

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **GUNTHORPE C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Gunthorpe, Nottingham

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122803

Headteacher: Mr M Armitage

Lead inspector: Mr Graham Bate

Dates of inspection: 11<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> October 2004

Inspection number: 266935

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	99
School address:	Davids Lane Gunthorpe Nottingham Nottinghamshire
Postcode:	NG14 7EW
Telephone number:	(0115) 966 3481
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J R W Miller
Date of previous inspection:	9 <sup>th</sup> June 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This Church of England voluntary aided school is situated in the village of Gunthorpe, which is about nine miles from the City of Nottingham. About half of the pupils live in the village. The remaining pupils attend the school by choice and travel by bus and car from a number of small rural communities. The school is smaller than the average nationally, having 99 pupils on roll aged from four to eleven years. Most of the pupils attend some form of pre-school provision, mainly a nearby play school with which the school has good links. The pupils are organised into four classes, all of which are mixed age. Almost all the pupils are of white British heritage and only a few are from ethnic minority backgrounds. Children's attainment on entry into the Reception class varies considerably from year to year. It covers a wide range and is below the level expected nationally for children of this age overall. A significant proportion of children has below average skills in the key areas of personal and social development and speech and language and attainment on entry is below average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is five per cent and below the national average. About 13 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below the national average. None has a statement of special educational needs. There is a low incidence of pupil mobility, with only two pupils leaving and two joining the school at other than the usual times in the school year. All the pupils have English as their first language. The school has been given the Investor in People award in 2002 and the School Achievement award in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20926	Mr G Bate	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Music Physical education Foundation Stage
9942	Mrs S Stevens	Lay inspector	
21858	Rev J Pryor	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography History Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is an effective school that provides good value for money.** There is a very strong commitment to ensuring that each pupil does well in all aspects of knowledge, understanding and skills. Pupils achieve well and standards are above the level expected nationally because teaching and the range of learning opportunities meet their needs well. It is seen as important that personal success is celebrated and self-esteem raised. This ensures that each pupil is an important part of the school family and local community.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The overall quality of teaching is good.
- Good relationships exist throughout the school and the pupils are very happy to take responsibility; they work hard and behave well, because of the good provision for their personal development.
- The school is led well and governed effectively, and the headteacher gives a very good educational direction.
- The good partnerships with parents, other schools and the community, and the care for pupils' personal well being, support pupils' learning well.
- Assessment practice is inconsistent between Reception and Year 1.
- The management of available curriculum time is not always effective.

A satisfactory overall improvement has been made since the last inspection in June 1999. There has also been a further improvement in the overall quality of teaching, as a result of its effective monitoring and evaluation. There has been a halt in the programme of development of the role of subject co-ordinators as over half the teachers are currently temporary. Marking of pupils' work is now more consistent and the great majority of parents understand the homework policy. Good outdoor provision for the Reception children has been made but some areas of their independent activities still require a sharper focus. The school is now aware of all visitors to the premises.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

#### **Pupils of all capabilities achieve well, including those with special educational needs.**

Test results, year-on-year, should be treated with great caution, as year group sizes in the school are very small. This contributes to the considerable fluctuations noted above. In all subjects, where it is possible to make a firm judgement, the pupils attain standards that are at least in line with expectations in Years 2 and 6. In reading and speaking and listening, mathematics, science, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and art and

design, in Year 6, attainment is above national expectations. Standards in writing are in line with national expectations. Children in the Reception class have made a satisfactory start towards the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage; a few are on course to attain them earlier.

The quality of the pupils' personal development including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. The pupils show positive attitudes to all aspects of school life and their behaviour is **good**. As a result of the very supportive atmosphere in the school, the pupils are very enterprising, show confidence and have good, and improving levels of self-esteem. Good levels of respect are shown for the feelings of others and they are happy to celebrate others' successes. Both attendance and punctuality are good.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good.** The pupils learn well as a result of the overall good quality of teaching and the stimulating and varied curriculum that is being developed by the teachers. The teachers insist on good standards of behaviour, which allows all pupils to learn effectively. The sharing of targets between teachers and pupils greatly assists learning. Occasionally, however, learning is not supported well enough by the effective use of available time. Pupils are challenged well to present work to a good standard and to extend their vocabulary.

The pupils receive a good level of care and support, as they are personally well known to all the adults in the school. Therefore, virtually all feel they have someone to turn to in times of need. The school's formal assessment procedures are well established and good. The continuous assessment of pupils' development is generally effective but more work is required to improve consistency between the Foundation Stage and Year 1. The school works hard and successfully to develop relationships with the parents and the community. These relationships give good support to pupils' learning. The very good links with other schools also has benefits for the learning of pupils.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good overall.** The headteacher is a very good leader, with a very well developed appreciation, particularly of the curriculum, of the school's needs. He works well with the governing body, which has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher and governing body have worked well together to manage recent accommodation developments and the current transitional staffing arrangements. The governing body ensures that the school complies fully with statutory requirements.

### **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

The vast majority of parents are very content with most aspects of school life and feel that their children receive a broad and well-rounded education. They are pleased that their children like school and with the progress they make. Particular pleasure was expressed about the range of extra-curricular activities and the quality of the music and drama productions. A very small minority is concerned about the information they receive concerning their child's progress and how well their views are sought by the school. However, almost every parent felt able to approach the school about any matter. Almost all pupils like their school and feel particularly well cared for. They also feel that the teachers listen to their ideas.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Examine the management of available school time, particularly in relation to the length of some lessons, the pace of working and the time spent on unstructured activities in the Foundation Stage.
- Build on the existing assessment procedures to ensure consistent practice between the Foundation Stage and the introduction of the National Curriculum in Year 1.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

The standards of children's attainment on entry to the school is broad. In the key areas of personal and social education and speech and language skills, attainment is generally below average. As a result of the good overall quality of teaching, however, all pupils achieve well in relation to their individual capabilities, including those with special educational needs. Evidence from the inspection indicates that there is no subject where overall performance is below national expectations at ages seven and eleven.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in all subjects.
- Standards in Year 6 are above the level expected nationally in reading, speaking and listening, mathematics, science, the use of ICT in other subjects and art and design. In writing, standards are those expected nationally.
- Pupils' use of literacy and mathematical skills in other subjects is good.

