appropriately planned to meet the needs of the majority of pupils. The teacher ensures that all pupils are included by directing questions to individuals. Pupils work in age groups when completing their writing tasks and there is some flexibility to accommodate different abilities in Year 1. There are opportunities for pupils to write stories and to develop their imagination but there is not enough direct teaching of secretarial skills beyond letter formation. The teacher's marking praises effort but there are no comments about handwriting, presentation, spelling or sentence construction. Pupils make satisfactory progress but this is not good enough to raise their standards from their well below average attainment on entry to the school. However, there are more boys than girls and two-thirds of the class have

special educational needs. The school is planning to adapt teaching to meet the different learning styles of the pupils.

35. The teaching of writing is good overall in Years 3 to 6 and some aspects are very good. Pupils make good progress so that by the time they are in Year 6 they are achieving as well as they can in relation to their overall abilities. Progress is particularly impressive in Year 3. Pupils' writing was poor in September but the teachers' well-structured teaching of skills, their high expectations and the use of interesting tasks have resulted in rapid improvement, in some cases from a few badly formed words to cursive, legible and well-structured text. Pupils now have a pride in their work and do their best. The teachers' marking is good, helping pupils to improve their work and showing appreciation of their achievements. Pupils have clear, relevant targets for improvement and the older pupils know what they need to do to achieve the next level in their writing. There are similar processes for all pupils, the majority having special educational needs. Most pupils with special educational needs thrive in this class and make very good progress. Several of these pupils are at the point of no longer needing additional support.
36. The subject management is satisfactory overall. While initiatives like improving the reading scheme have been successful, more has yet to be achieved in disseminating the best practice throughout the school in order to raise pupils' overall achievements.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

37. Technical vocabulary is promoted effectively in all subjects. The teacher for Years 1 and 2 uses the shared text in the literacy lesson effectively to promote healthy eating in her personal, social and health education lesson. The religious education lesson used the reason for storytelling as an introduction to the parables. Older pupils make very good use of research skills across the curriculum. In a very good English lesson, for example, the teacher used pupils as a Victorian maid and a modern domestic cleaner in a "hot-seating" exercise. Years 3 and 4 wrote an account from note taking and Years 5 and 6 used the information obtained from the domestic cleaner as a stimulus for persuasive writing. In both cases the pupils in the hot seat had done their own research to prepare for the lesson. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory in the infants and good in the juniors.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory** overall and good in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards attained in national tests at the end of Years 2 are well below average
- The teaching is good in Years 3 to 6 and these pupils achieve well
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress
- Most pupils in Years 1 and 2 lack confidence in problem solving and explaining their work

Commentary

38. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs depresses the overall performance in national tests. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Girls work at a quicker rate than boys and generally are more successful in national tests. Boys sometimes struggle to concentrate and lack confidence. Overall achievement is satisfactory but most pupils achieve well in number work, although standards are below average in this aspect of mathematics. Standards are well below average in other areas of mathematics with pupils struggling, particularly with new ideas and vocabulary. Pupils enjoy practical work but many find it difficult to record their work clearly and effectively and this results in some incorrect recording of answers. The rate of progress accelerates in Years 3 to 6 and pupils achieve well. Pupils benefit from often very good teaching which is challenging and effective, especially in developing their understanding of mathematical processes and problem solving. Those with special educational needs make very good progress, especially in Years 3 and 4,

because of high levels of expert support. Pupils of average ability achieve well and are on course to attain at least average standards in the national tests at the end of Year 6. Inspection evidence and school data indicate that standards are rising but more work is required to accelerate the learning of pupils in Years 1 and 2 through a more careful match of work. The school has set realistic and sufficiently challenging targets for performance in national tests in Year 6 and is on course to meet them. Overall provision for mathematics has improved since the previous inspection and standards are rising, especially in Years 3 to 6.

39. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory but the work set is not always challenging enough and the teacher's expectations of presentation and productivity are insufficiently high. Although lessons are prepared well, insufficient attention is given to providing activities and time limits to enable the pupils, especially boys, to focus on the tasks. As a result, work is not always finished and productivity levels are low. Conversely the work set in Years 3 to 6 is challenging and well paced and learning is brisk and purposeful. The teacher has high expectations and very good support for pupils of all ages and abilities ensures that rapid gains are made in learning and that achievement, especially in problem solving and using mathematical processes, is very good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and make good use of the techniques and guidance in the National Numeracy Strategy. Care is taken in planning lessons and preparing good resources to enhance the pupils' understanding. Brisk and purposeful starters reinforce mental arithmetic skills well. The rigorous questioning by the teacher and support staff in Years 3 to 6 keeps the pupils on their toes and provides a good means for checking on progress and understanding. These question and answer sessions are used well to identify pupils' understanding and plan the next steps in learning. High expectations result in well presented work and a growth in pupils' confidence and competence in solving complex problems. The pupils enjoy lessons and respond enthusiastically, working hard and taking care to be accurate. Lessons have very good pace and, because explanations are as clear as crystal, pupils are left in no doubt about what to do and how to improve. Especially effective is the teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those with statements because the lessons are designed to move learning on in small steps making good use of practical objects such as plumb lines and spirit levels when teaching about coordinates. Homework is used well to encourage pupils to practise and become secure in basic number work. Teachers use ICT effectively to support mathematics and the pupils enjoy using computers to find solutions to problems. Marking is accurate and often at the start of lessons the teachers review what has been learned and provide additional guidance based on their findings. However, target setting and its link with marking are at an early stage of development.
40. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily and there has been some monitoring of pupils' work and teaching. The headteacher has analysed test data and set challenging targets to raise standards. However, more support is needed to develop teaching in Years 1 and 2 to accelerate pupils' learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

41. Mathematics is used satisfactorily to support work in other subjects. In science, the teachers encourage pupils to make use of graphs and charts when recording experiments and this enhances pupils' understanding of how the weather impacts on road accidents. Pupils make appropriate use of tallying when collecting information and apply their knowledge of coordinates when reading maps in geography. In design and technology, the pupils measure accurately when designing and making models.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory** overall and good in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards attained in national tests are well below average at the end of Year 2
- Overall achievement is satisfactory and very good in Years 3 to 6
- Teaching is very good in Years 3 to 6

Commentary

42. Since the previous inspection standards have begun to show improvement, especially in Years 3 to 6, where pupils of all abilities and ages achieve well and make very good progress. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make steady progress in learning about the natural world and know the names of parts of plants; this work is enhanced through observations in the school's garden. Pupils learn about a variety of materials but lack confidence in explaining their properties. Average and more able pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a secure grasp of life and living processes and competently talk about forces, materials and their properties. They are good at presenting their work making use of graphs and charts and writing in a scientific way which is clear and factual. They also make good use of the computer to research information and present their findings. Those with special educational needs are very well supported in lessons and this enables them to participate fully and to grasp new scientific ideas and vocabulary so that they keep up with their classmates. The school has a well planned curriculum and the strong emphasis on practical work and investigation is proving successful in motivating pupils and helping them to develop an understanding of scientific processes. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs means that overall performance in national tests is low. Inspection evidence shows that average and more able pupils are on course to attain at least average standards at the end of Year 6. Boys and girls perform at similar levels although girls are more articulate in explaining scientific ideas than boys. The work set often relates to the pupils' experience of rural life and this brings the teaching to life and makes learning relevant.
43. Teaching is satisfactory overall and very good in Years 3 to 6 where the teacher provides inspiring challenges which bring learning to life. For example, in a lesson about photosynthesis the pupils scanned in pictures of tulip petals so that they might compare decay over a period of time using computer images to compare with actual petals. Lessons are planned well and good use is made of equipment to make learning fun. The challenging tasks and questions by the teacher move the learning on and encourage the pupils to form hypotheses based on good scientific investigation. Much is expected of the pupils and the teacher insists on high standards of presentation and good levels of productivity. Although the teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory there are some areas for development including expecting more of the pupils in accurately and neatly presenting their work. Lessons are planned thoroughly but the teacher does not always take sufficient account of the range of abilities and the different ways in which pupils learn. Throughout the school marking is accurate and includes praise, but there are few instances of targets being used to guide pupils on what to do to improve.
44. Leadership and management of the subject have improved since the previous inspection but not enough is done to ensure consistency in the teaching between the classes. The school makes satisfactory use of test data and assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses. Resources are good and the school makes good use of visits to extend pupils' interest in science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is good, enhanced by very good resources
- Pupils attain average standards and achieve well
- Leadership and management are good
- Computers are used well to support pupils' work in other subjects

Commentary

45. Progress for pupils of all abilities is good in developing and using the full range of skills in ICT. The school's very good resources are used in class lessons and across the curriculum to provide ample opportunities for the pupils to develop a good range of skills and techniques. Pupils thoroughly enjoy using computers and the subject contributes much to their spiritual, moral,

social and cultural development as they work together, share ideas and collaborate when researching information. Boys and girls are equally successful.

