

INSPECTION REPORT

The Harlaxton CE Primary School

Harlaxton – Grantham

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120525

Headteacher: Mrs. S. Dixon

Lead inspector: Mr M.J.Johnstone

Dates of inspection: 22nd to 24th March 2004

Inspection number: 264804

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
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	203
School address:	Swinehill Harlaxton Grantham Lincolnshire
Postcode:	NG32 1HT
Telephone number:	01476 561077
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. S.M.Taylor
Date of previous inspection:	2.11.98

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This Church of England voluntary controlled primary school is situated in the village of Harlaxton, close to Grantham in Lincolnshire. It is about the same size as other primary schools with 203 pupils on roll, including almost equal numbers of boys and girls. At the time of the inspection, there were 36 children in the Foundation Stage including 27 who attend full time in the Reception class and nine who attend part-time in a pre-school class. Almost all of the pupils are of white UK heritage. There are two pupils who have English as an additional language. Their first language is Kurdish. There are no lunchtime meals served in the authority but the percentage known to be eligible for free school meals is below average.

Very few of the pupils come from the village itself. The large majority come from housing on the Leicestershire border, outlying tiny hamlets and isolated farms, and Grantham. Socio-economic indicators are broadly average. Attainment on entry is usually average with the full range of ability present. Current indicators, however, suggest that the Reception children this year came in with above average attainment. About 13 per cent of the pupils (broadly average) have special educational needs. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. Pupil mobility is above average, particularly for pupils entering the school in Year 5. The school received the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Investors in People and school Achievement Awards in 2002

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21114	Malcolm Johnstone	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Personal, social and health education
19692	Bob Folks	Lay inspector	
4287	Brian Allaway	Team inspector	English Science Physical education Religious education Special educational needs
23686	Pamela White	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage English as an additional language Information and communication technology Geography History Music

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Although there are good features, **the school is providing a satisfactory education overall.** Pupils of all abilities achieve well in reading, speaking and listening, mathematics and science though overall achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and they develop a mature attitude to work. Teaching is generally satisfactory and sometimes good. The school is competently led and managed and provides reasonable value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- In reading, speaking and listening, mathematics, science and art and design pupils attain high standards by the end of Year 6
- Standards are not high enough in writing and ICT
- The headteacher has created a good ethos where there is clear concern and support for all pupils and staff
- Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage, Years 2 and 6 and there is some very good teaching in Year 2
- While the school has a general view of how well it is doing, the monitoring of pupils' progress, standards, teaching and learning is not rigorous enough
- Assessment is not used effectively enough to plan the next stages of learning
- The school develops pupils' personal and social education well. Pupils behave well and have very good attitudes to their work
- Participation in sports and the arts and opportunities for learning outside the school day are very good

Since the school was inspected in 1998 the rate of improvement has been satisfactory. Standards by the end of Year 6 have risen at a rate that is similar to the national trend. There are now better systems to monitor teaching and to track pupils' progress. Assessment procedures in English and mathematics are now satisfactory. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning is not rigorous enough and, in all subjects, assessment is not used consistently and effectively enough to plan what pupils do next. Although there has been improvement, standards in ICT remain low and pupils have underachieved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Attainment on entry to the school is usually average with a full range of ability present. However, most of the current Reception children came into school with above average attainment. They are making good progress and are likely to meet all the early learning goals that are set for them with almost a half set to exceed them. Standards in Year 2 are above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics and pupils are making good progress. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve standards in mathematics and science that are above

the national average and at least comparable with those in similar schools. There are not as many more able pupils this year and consequently standards are not quite as high as those achieved in the 2003 tests. While standards in speaking and listening and reading are above average, standards and pupils' achievements in writing are unsatisfactory. Standards are below average in information and communication technology (ICT) and pupils underachieve. Good support for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) ensures that they make good progress towards the targets set for them. Pupils do well in art and design and achieve high standards. In all other subjects, standards are broadly average.

Pupils' have very positive attitudes to all that the school offers and their behaviour is good. Relationships are particularly strong and pupils are mature, sensible and friendly. **The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.** Attendance is above the national average and pupils arrive at school punctually.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school is providing an acceptable standard of education. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with good teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes and in Year 2 and Year 6. Mathematics is taught well and the teaching of English is satisfactory. Relationships are very good and pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively and independently. Most resources are used well to assist learning. Assessment and target setting are not used effectively enough to plan what pupils do next. Some untidy work is accepted and marking does not often show pupils how they might improve.

The school provides a good curriculum and opportunities for enrichment through extra-curricular activities, sport and the arts are very good. Care, guidance and support are good and the school has a good partnership with parents and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. The headteacher is well respected by parents and staff and has created a good ethos, an interesting and stimulating curriculum and has a clear commitment to the care and support of the pupils and staff. The systems to check upon the quality of teaching and learning, however, are not stringent enough to bring about substantial improvement. Financial control and routine administration are good. The governors fulfil their statutory duties effectively and support the school well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The large majority of parents are pleased with what the school does for their children. The pupils say that they like school and feel safe and secure. They are confident that, should they have any concerns, there is always an adult who will listen and help them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The headteacher, staff and governors should now:

- Raise standards in writing and information and communication technology
- Ensure a more rigorous and consistent approach to the monitoring of standards, pupils' progress, teaching and learning
- Make more effective use of assessment, marking and target setting to plan what pupils do next

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

While there are variations between subjects, standards and achievement for pupils of all abilities are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In speaking and listening, reading, mathematics, science and art and design, standards are above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well
- Standards are not high enough in writing and information and communications technology (ICT) and pupils underachieve
- Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage (FS)
- Consistently good and often very good teaching in Year 2 is improving standards by the end of Year 2

Commentary

1 The attainment of the children when they start at the school varies from average to above average from year to year. The attainment on entry of the current group of children is above average with the full range of ability present. The children generally achieve well and by the time they start Year 1, all the children are likely to achieve the goals set for them in each of the areas of learning with almost a half of the children exceeding them.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.4 (15.5)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.5 (14.1)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.6 (15.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2 Standards in the national tests have fluctuated at the end of Year 2 over the past three years and generally pupils have not achieved as well as they should. Girls have tended not to do as well as boys over that time. In the 2003 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 standards were above the national average in reading, average in writing and below average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, standards were not high enough in writing and mathematics and pupils should have achieved more. Two new teachers in Year 1 and 2 are having a good effect on the achievements of the pupils and, particularly in Year 2, there are promising signs of improvement in standards and pupils' achievements. Standards are above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. There was no evidence of any significant difference in the standards of the boys and girls.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.8 (28.6)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	29.1 (30.4)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.0 (29.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3 Over the past three years, pupils at the end of Year 6 have done particularly well in mathematics and science. In relation to their prior attainment, achievement has been at least good and often very good for pupils of all abilities, including the more able and those who have special educational needs (SEN). This has not been the case in English. While pupils have generally done well in speaking and listening and reading, and achieved well, overall standards have been below the national average and achievement unsatisfactory in writing. In all subjects, there has been no significant difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls. Standards in the 2003 national tests and the work pupils were doing during the inspection largely reflected this trend in standards and achievement. Standards for pupils in the current Year 6 are above rather than well above average in mathematics and science since there are not quite as many more able pupils. In English, standards remain high in speaking and listening but are below average in writing. The two pupils who have English as an additional language receive effective additional support and make good progress.