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.2 (16.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.0 (14.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.0 (15.3)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 10 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.8 (29.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.0 (28.9)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.2 (28.9)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 15 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

1. Great care should be taken in making comparisons with the national figures owing to the small size of the year groups. Despite the inevitable variations year-on-year with small year groups, the overall trend is broadly in line with the national trend. In the 2003 Year 6 tests, performance was below average in English, average in mathematics and well above average in science in comparison with all schools nationally. In comparison with similar schools, having the same prior attainment at age seven, performance was well below average in English, average in mathematics and well above average in science. Results in the Year 2 tests in 2003 show performance that is well above average against all schools, in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. The comparison with similar schools indicates above average performance in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics.

2. Further analysis of the 2003 results shows that a greater percentage of pupils attained the higher Level 5 (Year 6) in mathematics and science than the national figure, however, in English, none attained this higher level. The pupils currently in Year 6 are being challenged well and successfully to improve their writing skills and raise overall standards in English. Good progress is being made at the start of the school year. The good achievement of all pupils is, in addition to good teaching, well supported by the effective analysis of their knowledge, skills and understanding and subsequent strategies to make further progress.
3. Standards, by the age of 11 in Year 6, are above the level expected nationally in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics, science, art and design and the use of ICT. This is also true, at the age of seven in Year 2, except in mathematics where standards are in line with national expectations. On the basis of limited evidence, standards in the remaining subjects appear to be at least in line with national expectations. Important and further progress has been made in ICT skills, since the last inspection, and is supporting well the drive to raise standards in other subjects.
4. Children in the Reception class are already making good progress in the key areas of personal and social development and communication and language, as a result of effective teaching and support. Strong and appropriate emphasis is given to these aspects in the autumn term to ensure the raising of attainment. Most children are on course to reach the nationally agreed learning goals at the end of the Reception Year and a few are likely to exceed them. The absence of a specific focus to other areas of the children's development, and lack of evidence, make a firm judgement of whether the children are on course to reach the nationally agreed goals by the end of Reception Year impossible at this early stage.
5. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early, given realistic, yet challenging, targets in their individual education plans and make good progress towards them.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Attendance is above the national average and punctuality is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Relationships are good between all members of the school's community and the pupils enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils generally behave well in classrooms and around the school. They work hard and are keen to do well.
- The good provision for pupils' personal development contributes well to the feeling of unity within the school.

### **Commentary**

6. Pupils' attitudes to school are good overall. Teaching assistants and support staff are consistent in their management of pupils including those with special educational needs and those with behavioural difficulties, enabling pupils to learn effectively. Most pupils listen well and are eager to respond to questions or to share their opinions with the class. They often make perceptive suggestions on their own and are confident in making observations because they know that they will be listened to with respect and valued for their ideas. Very occasionally the ineffective use of time leads to minor restlessness amongst some pupils.
7. Behaviour around the school, in the dining hall and in the playground is good overall. Pupils are polite, courteous and friendly. They concentrate well in lessons, are keen to earn praise for good effort and generally their behaviour requires little corrective action from teachers. Pupils

are confident that on the rare occasion that bullying occurs, staff will deal with it quickly and effectively. Lunchtimes are organised well, pleasant and orderly. Pupils' social skills are constantly and successfully promoted throughout their time at school. The reward system is valued by pupils and works well. Praise is used by all staff to encourage and motivate pupils, and pupils like talking about their work of which they are proud. There have been no exclusions in the past year.

8. There are opportunities for pupils of all ages to take responsibility within the school. Those pupils given responsibilities carry them out with confidence and pride, such as the playground 'Peacemakers' or the members of the school council. Relationships are good and pupils generally treat one another with kindness and respect. When minor disputes occur in the playground, duty 'Peacemakers' are on hand to work at restoring harmony. Pupils with special educational needs are included in all activities, supported by thoughtful and helpful classmates. Pupils readily help their classmates, for example a pupil in assembly was seen to be distressed and was immediately helped by another to leave the hall quietly while his chair was carried out, without prompting by the teacher, by yet another friend at the end of assembly.
9. Throughout the school, staff work hard and effectively to build pupils' self-esteem, with very clear results. Pupils show growing maturity as they progress through the school, becoming articulate and confident in discussions and during lessons. Spiritual development is fostered successfully across the curriculum in religious education lessons and in assemblies. Pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong and this is promoted well during circle time when pupils sit in a circle and are encouraged to discuss their thoughts and share their feelings. Pupils are encouraged to work and play together and to co-operate as 'members of a team' with each individual having a place in making the team function as a whole to achieve the school's aims.
10. Pupils' cultural development is fostered well in subjects such as art and design and religious education. The school has celebrated Diwali, listened to a local Rabbi discussing the Jewish faith, visited a Mosque and enjoyed a full Sikh meal with pupils dressed in traditional costume. They also have a wide and good experience of their own local church and its Christian festivities and culture.

## Attendance

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.4
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.*

11. Attendance at the school continues to be good and above the national average. School procedures for monitoring attendance are consistent and secure. There is no truancy and pupils are punctual. During the inspection, local traffic difficulties caused a few late arrivals but none beyond the close of registers. Pupils are keen to come to school and arrive in good time to begin lessons promptly.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. As a result of the overall good quality of teaching, the pupils learn and achieve well. The raising of the pupils' self-esteem is very important to the school, and the teachers give them every encouragement. The quality of the pupils' learning is greatly assisted by a varied, interesting and newly developing curriculum. The good quality of

relationships with the parents and the local community helps to ensure pupils are effective learners, as does the support for their personal welfare.

## Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall. Almost three-quarters of the teaching is at least good and none is unsatisfactory; as a result, the pupils learn well and make good progress. Since the last inspection there has been, overall, an improvement in the quality of teaching. Assessment is generally good but it lacks consistency between the Foundation Stage and Year 1.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every individual pupil matters to the teachers and their encouragement of, and engagement with, them is very good.
- The teachers manage their classes well and have high expectations for behaviour and consideration for others.
- The pupils concentrate well and work hard.
- The pupils benefit greatly from the good co-operation between the teachers and teaching assistants.
- Assessment practice between Reception and Year 1 lacks consistency.
- Time in lessons is not always used effectively.

## Commentary

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1	2	16	8	0	0	0

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

12. The strongest feature of the teaching is the emphasis given to ensuring that all aspects of the teachers' planning and delivery is focused on the importance of each individual pupils' learning. The teachers plan effectively, with clearly stated objectives for what they want the pupils to learn, and using a good range of teaching styles. These aspects of teaching help to ensure that all pupils can relate and respond to different approaches, experience success and, as a result, grow in individual self-esteem. This is a good, inclusive approach that celebrates success and effectively supports the pupils' learning. All the pupils respond positively to this approach by the teachers and, as a result, learning and achievement are good. The increasing and successful target setting by the teachers complements this approach well, as it reinforces the pupils' understanding of not only where they are 'smart' but also where they need to improve. Consequently, the pupils' application to work and their productivity are good.
13. The management of classes is good. The teachers do not tolerate poor behaviour, show respect for their pupils and expect them to show respect for others and celebrate success. In a number of lessons the pupils sensibly applauded, without prompting by the teacher, contributions made by their peers; another boost to individuals' self-esteem. The desire by the vast majority of pupils to concentrate and learn is partially the response to the teachers' imaginative curriculum, for example the stimulating work on the Ancient Greeks, which not only included good art and design work but also an excellent dance session.
14. The pupils with special educational needs are supported well by the good quality of their individual education plans and the effective co-operation between the teachers and teaching assistants. The teaching assistants also give good support, monitored well by the teachers, to

other individuals and groups, for example, when the Reception children and Year 1 pupils are taught separately, or individuals are helped to develop their computer skills.

15. In the Foundation Stage, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is good, however, in the teaching of communication, language and literacy, personal, social and emotional development and mathematical development. Planning in these areas has a clear focus. In other areas of the children's development, planning lacks a sharp enough focus to assess accurately children's attainment and record their progress. This is inconsistent with assessment practice in the rest of the school undermining the possibility of building on the pupils' previous knowledge and understanding and, therefore, their pace of learning is sometimes restricted. Effective formal assessments are, however, carried out at the appropriate time.
16. In most lessons throughout the school, the pace of learning is good. Little time is lost to the maintenance of discipline. However, the pace of learning does drop occasionally when, for example, introductory sessions are too long or the mental numeracy sessions are not 'speedily demanding'. More significantly, however, the effectiveness of learning deteriorates when the time spent on one lesson is very long and pupils' motivation drops. This is ineffective use of time that reduces the effectiveness of pupils' learning.
17. Assessment is good overall, but is inconsistent between Reception and Year 1 where too much reliance is placed on informal, unrecorded evaluations of progress. Marking of pupils' work has improved since the last inspection and is generally supportive and helps pupils' progress. Good evaluations are made of pupils' day-to-day progress, which assists teachers to match work to pupils' needs.

## **The curriculum**

Overall, the school's **broad, balanced and relevant** curriculum provides a good range of worthwhile curricular opportunities meeting the needs of the pupils well. This is the result of the careful analysis of what those individual needs are and the development of effective curricular strategies to meet them. The school offers good opportunities for enrichment and there are good learning resources but accommodation is cramped.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is imaginative and is continually developing to meet pupils' needs.
- There is a good range of activities, such as clubs and visits, beyond the required curriculum.
- The school takes great pains to ensure that the individual and particular needs of the pupils are met through the learning opportunities provided, especially those of pupils with special educational needs.

## **Commentary**

18. Curriculum development in the school is very good and, as a result, the range of learning opportunities is imaginative and motivates pupils well. The headteacher and staff are successfully developing the school's work along lines prompted by the national 'Excellence and Enjoyment' initiative. Learning opportunities are still firmly rooted in the National Curriculum and continue to make use of elements of existing national guidance suggestions. These are carefully adapted to meet the needs of this school. The school is now carefully and thoughtfully introducing changes related to these initiatives and is broadening the curriculum by linking areas of study thematically. Work in a variety of subjects is linked together naturally, such as a project based on a survey of traffic and housing to provide data for a by-pass proposal for the village. This provides for economies in time as well as increased relevance in the work for the

pupils. This broadening of the curriculum also has a good impact on teaching and learning as it allows teachers to pursue particular topics and enthuse the pupils further.

19. All the pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The careful analysis of pupils' particular strengths and needs across a range of six ways of thinking (or 'being smart') ensures that these are met through the learning opportunities provided. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, the planning of individual education plans and the administration of this aspect of the school's work continues to be good and effective in ensuring that pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
20. The pupils' personal and social development is an important focus in the planning of the curriculum so that their academic work is supported by a growing maturity on the part of the pupils. The good range of out-of-school activities, sports and games, drama and French all support personal development well. There are also close links with the local community and a good variety of visitors to support learning. The school also undertakes many visits to places of educational value for all the pupils at different stages in their career in the school. All these opportunities help the pupils to become self-assured and able to meet people with confidence, as well as increasing the curricular opportunities available.
21. The school ensures that as pupils move from stage to stage in their education, both within the school and when they leave, they are well prepared and understand what is happening. The very good links maintained with the cluster of schools with which this school is associated facilitate this. Opportunities offered by the local secondary school and the university are eagerly taken up.
22. The staffing of the school is adequate to its needs while the recent changes, which involve a significant proportion of the teachers, have provided opportunities for a redistribution of responsibilities as new teachers' extra talents and enthusiasms are explored. The good provision of support staff also enhances the delivery of the curriculum well.
23. The accommodation in the school has been greatly improved lately; better facilities have been provided for access, for parents and staff as well as very necessary office space. However, the classrooms are still very cramped and this inhibits some activities which require pupils to move around the room. The use of one classroom as a means of access to all the others is also unsatisfactory. The staff make good efforts to overcome these disadvantages. The outdoor accommodation is good and there is plenty of space. Resources for teaching are suitable for the curriculum and are generally of a good quality.