46. The school's well structured guidance for the teaching of ICT and good staff training has resulted in improved standards and provision since the previous inspection. Pupils respond well to the introduction of new skills and are quick and eager learners. They have secure skills in word processing and use the computer's tools to draft, edit and refine their work. The pupils competently use spreadsheets and databases, working accurately when putting in data and making good use of formulae to calculate. They have appropriate skills for their age in control technology and confidently program a simple robot to move, turn and perform other functions. They make good links in this work with their skills in estimation in mathematics. Pupils readily access the Internet and are aware of the benefits and dangers of this research tool.
47. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are planned well and good use is made of support staff to encourage pupils with special educational needs so that they take a full part in lessons. Lesson plans in a variety of subjects often incorporate ICT. Pupils are permitted to work independently and use their initiative so that the subject contributes well to personal, social and emotional development. Teachers make satisfactory use of assessment to identify pupils with good skills or those lacking confidence and they use the information to plan work that is matched to pupils' needs. The tasks set are challenging and the more able pupils receive sufficiently demanding work. The pupils are keen to learn and enthusiastic about the school's ICT suite and opportunities to use computers. They concentrate well and listen to instructions. Teachers are clear in their explanations and pupils are left in no doubt about what is required. Lessons have good pace and time limits are used well to keep the momentum of learning moving.
48. The subject is led and managed effectively, standards have improved since the previous inspection and the school has good plans for further development. Training needs have been met well and staff share ideas and good practice effectively. There is a good policy regarding the safe use of the Internet.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

49. Pupils use ICT effectively in a range of subjects and this enhances their progress and understanding in a variety of skills. Teachers often bring lessons to life through using the Internet to provide simulations to illustrate historical events, such in Years 1 and 2 when they study the Great Fire of London and with older pupils when comparing life during the Second World War with today. In mathematics, pupils use programs linked to their work on coordinates to reinforce their understanding. Pupils' knowledge of graphs and charts in mathematics is enhanced through their use of spreadsheets and databases in collecting and collating information. In English, the pupils apply skills of word processing to editing and refining their work.

HUMANITIES

Two lessons were seen in religious education and one in history but none in geography. In addition, inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work, examined teachers' planning and talked with the subject leaders and pupils about the school's work in humanities.

Analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils show that **geography** receives sufficient coverage and that pupils make satisfactory gains in knowledge of key geographical skills. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 compare life in the Fens with the imaginary Isle of Struay. They identify key features within their community and also talk about their route to school and to the nearest main towns. In Years 3 to 6 the work is linked well to local studies with a focus on rivers, farming and the environment. Learning is brought to life through visits to places such as Snipedales where pupils analyse soil samples and study the effects of humankind on the environment. They have studied settlements on the river Severn and know about the water cycle. Their work in mathematics on coordinates helps with the development of mapping skills. Pupils make appropriate use of ICT to research information about other countries.

In **history**, pupils in Years 1 and 2 compare holidays today with those in the past and have a satisfactory knowledge of their personal history and that of their families. In Years 3 to 6 the pupils study a good range of historical periods and have a secure grasp of life in Victorian times. They understand the way that life has changed for children since the nineteenth century. Pupils know that Britain has been invaded many times and the impact made by the Vikings on the locality. Opportunities to carry out research using computers, artefacts and books enhance pupils' appreciation of different sources of evidence. In their work on World War Two they explore similarities and differences in housing and the impact of the blitz on society. In the good lesson seen, the pupils were fascinated by the teacher's anecdotal evidence and artefacts such as a gas mask were used well to bring learning to life.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is good and pupils make good progress
- The curriculum is extended to reflect the Christian ethos of the school
- The achievements of the oldest pupils are in line with the expectations of the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus

Commentary

50. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a good knowledge of the major events in the life of Jesus. They are familiar with the symbols and artefacts related to churches and the use of the font, pulpit and altar. They understand the symbolism of the crucifix. Pupils in Year 2 have discussed Jesus' attitude to the soldiers at His crucifixion and understand what this teaches about forgiveness. Pupils' perception of issues, demonstrated in their books, is far greater than their skills in recording their work and their ability to communicate their understanding clearly. Teaching and learning are good in Class 1 because of the teacher's high expectations of her pupils' understanding.

51. Older pupils move beyond the acquisition of knowledge to exploring the impact of faith on their lives. In a good lesson in Class 2, pupils established the link between faith and action. The use of a picture of footprints in the sand and the discussion of pupils' personal journeys and the journeys of Jesus prompted an understanding of what it means to follow Jesus. Pupils achieved well in this lesson. Pupils' books show good use of research to explore aspects of Christianity and other major religions. There are some thoughtful comparisons between faiths and common issues are identified. For example, pupils have compared creation stories and beliefs about life after death. Common themes such as celebrations, rules and worship are explored and compared. In almost all examples pupils have been encouraged to express their response to their learning. This is a strength of the provision and makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve well.