4 In mathematics, pupils develop very good numeracy skills and quick and accurate recall of basic number facts. There is good coverage of other aspects of the mathematics curriculum, although more could be done to develop pupils' use and application of mathematics. Pupils do well in developing the skills of scientific enquiry and have a good scientific vocabulary. Pupils' have impressive speaking and listening skills and use them well in discussions across all subjects. They read well and have good research skills. Weaknesses in writing hamper their achievements in subjects such as history, geography and religious education.

5 Standards in ICT are below average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and, while some improvements have been initiated, there has not been enough progress to raise standards to national expectations. Some pockets of work of a satisfactory standard were seen during the inspection but overall pupils underachieve in the subject. Given the high standards in mathematics and science, standards in the subject are not high enough. In religious education, standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils' achievements are satisfactory.

6 Evidence collected in art and design indicates that work is generally better than is normally seen and pupils achieve well. In all other subjects, the work seen during the inspection was similar to that expected for pupils' age and achievement is satisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attitudes to school are very good and they behave well. The provision for personal development, including pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a very strong work ethic and want to do well
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and pupils are keen to help others
- Pupils' social development is very good
- Relationships are very good and pupils of all abilities and ethnic groups get on well together

Commentary

7 The pupils have very good attitudes to learning and take a full part in the many and varied activities available. In lessons, they concentrate and participate very well. The school has high expectations of pupils' conduct and the pupils respond very well to this. The pupils work well independently and in pairs and small groups. They work hard and do their best to please the teachers. Relationships within the school are particularly good and the adults provide good role models. The resulting harmonious atmosphere makes a considerable contribution to the pupils' learning.

8 The pupils are well behaved at all times and this is evident at playtimes and lunchtimes. The pupils socialise very well together. No bullying or harassment was seen during the inspection and the parents confirmed that any incidents are handled well by the school. Behaviour was regarded as good at the last inspection but attitudes to lessons have improved. There have been no exclusions in the last few years.

9 Pupils willingly take responsibility. This was well demonstrated by the high percentage of older pupils who take part in the Scheme to Help Others for Under Twenties (S.H.O.U.T), which encourages them to become responsible citizens and to take ownership of the community. Many of their activities in the village of Harlaxton to improve the environment, such as flower planting and litter picking, illustrate this well. The assembly presented by Year 6 during the inspection about the hardship and sacrifices parents may have to make, and the true values of friendship, was extremely well presented to the rest of the pupils.

10 Social development is very good. The pupils relate very well to other people and show respect for people, living things, property and the environment. The residential visits by pupils in Years 5 and 6 and active participation in a varied sporting programme helps to develop their social skills very well. In lessons there is strong encouragement for pupils to work collaboratively in order to achieve a common end.

11 Moral and spiritual development is good. The pupils can clearly distinguish right from wrong and this knowledge is reinforced in assemblies, lessons and at playtimes. The school provides them with a clear moral code, which is well understood, as demonstrated by the Year 6 assembly. Assemblies contribute considerably to the spiritual atmosphere in the school and help the pupils to understand how their actions may affect other people and to know how they may feel in these situations. Cultural development is satisfactory. It is well developed in the appreciation of a wide range of artists from this and other countries and the pupils have a good appreciation of their own heritage. However, this aspect of pupils' development is less evident in music. The school does address Judaism and Islam and the pupils have visited Leicester to see the Diwali lights but the opportunities to learn about and appreciate the values and beliefs of other cultures are limited.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	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.

12 Attendance is above the national average and unauthorised absences are better than the national average. Procedures are good and statutory requirements are met. Punctuality is good. There were no exclusions in the last academic year

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory overall.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Against a backdrop of staff changes involving the loss of experienced staff, improvements in the quality of teaching reported at the time of the previous inspection have been largely maintained.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in the FS, Years 2 and 6 with some very good teaching in Year 2
- Mathematics and science are taught well and pupils achieve good standards
- Pupils have a very good work ethic that supports their learning effectively
- Relationships are very good and pupils respect their teachers
- There are weaknesses in the teachers' expertise and confidence to teach ICT
- Assessment, marking and target setting are not used effectively enough to plan what pupils do next

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3 (9%)	18 (51%)	13 (37%)	1(3%)	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

13 Much of the teaching in the Foundation Stage (FS) is good and enables pupils of all abilities to progress well. The Reception teacher and the nursery nurse, who takes charge of the nursery class, plan and work together effectively. On some occasions pupils are not given enough opportunities to explore for themselves and the learning potential in some activities is not sufficiently exploited.

14 The teaching of mathematics is good across the school. There is a high degree of consistency of approach and all lessons have the recommended three-part structure. Pupils' mental agility with number is developed well in quick-fire opening sessions and work in ability groups usually offers appropriate challenge. The teaching of English is satisfactory overall. In both English and mathematics lessons plenary sessions that draw together what has been learnt and how this might develop are good. Lessons are planned using national guidance and structured reasonably well. Speaking and listening are developed well across the school and reading is taught well. In these aspects of learning pupils achieve well. The teaching of writing, however, is unsatisfactory and pupils' achievements should be better. Science is well taught with good emphasis on scientific enquiry.

15 In all year groups and subjects teachers consistently share with pupils what they are expected to learn at the outset of lessons. This ensures that they understand what they need to do and quickly begin the activities planned for them. Questioning of pupils is well focused and helps them to explain their thinking, for example, in mathematics when talking about the various strategies they have used to solve a problem. The correct subject vocabulary is encouraged, for example, in science. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour, relationships are very good and there is strong encouragement for pupils to participate in all activities. These features impact well on pupils' attitudes to learning and have established a very good work ethic across all subjects. Resources such as overhead projectors, whiteboards, and structural apparatus in mathematics support learning

well and add interest to lessons. Computers, however, are not used enough to support learning in all subjects. While teachers' subject knowledge is generally sound in most subjects, there are weaknesses in the teaching of writing and ICT.