### **Care, guidance and support**

Procedures for ensuring pupils' care, welfare and safety are good. Support, advice and guidance for pupils, based on the monitoring of their achievement and personal development are generally good. There is good involvement of pupils through regular seeking of their views about what they would like to see improved.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides a safe, secure and very friendly environment where the well being of pupils is a prime concern.
- Staff show genuine concern for the pupils in their charge.
- Pupils have good, trusting relationships with staff and feel confident in approaching them if they have problems or need assistance.
- Pupils have a voice in the work of the school through the school council.
- Pupils are provided with good support, guidance and advice because the school makes good use of the information it has on the pupils' personal development.

## **Commentary**

24. The school is a happy place where pupils feel secure and confident in their learning. Almost all pupils agree that there is an adult they could turn to if they have any concerns. Effective procedures ensure that pupils' care, welfare, health and safety have high priority in the school. Staff are vigilant about pupils in their care and understand and support them individually. Teachers take time to discuss any issues that arise with the whole class so that pupils can co-operate in understanding and resolving conflicts. Teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors play an important role in forming a pastoral team with the class teachers. All staff work together well using consistent rewards and sanctions so pupils know exactly where they stand and what is expected of them. The staff form good relationships with the pupils, giving a sense of being valued, which helps them to concentrate on their lessons and enjoy their school life.
25. There are very well organised procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils, including those with special educational needs. Teachers and teaching assistants have high levels of understanding of their pupils' needs and are very caring and sensitive in their relationships. There are pupils in school who experience difficulties with social and emotional issues, for example, and they are supported by a scheme which boosts self-esteem and self-confidence. As a result, all pupils are helped to take part in every aspect of learning which the school provides. Academic information is used well, generally, to target support where it is needed and records are maintained to track how well pupils are doing, although there is some inconsistency in the recording of this data between Reception and Year 1.
26. The school council meets regularly to talk about anything that affects what goes on in the school and is developing a high profile. It is a forum for pupils to express their views and time is provided in class during pastoral, social and health education lessons to discuss what should be brought up at the next meeting. The school values the views and opinions of pupils, for example over the provision of games and equipment available at lunchtimes. Suggestion boxes in the school entrance and pupil surveys encourage pupils of all ages to be involved in their daily school life and take an active part in its functioning.
27. Good induction arrangements for children who start in Reception enable staff to get to know them and help them to settle in before they begin school. Pupils' successes are celebrated at assemblies and with certificates of awards on 'special days' for both academic and personal achievement. These all do much to raise pupils' self-esteem and sense of self-worth as members of a community team in the school. Well-trained staff provide first aid, where necessary, and this is recorded well. All the required tests are carried out on alarms, appliances and equipment at the correct time. Good child protection procedures are in place and staff are trained appropriately. The school is very well maintained and provides a clean and cheerful environment for pupils to work in and enjoy their learning. However, some classrooms are cramped, making movement difficult.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has a good and effective partnership with parents and the local community. There are established and very good productive links with other schools and educational institutions.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are generally very satisfied with the work of the school and value the contribution it makes to their children's development.
- Parents and other community members provide good support for the pupils, in the school, on trips and visits.

- Newsletters, the prospectus and annual reports on pupils' progress provide good information for parents.
- There has been a recent lull in the provision of regular curriculum and topic information for parents.
- The school has good links with the community and very good links with other schools.

## Commentary

28. Almost all parents have a good opinion of the school. Parents feel the school provides a welcoming environment and feel confident in approaching staff when necessary. The headteacher and staff are available to parents at the beginning and end of the day and any complaints are dealt with immediately before they become serious issues. Parents welcome the open relationships and express confidence in the work of the school.
29. Generally, the information provided for parents is of good quality; it is well focused and clear. The school's prospectus and governors' annual report are informative and meet all legal requirements for their content. Consultation meetings are supported well and valued by parents. Annual reports on pupils' progress provide good information for parents describing what their child can do and setting targets for greater endeavour. However, many parents do not feel they receive sufficient, regular information on the areas of the curriculum being studied in order to better assist their children with work at home. The inspection endorses this view and the school is taking steps to reintroduce the sharing of curriculum information with parents. Most parents help their children with reading at home to support their learning. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed and are included in discussions as soon as any needs are identified. They are involved in agreeing new learning or behaviour targets with their children and staff.
30. The Friends of Gunthorpe School is active in organising events that contribute towards making the school a centre of the community. It is presently working to raise funds for additional ICT equipment for the school. Although the school does not regularly use formal methods to seek parents' opinions, the headteacher has a high profile before and after school and is readily available to listen to their comments. Teachers are also available to parents before and after school. Governors attend social events, where they and the staff are able to gauge parents' views. Numbers of parents, members of the community and neighbours of the school are involved in helping in the school, listening to readers, helping with school outings or when needed, such as playing the piano for assembly when the school was temporarily without a piano player. This valuable contribution to the school is appreciated by the staff and enjoyed by the pupils, who benefit from this close community link to broaden their experiences.
31. Links with other schools extend the curriculum and benefit pupils in inter-school sports, for example. The school has well developed and very good links with local partner schools, with opportunities for the development of shared events and initiatives. The transfer of pupils to secondary school is smooth because there is a good exchange of information and pupils have opportunities to experience life in their new school prior to starting. There are good links with the community, for example through the local vicar and church, the use of local residents to support aspects of the curriculum and in charity events.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher provides **very good** leadership for the school, encouraging innovation and openness to change, to promote high achievement in all aspects of learning and personal development in all the pupils. During a period of staff changes, and in which leadership roles are being developed, the existing good management systems and procedures provide stability. The hardworking governing body has a **good** understanding of the school's strengths



and areas for further development. The headteacher's vision for the school is shared by the staff and governing body alike.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher's openness to innovation and change is based on a careful analysis of the work of the school and the needs of the pupils. He is a very good leader.
- The governing body has good skills and insights to move the school forward as well as to ensure that statutory responsibilities are met.
- The careful monitoring of the work of the school is used to identify areas for further development, leading to an effective school improvement plan, which has the support of all involved.
- The governing body, headteacher and staff are aware of the challenges they face in improving the accommodation available.