52. The subject is managed well. The school makes good use of local places of worship and older pupils visit a mosque and the cathedral in Peterborough to support their learning. The spiritual acts of worship, often led by visitors from local churches or the diocese, enhance the Christian aspects of the curriculum.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Inspectors observed two physical education lessons (both swimming) but none in art and design, music and design and technology. In addition, inspectors looked at teachers' planning and talked to the teachers and pupils about the subjects. They also looked at a range of completed work. The planning for all the subjects meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and there are regular opportunities to study each subject. The school has well crafted schemes of work and skills,

knowledge and understanding are developed consistently. Evidence from the work observed shows that boys and girls are working at similar levels which are appropriate for their age.

Pupils enjoy **music** and sing well in assemblies. There is a range of opportunities for the pupils to take part in musical productions and to join with pupils from other schools in musical festivals. The subject is supported with a good range of instruments and pupils have plenty of access to tuned percussion instruments. They listen to an appropriate variety of music from a range of cultures and styles. The staff provide well planned opportunities for the pupils to develop their skills and techniques in **art and design**. Pupils know about the work of several famous artists and produce good work in the style of Mondrian and Klimt, successfully creating a blend of colours using a variety of techniques. They carefully observe objects and living things to produce still life drawings, paintings and three-dimensional work. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have opportunities to join in an art club and produce good water colours having learned how to stretch paper to avoid distortion in their work. The pupils enjoy art and the subject contributes well to their spiritual and cultural development. Some good work was seen in **design and technology**. Pupils enjoy practical activities and work hard. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils make interesting toys using simple pulleys for Incy Wincey Spider. Their work shows care and good planning. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a good grasp of the design process and experiment with a variety of skills and techniques to produce well crafted objects. Having explored commercial packaging, they design their own packages to contain a variety of products. Much thought goes into logos and labelling, making good use of their computer skills to produce well designed work. Pupils use their mathematical skills well in design and technology, measuring accurately and drawing plans, taking care to use right angles and straight lines. They are good at evaluating their work and this links well with their literacy skills as they carefully explain the process of construction and write about ways they might improve their work. The subject contributes well to pupils' social development as they cooperate and collaborate on topics.

Although no **physical education** lessons were observed in school, swimming was inspected. The school has access to swimming lessons in Spalding for at least one term every year. The whole school, including children in the reception class, have weekly lessons. The provision is organised very well and the school makes good use of the effective swimming instructor at the pool. As a result, almost all pupils from Year 3 onwards have at least basic swimming skills, essential in this locality. The youngest pupils and non-swimmers are taught very well. The Class 1 teacher is a qualified instructor and has very good subject knowledge. Safety is paramount and pupils are expected to obey safety rules at all times. She has very good relationships with the pupils and ensures that they are not under any pressure. As a result, after only one lesson, all pupils are confident to put their faces under water and walk, jump and hop from one side of the trainer pool to the other. The teaching assistant, also qualified, gives very good support and her humour and confidence supports pupils very effectively. This lesson was very well planned and all pupils made rapid progress. Inexperienced swimmers worked with the instructor and made good progress during the lesson. More experienced pupils, working with the part time teacher in Class 2, made less progress. They were working to develop their swimming stamina but were given little help to control their breathing. Pupils' had very good attitudes throughout the session. The youngest pupils, when they forgot the rules, were questioned about why they had to leave the pool. They were in no doubt about their misdemeanours and were suitably chastened! The provision for swimming is very good and made very effective because of the very good care of the pupils and the pupils' good behaviour and attitudes.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

One lesson was seen in **personal, social and health education**. Each class has dedicated time during the week where pupils discuss issues as diverse as honesty and healthy living. There is a well-structured curriculum to develop the subject and very good links with both religious education and science. The school's healthy living initiative has had an impact on the pupils of both classes. In Class 1 pupils are establishing a clear understanding of the need for a healthy diet. The subject has been explored in more depth in Class 2 as pupils identify the attributes of different types of food. Pupils learn about the use and abuse of drugs and alcohol abuse and the nurse supports sex education for pupils in Year 6. Younger pupils are taught how to keep safe, about "stranger danger" and the care needed with medicines. The strength of the provision is the consistent emphasis on

personal values. The strong Christian ethos of the school is the foundation for establishing personal and social values. This is simply explored in Class 1 where pupils study people who help them and look at ways they can help others, for example the school caretaker. Older pupils look at desirable attributes such as honesty and self-esteem. They discuss issues relating to relationships and explore feelings about being left out, gang pressure and how to say "no". The consistent values promoted throughout the school have had a major impact on pupils' behaviour and relationships and have helped to establish the caring, orderly and calm ethos in school and the significant improvements in the pupils' attitudes and relationships.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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