16 Pupils who have SEN are taught well and given good attention in lessons. They make particularly good progress when receiving additional support from the SEN teaching assistant who is also the governor responsible for SEN. The support given by teaching assistants and teachers ensures that pupils receive help which relates closely to the targets in their IEPs. Pupils receive well-targeted teaching in small groups within the class or in small withdrawal groups and this helps them achieve well at these times. The SEN governor, who is also a special needs teaching assistant, has a very good overview of the teaching arrangements for the pupils and together with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) they monitor pupils' progress carefully.

17 Assessment overall is unsatisfactory and there has been insufficient improvement since the previous inspection. Satisfactory systems track pupils' progress in English and mathematics but there are no whole-school systems in other subjects. This makes it difficult to ensure that skills are developed from one year to the next. In lessons generally teachers use questioning well to test pupils' understanding and plenary sessions often encourage pupils to discuss what they have learnt. However, this information is not used effectively to plan what pupils do next. Target setting is at an early stage of development and is not yet effective in developing more focused learning for individual pupils. Whilst pupils' work is marked regularly, there are few comments that show pupils how their work might be improved.

The curriculum

The curriculum provided by the school is good. The breadth of curricular opportunities is good and the opportunities for enrichment is very good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils who have SEN is good
- Subjects are linked effectively to enhance learning
- Progression in learning cannot be guaranteed since there are deficiencies in the use of assessment in most subjects

Commentary

18 The curriculum meets statutory requirements including provision for religious education and collective worship. There are appropriate policies for sex and relationships education, drugs and racial equality. The curriculum provides good equality of opportunity with all pupils involved in all that the school has to offer. There is a good programme to develop pupils' personal, social and health education, (PSHE) including regular circle times and specific PSHE lessons. There is a particularly effective series of activities for pupils in Year 5 and 6 designed to develop ideas of citizenship (see subject section on this aspect). There are very good opportunities for pupils to be involved in sports and the arts. During the inspection, for example, the pupils in Year 6 had been highly successful in a regional choral speaking event. The school is also known in the area for its success in inter-school football, cricket, swimming and rounders.

19 The curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage is good and is planned effectively in all the areas of learning. Children make good progress and develop into proficient and well-motivated learners.

20 Overall, the curriculum has developed well since the previous inspection and, given the staff changes over that time, the school has been responsive to innovation and has looked at ways of improving provision further. There is good use of visitors to the school and visits outside to enrich

work in most subjects and to add a further dimension. Subjects are effectively linked and this gives the learning more meaning for the pupils. There is an appropriate and strong emphasis on English and mathematics. Adoption of national subject guidance has given greater structure and consistency to planning in all subjects. The use of assessment data in most subjects, however, is not used effectively enough to plan the next stages of learning and monitoring of the curriculum is not stringent enough to guarantee that key skills develop progressively across key stages and year groups.

21 Throughout the school, there is good provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN). Procedures for identifying and supporting pupils with SEN are good. As a result of early intervention, there are very few pupils in Years 5 and 6 who require extra help. Individual education plans (IEPs) are maintained well. They are supported well and good intervention strategies ensure that support is quickly forthcoming.

22 The number of teachers with sufficient expertise to teach the subjects of the curriculum is reasonable. The number of good teaching assistants is small but additional teaching support for Years 1 to 6 is minimal. The accommodation is satisfactory overall with good outside facilities. The current temporary classrooms for Years 4, 5 and 6 are due for replacement in the next academic year. Resources are adequate, although there are some shortages in equipment for ICT.

Care, guidance and support

The school has maintained the good care, guidance and support noted at the time of the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong and caring ethos where there is clear concern for the individual
- Pupils are well involved in school life
- Induction procedures are good
- Staff know the pupils well and the very good relationships ensure that pupils feel safe, secure and valued
- Pupils' personal achievement is monitored well but the monitoring of their academic progress is less successful.

Commentary

23 The school has good procedures for child protection and they are sensitively and effectively applied. Health and safety procedures are good and there is regular involvement by governors. Building and site inspections are undertaken each term. Portable electrical equipment and fire and gym equipment are inspected regularly.

24 Support from outside specialist agencies is mixed, with good support from the Educational Behaviour Support Services. Good learning support is provided for pupils with special educational needs, which the school buys in. However, there is no support from an educational psychologist at the moment and speech therapy is very limited.

25 The pupils' personal achievement, such as sporting success is well monitored and recorded but academic progress is less successful. Although pupils' academic progress is monitored and recorded it not yet used to identify specific areas for improvement linked to individual targets.

26 Induction procedures for children joining the school are good and this ensures that they settle quickly into school routines.

27 The staff know the pupils well and each pupil is able to approach more than one adult to seek help and advice. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and cared for. Parents are pleased with the way that the school looks after their children. The procedures for seeking pupils' views and encouraging their involvement in the school are mostly good. The many pupils who attend

S.H.O.U.T. illustrate this very well and their suggestions about how to improve school and also Harlaxton village are evidence of this. To further improve pupils' participation, the school is in the process of setting up a School Council.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established a good partnership with parents and links with the community. Links with other schools are satisfactory overall. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are provided with good information about what is happening in school
- There is a flourishing Parent Teacher and Friends Association.
- Good links with the community support pupils' learning well

28 The parents who attended the pre-inspection parents meeting were positive about the school. The questionnaires were similarly supportive in almost all areas. A small minority of parents expressed some concerns about how well they were informed about their children's progress, about being consulted generally and the arrival procedures at the beginning of the school day.

29 The inspectors looked closely at these concerns. There are not as many opportunities for a formal meeting about pupils' progress as is found in most schools. However, the close relationships between the school and parents and the "Open Door" policy, provides well for discussion on an informal basis. The start of the school day was observed and the arrangements made were considered to be satisfactory. Everyone appeared to be taking care to ensure the safety of the children who were allowed into the school at ten minutes to nine.

30 The information provided to parents overall is considered to be good. The school prospectus and annual governors report to parents are well-presented and informative documents. Regular letters and newsletters are sent out to parents to keep them informed of events in the school. The coverage books and reading records are considered to very good and ensure that parents know the work to be covered and allow them to correspond with the school if they wish. However, the annual report on each pupil's progress, although satisfying statutory requirements, does not always contain information on how pupils' work might be improved, particularly in the main subjects.

31 The school has a flourishing and active Parent Teacher and Friends Association. They organise many fund-raising and social events throughout the year and help to provide very useful funds to buy extra equipment and resources for the school.