### **Commentary**

32. The headteacher is keen to develop all aspects of the quality of education and is firmly focused on meeting the needs of each individual pupil and how they learn. In this commitment to innovation and improvement, he is fully supported by the staff. This approach by the headteacher ties in with the governing body's desire to maintain the school's caring and supporting ethos while at the same time promoting high achievement and improved standards. The 'open consultative' style of leadership helps all staff to work as a team and for ideas for improvements to be readily shared. The changes planned for the curriculum are also the result of an effective analysis and understanding of where the school is at the present time.
33. The governors' committee structure is effective in ensuring that decisions are arrived at efficiently. There is enough common membership between committees to ensure effective communication of ideas and a common basis for judgements. Governors have a good grasp of the school's strengths and further needs. The development and improvement planning is firmly rooted in educational needs, yet retaining a firm grasp of financial implications, for example the implication of seeking to improve further the accommodation. In financial matters the school follows the principles of best practice, seeking always best value for money spent. The day-to-day management of finance is efficiently carried out and comments from auditors are carefully followed up. The school has managed the finances for its recent buildings well. The significant carry forward into this year represents funds earmarked for this building development. The Friends of the school raise significant funds to support school ventures and these are spent wisely.
34. Currently the management of subjects has fallen on the headteacher as staff changes have necessitated a restructuring of the senior management team and the reallocation of subject responsibilities. It is a tribute to the work of former office holders that the systems are still so effective and well established. Regular and systematic scrutiny of pupils' recorded work is undertaken. The school improvement planning takes account of the good analysis of data from tests and other assessments. These systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are very effective forms of self-assessment of the school's progress. The headteacher monitors the progress of individual pupils well. As the groups for each year are so small this method is essential for establishing where the school is going, rather than simply an analysis of the published statistics.
35. The staffing of the school is managed effectively and teams of teachers and teaching assistants work well together. The support provided for pupils with special educational needs benefits particularly from these arrangements. The harmonious character of the school also makes it a pleasant place in which a number of parents volunteer to help with hearing reading.

The staff are generous with advice to make this support as effective as possible. As well as making monitoring visits according to an agreed pattern, some governors also assist as volunteers. This enables them to have a clearer understanding of how the school runs.

36. The school is totally committed to providing well for all its pupils and has adopted a system that ensures that pupils' strengths and needs are identified and met. The ethos of the school is such that all staff and pupils relate well towards each other.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004*

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	386,936
Total expenditure	299,247
Expenditure per pupil	3,022

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	79,016
Balance carried forward to the next year	87,689

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

The children enter the Reception class in the September before they are five, the majority having experienced some pre-school provision, particularly a local playgroup, with which the school has developed good links. A number of children have personal and social interaction and speech and language skills that are below average. These are key areas for the children's future development and the school correctly makes them a focus of their initial work. Overall, although attainment on entry varies from year to year, it is below the level expected nationally for children of this age. The children clearly enjoy school and most appear happy and content. They show positive attitudes and are generally pleased to talk about what they are doing. Children with special educational needs are supported well.

The children are in a mixed-age class with some Year 1 pupils. The Reception teacher works very closely with a teaching assistant which allows, when appropriate, for the two age groups to be taught separately. This is a well-managed and effective arrangement, ably supported by the teaching assistant.

There is a well designed and quite spacious outdoor secure area where children can play, jump, balance, use wheeled apparatus and undertake activities with water. The indoor classroom accommodation is quite crowded, but well organised within this constraint and the necessity to use part of it as a 'corridor' to other classes.

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and, in some areas of the children's development, it is consistently good. Planning is centred upon developing the children towards nationally agreed goals but some of the activities lack a sharp enough focus. Additionally, assessment of children's progress towards these goals is informal, making evaluation of individual's progress and planning for the next steps to be taken very difficult. This is an area in need of improvement to ensure an effective and consistent flow of information into Year 1.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good quality teaching.
- Good relationships raise children's confidence and independence.
- Great care taken to include all children in all activities.

#### **Commentary**

37. The class teacher radiates good will towards the children but quietly and firmly insists on appropriate behaviour and respect for others. The children are, therefore, well cared for and supported. Although the children have been in the school only a short time, classroom routines are being quickly established. Children are beginning to concentrate on activities and quickly learn the correct way to behave, taking turns, listening to others and putting up their hands to answer questions. Achievement in this area of the children's development is good, aided by teachers' high expectations and by the good model set by the pupils in Year 1. All the children are on course to reach the nationally agreed early learning goals by the end of Reception.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All adults encourage children to extend their vocabulary and teaching is good.
- Good use is made of stories to encourage the children's appreciation of books.
- High priority is given to speaking and listening skills.
- Some 'writing' activities lack a sharp enough focus.

### **Commentary**

38. Overall, the teaching is good and ensures that children achieve well and gain confidence in using language and in developing their vocabulary. All adults take every opportunity to talk to children and extend their expression beyond single words or gestures. The teacher shows great appreciation of children's contributions when, for example, discussing a story and asking them what they think may happen next. This greatly increases children's self-esteem. This emphasis on communication and language is already having a positive effect on the children's achievement and development. Most are on course to reach the nationally agreed goals.
39. A rich variety of books, pens, pencils and other materials is provided by the class teacher at a table for writing activities. Children work hard and consistently there to practise early writing; some show early signs of emergent writing, recognisable letters, and the ability to spell their names. When engaged in 'free writing' activities, the children's learning is not supported by a simple target, for example put a 'name' on the envelope when you have written your 'letter', thereby encouraging attribution of meaning to marks. As a result, the children do not gain as much from the activity as they should.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

40. The limited evidence in this area makes it impossible to make a confident statement about provision. In the one short session observed, the teaching and learning were good. The children showed an appreciation of 'subtraction', for example taking one finger away from ten. They also showed a good understanding of 'shorter' and 'longer' when making plasticine snakes. A couple of higher attaining children suggested they could make an 'in between' snake.
41. The teachers' planning shows an appropriate range of activities has been identified. The children's mathematical language benefits, when working on activities with Year 1, from hearing them and the teacher talk, for example, about a variety of plane shapes, such as a triangle or square.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are challenged in their geographical and historical thinking by working with Year 1 pupils.
- Children's early skills in the use of computers are developing well.

- There is a lack of focus to the independent activities that children undertake without direct adult involvement.

### **Commentary**

42. Children are challenged by working with Year 1 pupils in this area of learning. The children listened intently, in a joint Reception and Year 1 lesson, when an elderly local resident answered questions about what it was like to be a child of their age 90 years ago. Many showed an early understanding that there are changes over the passage of time. Similarly, in another joint lesson on finding out about places, they watched with interest the journeys of a toy character, Barnaby Bear, around the British Isles. They were intrigued when a Year 1 pupil described how she had taken the school's Barnaby Bear on a trip to Nottingham Goose Fair. The children are beginning to gain confidence in mouse control when drawing houses on the computer with a parent helper. In the independent activities, for example, exploratory water play, there is a lack of purpose, which hinders achievement in the children's knowledge and understanding.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development and creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Regular daily physical activity successfully develops skills in, for example, climbing and balancing.
- Opportunities to develop making skills, such as cutting out.
- A sense of purpose for activities is missing as there is no planned focus to free choice activities.

### **Commentary**

43. The children, in both these areas of development, are given good opportunities, for example, to explore their physical limitations on the large apparatus, use wheeled apparatus, dress up and to make models and 'pastry' cakes. Such opportunities are required as children explore the world in which they live and learn new skills, such as using scissors, and gain understanding and physical confidence. This is an important element in the teachers' planning. However, the lack of identification, within the planning, of a purpose and structure means there are lost opportunities for a systematic development of children's knowledge, skills and understanding. It also detracts from the pace of their learning and uses time less effectively.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good quality of teaching ensures that the pupils learn and achieve well.
- In planning work, good use is made of assessment and the analysis of results of tests to match work to pupils' needs.
- Skills developed in English are used well to support learning in other subjects.

- The quality of speaking and listening as well as reading are consistently high in all years. By Year 6 most pupils are mature conversationalists and good readers.
- In a few lessons the pace of pupils' learning slows part way through.

## Commentary

- Standards of work seen in English in Years 2 to 6 are better than the level expected nationally in reading and speaking and listening and are in line with national expectations in writing. Over time there have been wide variations, due to the small year groups, in standards indicated by the results when compared with other schools. For example, in 2002, performance in the national tests was well above the national average and, in 2003, well below. However, the careful records kept of individual pupils' progress indicate that achievement in the subject is generally good and that pupils make good progress. Good achievement is the result of the imaginative teaching throughout the school, which makes good use of the National Literacy Strategy adapted for the needs of pupils. There are few occasions, however, when the pace of lessons slackens and pupils end up producing rather less work than they are capable of doing.
- Parent helpers provide good extra support for reading especially for the younger pupils. All parents are encouraged to support their children with speaking and listening as well as reading at home. The programme of English homework provided throughout the school is well managed and effective. By the time they are in Year 6, most of the pupils are very articulate and assured conversationalists and many achieve this capability much earlier. Pupils read well and happily for information and for pleasure and make use of the good stocks of books in the school. Innovative projects such as encouraging parents to write reviews of their favourite children's book for book week, or the provision of a loan box for adult readers in the library area, ensures that reading is given a high value as a personal activity.
- The teaching of English is good throughout the school resulting in effective learning. Marking is carefully done and, in most classes, careful records are kept and maintained. The results are analysed and the information used to provide clear targets for the pupils to strive for in order to improve their writing. The teachers are also very open and receptive to new ideas for making both teaching and learning in writing more effective. Opportunities, for example, are being provided for writing at length. This is beginning to have a positive impact on the pupils' writing skills and understanding of the use of language.
- The resources available for English are good and well distributed among the classes. The support provided by the teaching assistants is well planned and carried out. This means that pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom a short period of extra work in the subject will help them to achieve even more, are well supported. ICT is used well to support work and helps pupils to achieve high levels of presentation, and gather information from a range of sources. Written work is generally well presented and pupils take a pride in what they do as a result of careful marking and the use of targets to which the pupils aspire. The wide range of visits made to places of educational interest, and the number of visitors coming into the school in support of a number of subjects also enriches the pupils' minds so that they have a rich deposit of knowledge as a basis for interesting writing. Pupils enter the school with a significant proportion of them achieving below expectations in language development and they make good progress to achieve a good quality of spoken language.
- Currently, English, in common with the other subjects in the curriculum, is managed by the headteacher. This is a temporary arrangement brought about by staff changes. The general organisation of English is based upon the good work done by previous co-ordinators of the subject. The day-to-day management is effectively handled by the headteacher. The headteacher is maintaining the careful monitoring of teaching and learning as well as the analysis of pupils' work, all of which are used to improve standards and the pupils'

achievement. Overall, the school has made steady improvements in English since the previous inspection.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

49. The use of topics as a focus for learning has led to some integration of subjects. This in turn has led to developments in the use of literacy. The quality of writing in other areas of the curriculum, such as history or in recording results in science, is good and has improved as a result of this development. Pupils' interest is heightened and the themes provide them with interesting topics to write about. The good standards in reading ensure that pupils can acquire information readily from books or computers to support their study in other subjects.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The overall quality of teaching is good, with good use made of targets for learning.
- Pupils achieve well. In Year 6, standards are, overall, above the level expected nationally.
- Pupils respond well to mathematics and have an enthusiasm for their work.
- There is broad and good curriculum coverage.
- The extent and pace of mental work is sometimes inappropriate.