32 The school has good links with the local community and with the Parish Church of St. Peter's. Pupils are often seen around the village on projects and have regular contact with the village shop and Post Office and the local postman. There are also very good links with Belvoir Estate and a close relationship with the University of Evansville at Harlaxton Manor and the American students who attend. Links with comprehensive schools and particularly the Technical College are good but are not as strong with grammar schools in the area. Links with industry exist through Belvoir Estate, local farms and ASDA.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides good pastoral leadership for staff and pupils
- The headteacher has created a broad and stimulating curriculum
- The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and financial management is good
- Monitoring has improved but is not focused sharply enough to bring about sustained improvement
- The school development plan is not specific enough

33 The headteacher is well respected by staff and parents and ensures that the school makes a significant contribution to village life. The headteacher has created a broad and stimulating curriculum and has established a positive ethos in which pupils' behaviour is good and their attitudes to their work are very positive. The school is a well-ordered community where the pupils feel valued and secure.

34 Since the previous inspection there have been some improvements in the monitoring of teaching and learning through lesson observations conducted by the headteacher and senior staff within the performance management cycle. However, the systems to check upon the quality of teaching and learning are not rigorous enough to bring about substantial improvement, especially in writing and ICT. The school's self-evaluation procedures and use of performance data have effectively identified the need to raise standards in the pupils' writing to bring them in line with the good standards in mathematics and science. This evaluation has not yet led to any significant improvements. The school plans to work with the local education authority's (LEA) literacy consultants to tackle this weakness.

35 Currently the school has no deputy headteacher. However, the members of a recently formed senior management team provide good role models for other staff and pupils and support the headteacher well. Recent staff changes and the appointment of two newly qualified teachers have led to a re-distribution of co-ordinator responsibilities. This has necessitated the headteacher taking on responsibility for four key subjects. New co-ordinators have undertaken an analysis of their subjects and have generally produced effective action plans. In English, the action plan does not focus enough on what needs to be done to bring about improvements in the pupils' writing. The newly qualified teachers are receiving regular and well-informed support from their mentors. Their induction to the school is good. The leadership and management of SEN and the Foundation Stage are good.

36 Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and are well informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have established effective links with subject co-ordinators and keep the school development plan (SDP) under review. The SEN governor is also a special support assistant in the school and has a strong working relationship with the special educational needs co-ordinator. This ensures that the progress of pupils with SEN is monitored closely. Governors make prudent use of the budget and monitor spending in line with the priorities in the SDP. They have a reasonable understanding of best value principles and are beginning to hold the school more accountable for the quality of education that it provides.

37 The management of the school is good. Day-to-day systems run smoothly. All members of staff have a clear understanding of the school's routines and this creates a well-organised school in which the pupils are happy to learn. Despite recent changes to the staffing, there is effective teamwork throughout the school. Training for staff is selected carefully to ensure their ongoing professional development.

38 Governors and staff are involved in the construction of the school development plan (SDP), which identifies a range of appropriate areas for further action. However, the plan lacks the

necessary detail to enable the school to be clear about exactly what needs to be done to raise standards further. The SDP does not include success criteria or any indication of how progress towards agreed goals will be measured.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	433,850
Total expenditure	423,850
Expenditure per pupil	1,841

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	9,300
Balance carried forward	10,000

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

39 The school makes good quality provision for the children in the Nursery and Reception class. The school has a part-time nursery that operates in the mornings only and the nine Nursery children are mostly taught alongside the twenty-seven full-time Reception children in the Foundation Stage class. The good relationships that exist with parents, together with a good induction programme, mean that the children settle into school life quickly and easily and receive a good start to their education.

40 The quality of the teaching for the Nursery and the Reception children has improved since the previous inspection and it is now good. The teacher and the nursery nurse plan thoroughly and they provide a good range of learning opportunities. However, some of the tasks do not always allow the children to explore and investigate independently and there is an imbalance between teacher directed and free-choice activities. The teachers assess the children regularly and the information is used well to form a profile of each child's achievements as well as to check their progress.

41 The attainment of the children when they start at the school varies from year to year and assessment information for the children currently in the Reception class shows a wide range of ability but, overall, it is above average. The children generally achieve well with some particularly good achievement in the development of their personal, social and emotional development and in their communication, language and literacy skills. By the time they start in Year 1, all the children are likely to achieve the goals set for them in each of the areas of learning with almost a half of the children exceeding them. Leadership and management of the Nursery and the Reception class are good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Personal, social and emotional development permeates all activities
- The children quickly develop independence and self-confidence
- They co-operate well with each other and with the adults in charge of them
- They develop a good understanding of what is right and what is wrong

Commentary

42 The children achieve well because they are taught well and many of them are on course to exceed the goals set for them by the time they start in Year 1. This is a good improvement since the time of the previous inspection. There is a good emphasis on this area of learning and the teacher and support assistants take every opportunity to highlight good manners as well as tolerance and kindness towards each other. Almost all of the children follow instructions and know what is expected of them. In response to the teachers' high expectations, they settle well to the planned activities and persevere with tasks. They are eager to learn new skills and usually put effort and concentration into their work. The children learn to share and work together in a variety of situations, such as role-play and when playing with sand or the large bricks. The older reception children show care and consideration to the younger nursery children and all of them show a sound level of independence when dressing for practical and physical activities. Relationships are very good. The children respond very well to the adults supervising them, and they listen and behave well. They have very good attitudes and are keen to take part in all activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children have good speaking and listening skills
- Children are encouraged to develop their communication, language and literacy skills in all the other areas of learning
- The teacher uses a range of stories, songs and rhymes as well as good questions in order to enrich the children's vocabulary and to encourage speaking and early reading skills

Commentary

43 The children achieve well because this area of learning is well taught. They make good progress and almost all are likely to reach the learning goals by the time they start in Year 1. Almost a half of the children are likely to exceed them. Regular opportunities to sing songs and recite rhymes as well as to join in the sharing of news, knowledge and information help the children to use and improve their spoken language. Good questioning by the teachers plays a key part in this process. The children's reading skills are developed through the learning of initial letter sounds and key words from early reading books. The teacher also encourages the children to use picture clues and to predict what comes next as a successful strategy for understanding what is read. A comfortable book corner promotes the enjoyment of books and children learn to handle books with care. They often choose a book to read to themselves or to share with others. All the children practise writing patterns and letter shapes and they write lists and labels in order to develop their writing skills. Many of the average and more able reception children write a sentence to record how they planted tomato seeds and many write labels to describe their chosen variety of pizza. The less able Reception children and most of the Nursery children complete a similar activity and either draw a picture of the event or copy or shadow write their sentences according to their ability. Many of the Nursery and the Reception children write their name unaided. They also use tape recorders and listening centres confidently in order to improve their listening and comprehension skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-planned activities enable the children to learn effectively about numbers, shapes and money
- The children's mathematical learning is consolidated and extended well through games and role-play
- Early counting skills are reinforced well and provide a good foundation for developing the children's numeracy skills
- The majority of number activities are teacher-directed and this limits the children's capacity for independent exploration and investigation

Commentary

44 The children achieve well and almost half of the Reception children are on course to exceed the goals set for them by the time they enter Year 1. The teachers' use of songs, rhymes and counting games to help make the learning of numbers fun has a positive effect on the children's progress. They learn the importance of 'pointing, matching and counting' to ensure accuracy. For example, when they count the correct number of bean seeds when learning to subtract from ten. The teaching is generally good and learning for the more able children is extended well when the teacher's good questioning enables them to explain how two 5p coins have the same value as a 10p

coin. Additionally, the use of correct mathematical language ensures that the children's mathematical knowledge and understanding develop well. They use the vocabulary of 'more than' and 'less than' when subtracting and some are beginning to use 'take away' as they repeat the sums they have made. The teachers make good links with other areas of learning, such as when the children are taught to recognise coins as they buy flowers and 'give change' in the home corner garden centre. The children consider size, shape and position when playing with shapes, large bricks and when emptying and filling containers in the sand play area. During the inspection, the teacher or the nursery nurse directed almost all of the mathematical activities and, while their teaching and input were good, there was a lack of opportunities for the children to explore and work with numbers independently.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in the development of knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children have good relationships with the class teacher and nursery nurse who provide good role models and who are a knowledgeable source of information
- The planned activities are effective in improving the children's observational skills and in evoking discussion and curiosity
- The use of the computer, tape recorders and digital photography help the children's early understanding of new technology
- There are limited opportunities for the pupils to develop independent enquiry skills

Commentary

45 Most of the children will achieve the goals set for them in this area of learning by the beginning of Year 1 with a significant number achieving them well before the end of the Reception year. The teacher and the nursery nurse have a good understanding of the range of experiences children need to develop and they support children well in their practical activities. They ask pertinent questions and make good links with what the children already know. For example, their knowledge of size and capacity is applied when filling pots with compost ready for planting. They understand that if the pot is too full it will overflow when watered. The children gain sound early computer skills and reinforce their learning by clicking and dragging pictures to make a sequence about growth. They also use programs to reinforce their learning in early reading and number skills. They learn about the passage of time through celebrating birthdays and the changing seasons and also by comparing the toys they enjoyed as babies with those they play with now. When making pizzas they begin to understand about the changes in materials and their awareness of different cultures is developed as they learn about the Chinese New Year and sample Chinese food.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for the children's physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children's confidence, independence and dexterity develop well through the planned activities
- There is a lack of good quality equipment in the outdoor play area which is also small

Commentary

46 The children are on course to attain the expected levels in their physical development by the time they start in Year 1. Their achievement is satisfactory. There is an outdoor play area with a safety surface but it is small and lacks a range of good quality equipment for playing and climbing

and this affects the children's overall achievement in this area of learning. Nonetheless, the teacher and the children make good use of the space available and they also use the hall for indoor movement sessions and the adventure playground equipment in the main school playground. The quality of teaching in this aspect is satisfactory. Lessons are well managed in order to develop the children's awareness of space but time is sometimes wasted while the children wait to use the apparatus or wait to take a turn at catching a ball. The sessions are usually tightly directed by the teacher with the result that there are limited opportunities for the children to explore the apparatus freely and imaginatively. Malleable materials, simple tools and construction materials are available to help the children develop control over smaller movements. The Nursery and the Reception children make sound progress and show their developing dexterity as they use pencils and crayons to colour pictures and as they use glue, beads, tools and equipment. For example, some of the children are beginning to use scissors with a degree of skill and control when they cut small pieces of coloured paper to make 'toppings' for their pizzas.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children experience a good range of creative activities that include art and design, cookery and music
- There are good opportunities for drama and imaginative play

Commentary

47 The children achieve well in the creative area of learning and at least half of them are likely to exceed the goals set for them by the time they start in Year 1. They have numerous opportunities to develop their creative skills through art and design, music and construction activities, working individually or with others. There are good opportunities for imaginative play, and with support and intervention from the nursery nurse and the support assistant, the children are able to play imaginatively. For example, they take on the roles of shop assistants and customers in the garden centre, accepting 'telephone orders' and decorating plant pots to sell in the shop. Few opportunities for dressing up were observed during the inspection and the costumes and outfits available to the children were largely unexciting. Music features strongly in the children's creative development. They enjoy singing a range of songs and action rhymes and use the listening centre to listen and join in with nursery rhymes. A group of the Reception children achieved well as they used instruments and their voices to portray the sounds of a storm. Sand, chalks, crayons, play dough and collage materials of different textures are available for the children to explore on a daily basis and they make good use of these to develop their senses and to investigate colour as they produce individual pictures and models.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and speaking and listening skills are above average
- Standards in writing and the teaching of writing are unsatisfactory
- The action plan for the development of the subject is not sufficiently focused on raising standards
- Teaching in Year 2 is good and is helping improve pupils' achievements

Commentary

48 Throughout the school pupils are competent at expressing their ideas and enjoy conversations with their peers and with adults. By the end of Year 6 many pupils use mature and sophisticated language to express their feelings, and experiences. Teachers encourage high quality discussion and use questions well to challenge pupils' ideas and to check their understanding. Older pupils demonstrate considerable confidence and skill in choral speaking.

49 Throughout the school standards in reading are good. By the end of Year 2 pupils have learned to read well and become competent, independent readers quickly. The monitoring of pupils' reading is undertaken diligently and reading records demonstrate a helpful dialogue between home and school to support the pupils' development. By the end of Year 6 standards in reading are above average and pupils have good levels of comprehension and read widely but the monitoring of their reading progress is inconsistent.

50 Standards in writing are well below those in reading and speaking and listening. While there are some good examples of well executed writing in Year 2 and Year 6, many of the pupils are underachieving. This is caused by:

- lack of consistency about when and how key skills are taught
- over-reliance on isolated English exercises
- lack of challenge for some of the more able pupils
- teachers' marking which is frequently cursory and over-praises mediocre work
- expectations of pupils' spelling, handwriting and presentation that are not high enough
- assessments of pupils' work not being used frequently enough to plan the next steps in their learning
- target setting that is not robust enough to enable pupils to evaluate their own progress

51 The strongest teaching was observed in Year 2 where pupils were provided with a range of imaginative contexts for their writing and where they were very clear about the teacher's expectations. In this classroom the excellent work ethic, the 'language rich' environment and the teacher's skills in explaining and questioning ensured that pupils of all abilities achieved well. Conversations with pupils in Years 3 to 6 and an analysis of their work confirm that there are frequently unfinished pieces of work in their books. There are also too few opportunities for them to write for a variety of purposes or for sustained periods of time. There is very little evidence of word processing being used regularly for pupils to redraft or edit their work.