### **Commentary**

50. Pupils are, overall, attaining standards above the nationally expected levels in Year 6. This is also true of pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5, whilst in Years 1 and 2 standards are broadly average. Results in the 2003 national tests for eleven-year-olds indicate, but bearing in mind the small cohort size, average performance in comparison with all and similar schools. Results for Year 2 pupils show below average performance in 2003 against all and similar schools. The variation in test results and the present standards, simply reflect the differences found in the ability of the small year groups. With the good levels of support given, the pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets.
51. Importantly, and predominantly, as a result of the overall good quality teaching and the positive attitudes shown by the pupils, the great majority of them achieve well. Most pupils have good recall, for their age, of number bonds and multiplication facts. This was illustrated well in a good Year 5/6 lesson when the pupils used their mental recall of multiples and prime numbers in a 'game' of 'bingo'. This activity challenged their thinking and they were also motivated and enthused by the nature of the task; consequently, they learnt well. However, in a number of introductory sessions the pace is undemanding, or insufficient time is given to it, to ensure full consolidation of understanding, for example in a session devoted to number bonds and sequences.
52. The teachers are very adept at encouraging and engaging the interest of all pupils. They work very hard, and successfully, to include pupils in discussion and the celebration of mathematical success appropriate to the level of individuals. The good motivation of the pupils by the teachers is as a result of imaginative planning and relating work in mathematics as far as possible to 'real' life' situations. For example, statistical work on how pupils travel to school, the finding of treasure using co-ordinates, and the use of plane shapes to make interesting 'pictures' with the youngest pupils, all give meaning to mathematics activities.

53. Teachers generally approach mathematics in a very systematic and well structured way, thereby underpinning understanding. This was illustrated well in a lesson when the teacher explained the difficult concept of discrete and continuous data very effectively, resulting in very good understanding by the pupils. However, when the pupils are expected to understand too much in one go, as in some work on number bonds, learning and progress falters.
54. Pupils' learning and achievement is greatly assisted by the use of targets, particularly in Years 3 to 6. In discussion with pupils, they are keenly aware of their personal targets and speak with pride of those attained. This adds greatly to their personal and mathematical esteem, as well as to standards. Work is marked conscientiously and assessment of progress is good, as each pupil's achievement is evaluated regularly. The teachers work in close co-operation with the teaching assistants, for example there was a useful exchange of information between the teacher and the teaching assistant following her work with individual pupils on the computer supporting work on shape in the Year 1 class.
55. It is evident from planning documents, and a scrutiny of last year's pupils' work, that the mathematical curriculum is covered well and a wide range of experiences is offered. Good analyses of results are carried out, allowing the school to target individual pupils and follow progress closely. The monitoring and evaluation of the subject have improved since the last inspection and the school has sensibly used outside expertise, where appropriate, to assist in checking the quality of work. The school is acting well on the recommendations resulting from this external checking. The headteacher, who is temporarily overseeing the subject, has a very clear understanding of the direction of future developments.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

56. The school's increasingly cross-curricular approach is providing the pupils with good opportunities to use their mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding in a number of ways. This is evident, particularly in science where data are presented in a variety of ways, such as graphs and tables, and data handling in ICT.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pupils achieve well.
- Standards are above the level expected nationally in Years 2 and 6.
- The overall quality of teaching is good; teachers encourage their pupils very well.
- Available curriculum time is not always used effectively.

### **Commentary**

57. It is clear that pupils enjoy, and are stimulated by, this subject and consequently they make good progress and achieve well. The scrutiny of work from last year, and the relatively small amount currently available, together with lesson observations and discussions with pupils, indicate that they have a good understanding of science and standards are generally above the levels expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. In the national tests, performance over the last five years has been consistently above the national average. Caution must be taken in interpreting these results, as cohort sizes are very small. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They make good progress because they are assisted well.



58. The pupils generally collaborate well when carrying out investigations, which effectively supports their learning. In one lesson this co-operation was less effective as the group was too large to enable all pupils to be actively involved and they became less motivated in their learning. This decrease in motivation and learning was apparent in a couple of lessons when the time given to the subject was too long and pupils began to be distracted. However, the positive attitudes and good behaviour of most pupils help to ensure that the pace of learning is usually well maintained.
59. Despite the very occasional ineffective use of time, the overall quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils' needs are met well. The teachers offer good challenges to develop the pupils' scientific thinking. For example, in a good Year 5/6 lesson, the teacher built successfully on pupils' knowledge and understanding of circuitry work carried out two years before. Some Year 2 pupils' thinking was also appropriately challenged when considering the classification of animals using Carroll diagrams, and Year 3/4 pupils were challenged to explain outcomes of their experiments on friction. However, and most significantly, the teachers recognised that not all pupils would be able to rise to the challenge. They were, therefore, extremely careful to ensure, by effective encouragement and support, the self-esteem of these pupils did not suffer, particularly in the eyes of their peers. This awareness of differing needs and capabilities is a strength of the teaching.
60. The curriculum is well planned, ensuring exceptionally good coverage of scientific topics. Following the last inspection, the monitoring of the curriculum was significantly improved. The pupils' work, for example, was subject to a first rate, clear and systematic analysis by the then co-ordinator. The school has built successfully on the outcomes of this analysis, for example in responding to the need for more independent investigative work and a reduction in the number of worksheets used. These matters have been addressed well, particularly in Years 3 to 6 and have improved learning. There was, for example, a good balance, in a Year 5/6 lesson, between scientific exploration and directed discovery.
61. The teachers effectively use the pupils' developing mathematical skills in their science. There is evidence of the use of data presented graphically, for example in work on the growth of plants, and in a Year 3/4 lesson where the pupils calculated the mean of results from some friction experiments; this use of mathematical skills very effectively consolidated their scientific learning. The teachers also give appropriate prominence to the very important scientific notions of prediction and fair testing. As a result, the pupils had a good understanding of both concepts. There are high expectations for the standard of presentation in the pupils' books. This is particularly good in the oldest class. Work is regularly marked and assessment is well developed in Years 3 to 6. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. The subject is in a good state and moving forward well within the school's new curriculum approach. Co-ordination of science is competently overseen, on a temporary basis, by the headteacher.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- ICT is carefully planned and well taught so that pupils of all ages achieve well.
- Standards in the use of ICT in other subjects are good.
- The distribution of computers and other ICT resources in classrooms encourages use and makes for successful learning.
- Good use is made of teaching assistants to support the pupils' learning and achievement.
- The benches on which some of the computers are housed are too narrow and inhibit the development of good keyboard skills.