52 The English co-ordinator has produced an action plan but this does not make clear what actions are to be taken to rectify the under-achievement in writing. The headteacher has secured the services of the LEA literacy consultants to support the school in tackling this key priority.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53 Pupils make appropriate use of their well developed speaking and listening and reading skills across the curriculum. The pupils' confidence and good speaking and listening skills ensure good discussion in all lessons. Their good knowledge of reference skills and enthusiasm for books lend good support to work in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. However, written work in subjects such as science and history demonstrates weaknesses in presentation, handwriting and spelling and this limits the quality of their responses.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above the national average by the end of Year 6 and pupils of all abilities achieve well
- Teaching is good and is particularly strong in Years 2 and 6
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject and want to do well
- The subject is well led and managed
- More could be done to develop pupils' use and application of mathematics

Commentary

54 For pupils leaving the school at the end of Year 6, the school has done well to maintain the high standards identified at the time of the last inspection. Current standards are above the national average. They were well above average in the 2003 tests but not quite as many pupils are attaining the higher level this year. Boys and girls achieve equally well and a higher percentage of pupils reach the higher levels of the subject than is found nationally. Pupils who have SEN are well supported and also achieve well. Over the past few years, standards have been more variable at the end of Year 2, ranging from above to well below average. They were below average in the 2003 national test and in relation to their prior attainment, pupils made unsatisfactory progress. Girls did not do as well as the boys in the test. Consistently good and often very good teaching in Year 2 this year is compensating for previous underachievement and standards for both boys and girls are now at least similar to the national average with pupils of all abilities making good progress.

55 Throughout the school, pupils have a good understanding of number. All teachers pay good attention to developing pupils' mental recall of number operations in well-paced opening whole class sessions. Pupils in Year 2, for example, use mental recall of the 2, 5 and 10 multiplication tables well and in Year 6, pupils use their good knowledge of all multiplication tables to 12 successfully in oral work. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a sound understanding of the place value of each digit in a number and use this successfully to order numbers up to 100. By the end of Year 6, most pupils use understanding of place value to calculate multiplication and division of whole numbers and decimals.

56 Good work on using and applying mathematics is being done in Years 1 and 2 to address previous weaknesses in this aspect of teaching and learning. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils were set the task of solving a problem and testing a simple hypothesis using their knowledge of number and data handling. They had to test whether there were always more brown sweets in a packet than other colours by counting, tallying, graphing and interpreting the results. Pupils co-operated well in the activity and clearly enjoyed this 'real life' practical activity. This aspect of learning is a relatively weaker element in the work in Years 3 to 6. There are instances of pupils using and applying mathematics, for example, by trying different approaches suggested by the teacher and encouragement to check results and consider whether they are reasonable. There are fewer instances, however, of pupils searching for a solution to a problem by trying out their own ideas. Teachers' do not always have high enough expectations of presentation and some pupils do not present their work in a clear and organised way. Given their good skills in other aspects, their achievements in using and applying mathematics should be better.

57 Teaching is good overall and is particularly effective in Years 2 and 6. Teachers are enthusiastic about the subject and this rubs off on the pupils. They have high expectations of behaviour and involvement and these result in orderly lessons characterised by a very good work ethic. The three-part structure of the National Numeracy Strategy is well embedded in the teaching and leads to a high degree of consistency of approach. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and introduce and consolidate the correct mathematical vocabulary. A strong feature of most

lessons across the year groups is the good discussion of strategies that takes place. This is supported well by pupils' good speaking and listening skills. Group work is largely successful and tasks are usually matched well to the different abilities. There are a few instances, particularly showing up in the scrutiny of pupils' work, where work is repeated unnecessarily at a similar level, for example, graphs produced in Years 5 and 6 are no more advanced than those produced in Year 2. This highlights some shortcomings in teachers' assessments that are not used effectively to plan the next stage of learning. The setting of individual targets for pupils is not a strong feature in the subject.

58 Over the past year, staff changes and the appointment of two newly qualified teachers have meant that the headteacher has had to take over the leadership of the subject. Pupils' performance in national tests is analysed and has identified the right areas for development. Over the past year, the monitoring of teaching and assessment has not been as stringent as it should be

Mathematics across the curriculum

59 Pupils' good mathematical knowledge is used satisfactorily in support of other subjects. In science and design and technology, pupils' data handling skills help produce a variety of tables and graphs. In a food technology lesson for pupils in Year 5, for example, pupils used data handling skills successfully to tally results and produce a graph of their favourite tasting breads. Measuring skills give good support to work in design and technology. Pupils' mathematical skills are not harnessed enough in ICT since computers are not used enough across the curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 6
- Pupils achieve well in the area of scientific enquiry
- Teaching and learning is good throughout the school
- Very little use is made of ICT to support learning

Commentary

60 Standards and the quality of learning have improved since the previous inspection and pupils achieve well particularly in Years 3 to 6. Standards are improving by the end of Year 2 and are now similar to the national average. Discussions with Year 6 pupils indicate that they undertake the full range of work covering the National Curriculum requirements. Pupils have made good progress over time in their scientific knowledge and understanding. In a study of electricity, Year 6 pupils explained in scientific terms what they had discovered about electrical circuits and conductors and suggested ways in which they could have improved their work.

61 Science investigations are planned well throughout the school. The youngest pupils respond enthusiastically to suggestions about how to find things out, they collect data and answer questions; for example, when they were looking at the different way in which toys moved. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 explain the principles of fair testing very clearly. The higher attaining pupils stress the importance of controlling variables and being accurate in the use of measurements and in the presentation of data.

62 Throughout the school, work is matched well to pupils' ages and aptitudes and pupils with special educational needs have appropriate guidance and support. Year 3 pupils were making graphs to demonstrate the changing length of shadows during the period of a school day. They had a good understanding of the movement of the earth in relation to the sun and could explain the reasons for the changing length of shadows.

63 Positive and enthusiastic teaching was observed in Years 2 and 3. Relationships were very good and clear instructions and well-resourced activities meant that the pupils concentrated very well. The teachers had high expectations of pupils as they worked in groups and shared ideas and resources. Tasks were matched well so that pupils of all abilities achieved well during the lesson and the higher attaining pupils were challenged further by the use of probing questions. Pupils used appropriate technical vocabulary during these lessons.

64 A general weakness in the scrutiny of books was that much of the pupils' work received only cursory marking with few comments on how it might be improved. In some year groups the presentation of pupils' work was untidy. Data handling and the use of measures was an integral part of many of the investigations in Years 3 to 6 but there was very little evidence of pupils using ICT to present their findings.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6
- Pupils in most classes are underachieving in relation to their capabilities
- Some teachers lack expertise and confidence in the subject
- The school is using the expertise of the staff at the local technology college in an effort to improve standards
- Computers are not used enough to support learning in other subjects

Commentary

65 Raising standards in ICT, particularly by the end of Year 6, was a key issue at the time of the previous inspection. The school has made some progress since then and, although some improvements have been made, these have not kept pace with rapidly rising national expectations. Additionally, the school's efforts to raise standards have been hampered by technical problems and limited software. Consequently, across the school, standards are below average and achievement is unsatisfactory.

66 From a scrutiny of the limited work available, the two lessons observed and discussions with pupils, it is clear that they have not had systematic and regular opportunities to develop their basic ICT skills. This means that, while many pupils have a reasonable grasp of word processing, data handling and using art programs, aspects such as using control technology, modelling and using multi-media packages are not yet developed and are not an integral part of teaching and learning. Consequently, the recent input and support for Year 6 in their learning of control technology was building on very insecure foundations and this adversely affected the pupils' learning and achievements.

67 By the end of Year 2, the pupils have planned routes and programmed a floor robot to follow instructions. Their work shows that they know how to record repeated instructions in order for the robot to follow a given path. Year 2 work further shows that the pupils use drawing tools and an art program to create a picture and are able to print their work. Some of the Year 6 pupils have used the Internet for research into topics such as rivers and the Ancient Greeks and a few have learned how to compose a slide presentation using imported pictures and text. However, this achievement is not consistent across the classes and year groups. In the lessons observed during the inspection the quality of the teaching was satisfactory but several of the teachers have limited knowledge and confidence to teach the more advanced elements of the ICT curriculum. As a result, therefore, the overall quality of teaching is unsatisfactory.

68 Data handling is one of the more successful elements of the school's work in ICT and in a Year 3 lesson the pupils achieved satisfactorily as they devised a database to organise their information on minibeasts. The teacher built well on the pupils' previous learning, using the correct terminology and ensuring that the pupils understood terms such as 'field' and 'record'. The teacher's carefully targeted questions enabled all the pupils to succeed in organising and classifying their information but almost all of them were working below the nationally expected level.

69 There is an appropriate action plan for ICT that outlines what needs to be done to secure improvements. Rigorous and systematic implementation of the plan and further training for teachers is needed in order to bring about swift and significant improvements.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70 There is some effective use of digital cameras to record the pupils' work in subjects such as art and design and many of the pupils use tape recorders and listening centres confidently. However, there is little use of ICT across the curriculum and computers are not widely used to support the pupils' work in other subjects. This remains a weakness that has yet to be addressed.

HUMANITIES

One lesson in history was seen in Year 4 and one lesson in geography in Year 5. It is not, therefore, possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of the provision in these two subjects. Comments are based on these two lessons, scrutiny of pupils' past and present work and discussion with teachers and pupils. There are no whole-school assessment systems in these subjects and this makes it difficult for teachers to plan the next stages of learning. In both history and geography not enough use is made of computers either to reinforce learning or for research.

By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 the pupils achieve the standards in **geography** expected for their age. Pupils in Year 2 have compared and contrasted differing locations such as Harlaxton, Grantham and Skegness and explored a range of physical and man-made features. In Year 2, there are examples of good quality work that reflect the high expectations and good teaching in that class. In Year 6, the pupils have studied rivers and there is some evidence that they are beginning to understand the associated vocabulary such as 'tributary', 'basin' and 'floodplain'. Across the school the quality of presentation and the marking of the pupils' written work is variable. There are examples where work is untidily presented and in only a few classes does the marking show the pupils how they can improve.

Standards in **history** are as expected for the pupils' ages and achievement is satisfactory. By the end of Year 2 most pupils have a sound knowledge of famous events and people in history such as the Fire of London and Florence Nightingale. The pupils' work and discussions with them show that as they move through the school they develop a sound understanding of the past through their learning about the Ancient Greeks, the Tudors and by learning about aspects of life in Britain in Victorian times and during World War II. By the end of Year 6 some of the pupils show good research skills and achieve well as they produce work on aspects of life in Ancient Greece. The Year 4 pupils show a sound understanding of how past events shaped people's lives and they are largely successful in empathising with the feelings and emotions of evacuees during World War II. Learning in history is enlivened and enriched by a range of visits and visitors to the school who stimulate the pupils' interest and enthusiasm for the subject.

Religious education

Provision is **satisfactory**.

- Pupils have opportunities to reflect upon their own beliefs and ideas.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to relate religious beliefs to their own lives
- Teaching in the lessons seen is good

- There is little evidence of extended writing in the subject

Commentary

71 Standards are in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. The school's scheme of work combines well units of work from the Syllabus and from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) non-statutory guidance. Pupils have a good range of opportunities to experience some of the beliefs and traditions of Christianity, Judaism and Islam but they also have opportunities to reflect on their own ideas. Pupils are aware that Christianity is the principal religion represented in Britain today.

72 Teaching in the lessons seen during the inspection was good. The teaching provides pupils with opportunities to relate religious belief and practice to their own lives. Material is introduced with considerable integrity and pupils are reminded of the importance of treating books, such as the Qur'an and the Bible with respect. Pupils in Year 2 have considered the Ten Commandments from the Jewish Torah and have reflected on rules that they feel are important in their own lives. They have then discussed the kind of rules that are of value for the whole school community. These pupils are confident and they enjoy discussion. Through sensitive questioning by the teacher they extend their answers as they reflect on their own ideas about God. Evidence from the scrutiny of work, however, indicates that there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write at length in the subject.

73 Resources are used well to motivate and interest the pupils. Pupils in Year 3 looked at symbols such as bread, light and sheep as they considered the language used by Jesus to describe himself. In most lessons paired discussions are used well to enable pupils to share their ideas. Pupils in Year 6 have explored the purpose of prayer before being introduced to the relevance of prayer in Islam. Video material was used well to demonstrate what home life was like for a Muslim child growing up in England today.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

It was only possible to see one lesson in art and design (in Year 2) one lesson in design and technology (in Year 5) and one lesson in physical education (in Year 3). It is not, therefore possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of the provision in these three subjects. In addition to the lessons seen, inspectors spoke with subject leaders and pupils and looked at pupils' work over the year. There are no formal assessment systems in these subjects and this makes it more difficult for teachers to plan the next stages of learning.

In **art and design** there is evidence of good coverage of the subject across all year groups and much of the work is better than is normally seen for pupils' ages. Work shows good development of skills from year to year and good achievement by pupils of all abilities. Pupils have had experiences of working with a good range of media in both two and three-dimensional forms. Pupils have the opportunity to create a variety of pots and plaques in clay and then to decorate and fire them in a kiln. There is some very good embroidery work in Year 5 and 6 with a particularly impressive frieze of an Ancient Egyptian hunting scene. Boys and girls were involved equally in producing the frieze.

Sketchbooks used by all classes show good development of pencil, crayon and pastel work and attention to detail. Teachers use the work of great artists such as Rousseau and Picasso to inspire the pupils this has resulted in bold use of paint and collage techniques. Teachers link work in art with other subjects successfully, for example, painting in Year 3 inspired by the 'Iron Woman' by Ted Hughes is good and pupils in Year 2 have used effective scraper board techniques to represent work on the Torah in religious education. Visiting artists are used effectively to provide additional interest and stimulation for the pupils. In a very good Year 2 lesson on using different media and techniques to record observations of buildings, enthusiastic, knowledgeable and stimulating teaching developed pupils' observational and sketching techniques well and captured the attention of all the pupils. They concentrated well and were eager to improve their work.

Although the work in **design and technology** is similar to that expected for pupils' ages, skills are not developed as well over time as they are in art and design and not as much work is in evidence across the year groups. In a satisfactory lesson in Year 5, pupils were evaluating the characteristics of breads from different countries. The pupils had previously made and baked their own bread. The good planning and practical nature of the activities created good levels of interest and enthusiasm for the task and good attention was given to health and safety issues. The lesson provided pupils with a good opportunity to investigate and evaluate a familiar product. A lengthy whole class introduction saw some pupils beginning to lose interest since they were eager to get started on the practical work. In Year 2, pupils have designed and made a vehicle for a specific purpose. Pupils in Year 3 have used their own design brief planning sheet to design and make biscuits and have created a simple hinging mechanism as part of a collage on the sky. Pupils in Year 4 have used digital photography well to evaluate the design of various chairs. In Year 6, pupils have designed and made good slippers using a variety of materials and including stitching techniques.

In **physical education** an appropriate and well-balanced curriculum covers the required areas of gymnastics, games, dance, athletics and swimming. Recently, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have experienced outdoor and adventurous activities on a residential visit. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have regular opportunities to swim and almost all the pupils swim a minimum of 25 metres by the time they leave the school. In the lesson seen during the inspection the teaching and learning were satisfactory. The lesson was structured well giving appropriate emphasis to warming up and cooling down activities. The pupils developed their skills of using a racquet and throwing a ball with reasonable success. The organisation of the lesson ensured that pupils made good use of the space and time available. The teacher was dressed appropriately for the lesson and this set a good example for the pupils. Extra-curricular clubs have a good impact on standards in football, cross-country, rounders and athletics. Pupils enjoy considerable success when they participate in competitive games with other schools.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Singing is well taught and, consequently, pupils sing tunefully in assemblies
- There are good opportunities for the pupils to learn to play a range of instruments
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to listening and appraise different musical traditions and styles

Commentary

74 The standards achieved by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with those expected nationally. Achievement for the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. This is a similar picture to the one found at the time of the previous inspection. The quality of singing in assemblies is good and it is well taught across the school. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils use their knowledge about the sounds made by a variety of percussion instruments and also vocal sounds to perform a good composition based on a thunderstorm. This was successful because the quality of the teaching was good and the teacher built well on the pupils' previous learning. She maximised their enjoyment and excitement by praising and encouraging the pupils and by sharing her enthusiasm with them. The pupils' learning was further extended as they began to understand how written symbols can represent sounds and how tempo and dynamics can be used to create different effects. All the pupils handled the instruments confidently and with a sound degree of control. In a satisfactory lesson with the Year 4 pupils, they showed a good sense of rhythm and read a rhythmic pattern from symbols displayed on the board. The pupils play in parts, using instruments to sustain their own rhythm while also being aware of others. However, the pupils were not always quick to follow the directions of the teacher as the conductor and the pace of the lesson

slowed. Some pupils lost concentration whilst waiting for others to rest their instruments. This adversely affected their overall achievement.

75 The knowledge and expertise of the staff in music is variable but the school uses the skills of specialist music teachers to provide instrumental tuition in strings, keyboard, brass and woodwind instruments and all the pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder. Visits and visitors are used effectively to enrich the music curriculum and the pupils talk enthusiastically about a visiting singer who introduced them to a range of songs and also emphasised the techniques needed to sing well.

76 Music makes a positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual and personal development and adds to their confidence in performance when they give concerts to parents and friends. While the elements of performing and composing are planned and taught satisfactorily across the school, opportunities to listen to and appraise music from a range of styles and composers are limited. Additionally, more could be done to raise the profile of music played in assemblies, especially recorded music when the pupils enter and leave.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHE)

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good relationships and caring ethos strongly support pupils' PSHE
- There is a very good programme of activities designed to develop the older pupils' understanding of citizenship
- Pupils' good speaking and listening skills enable them to take an active part in debate on a range of issues related to the subject
- There is no school council to provide a forum for pupils to become more involved in decision making

77 The school has a good programme of activities and lessons to develop pupils' personal qualities. These include regular specific PSHE lessons and circle times (an activity where pupils sit together in a circle and talk about their feelings and beliefs). Pupils are taught sensitively about the dangers of drugs and about sex and relationships through these activities and within relevant science topics. The high degree of maturity of the older pupils and their good speaking and listening skills enable quite complex issues to be discussed. There is a very good programme for older pupils called 'SHOUT' (Scheme to Help Others by the Under Twenties). This is run by the teachers and the local crime reduction officer and is designed to change anti-social attitudes and educate young people in the concept of caring, responsible citizenship. In a good session with pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, pupils talked sensibly about modern role models, challenged typical stereotypes and discussed the importance of making the right choices. Throughout the school, pupils readily help others in lessons and at playtimes and learn to take responsibility for their own learning. In science and physical education lessons, pupils learn about the importance of a balanced diet and a healthy body.

78 There is no formal mechanism, such as a school council, for involving pupils in decision-making concerning the running of the school. This places some limitations on their development in this aspect of the school's work.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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