## **Commentary**

62. ICT is fully integrated with other subjects in the curriculum so that much of the learning of particular skills and techniques takes place as a group activity within other lessons. This gives a particular relevance to the work done. Computers and disc or tape players with the tools that go with them are seen principally as aids to learning. Pupils of all ages word process their writing so that from an early age they can present their work attractively.
63. The teaching and learning of ICT throughout the school is good. Much of the teaching is carried out very competently by the well-prepared teaching assistants. Teachers and support staff alike have good ICT skills and understand the subject well. They also use these skills in the preparation, planning and recording of their work. The regular use of short periods of time for teaching small scale and particular skills is a very effective way of encouraging learning as well as a good use of time. As a result of this, pupils of all ages learn quickly and achieve well. They generally attain standards that exceed those expected nationally in the use of ICT to support other subjects.
64. The computers are distributed in the classrooms throughout the school so that they are readily available both as tools to support other subjects and as the means of teaching ICT. This is a significant factor in the success of the subject. Assessment in the subject is generally carefully carried out and used to ensure that pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils have their own ICT folders so that they can keep a check on their own progress. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively by the staff so that their progress is similar to that of the other pupils in their classes and they achieve well.
65. Each classroom is furnished with sufficient computers to allow the planned work to take place. In some cases the apparatus, or its siting, is not wholly appropriate for the pupils using it. Some of the workbenches are too narrow to allow the keyboards to be placed as effectively as they might be, but the pupils are adept at eventually finding a way round the problems.
66. Pupils enjoy ICT and are conscientious in their work, taking pride in their successes. They generally work well together and support each other's endeavours. The effective siting of a sufficient range of computers, except where the bench is too narrow, the good range of ancillary equipment, the good quality teaching and support together with the higher than average standards represents a good improvement in the subject since the previous inspection.

## **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

67. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is a strength of the school because the resources are seen principally as aids to learning. The use of ICT to support learning begins effectively in the Foundation Stage. There, the children use photographs taken of them to support their study of themselves. In the word processing of their writing, older pupils use different fonts not only to provide visual effects but also to represent expression in language. In mathematics and science, data collected and analysed by pupils is displayed through ICT very effectively, and some of it in science is gathered using scientific instruments connected to the computers. Pupils use photographs as the basis of pictures, which they alter using electronic means to turn them into their own pictorial creations. In other subjects, pupils use computers to access information to broaden their knowledge effectively.

## **HUMANITIES**

In geography it was possible only to sample work and hold discussions with pupils. On the basis of this information, there is every indication that standards are in line with national expectations.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

68. These comments are based on observation of one lesson, the scrutiny of work, discussion with pupils and teachers and an analysis of displays on the walls plus photographic records of visits.
69. The standards attained by pupils in Years 2 and 6 are generally in line with national expectations. The older pupils are articulate and happily describe the work they have done with a good level of recall. The younger pupils follow the adventures and travels of Barnaby Bear on video and give a good account of what they have learned. In Year 1 they have a good knowledge of the four main points of the compass and can identify the countries that make up the British Isles indicating for example which one is in the North.
70. The school makes good use of the locality in geography. The older ones conducted a traffic census and study of housing with land use. This led to a theoretical proposal for a by-pass round the village. This project included map work as well as the collection of data. Literacy skills were used to compose letters to people who might be affected by the proposal, though the persuasive language lacked some of the finesse found in other 'English' writing.
71. Good use is also made of visits to develop the pupils' understanding of the topics studied, for example the current study of space followed a visit to the Space Centre in Leicester, which made a strong impression on the pupils and provided a good basis for further work.
72. Pupils of all ages and capabilities enjoy the work planned for geography and achieve well. The co-ordination of the subject has been maintained effectively during staff changes, and there has been satisfactory development since the previous inspection.

## **History**

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The development of the curriculum around themes and topics motivates and interests pupils, enlivens the teaching and leads to more secure learning.
- When pupils are ready they are introduced to first hand evidence and to oral history, and are taught how to use it well.
- Making visits to places of historical interest and inviting visitors with historical experience or expertise to talk to the pupils enriches their learning.

## **Commentary**

73. Overall standards are in line with expectation of pupils in Years 2 and 6. Where a topic has been taught by a teacher with a particular enthusiasm for the subject, and when this leads to the subject being explored in a variety of ways, standards are higher. One example is the study of ancient Greece which included dance, art, an exploration of food as well as through books and other media.
74. In most classes, where the teaching of history is good pupils enjoy the subject, learn well and make good progress. As a result their achievement is good. Where the teaching is satisfactory learning, while still adequate, is less enjoyable and progress is less rapid and the quality of the achievement of pupils in those classes is lower. A good feature of the teaching is the way that series of lessons are introduced by a visit to a place of historical interest. For example, the visit

to Eden Camp as a prelude to World War 11 studies. The visit also proved a useful starting point for work in other subjects such as English and design and technology as well as providing a very good basis for historical thinking and awareness. A similar and good stimulus to learning was provided for younger children when an elderly visitor talked about her childhood in the village some 90 years ago.

75. Lessons with first-hand contact with historical events enable the pupils to grasp concepts such as the passage of time, or differences in outlook common at different periods in history directly. They are in direct contrast with those lessons, where the teaching while competent is less effective, based upon thin commercial resources which provide a narrow range of information lacking in challenge or complexity. These lessons do not provide the pupils, especially the older ones, with enough information upon which to base the opinions they are expected to form.
76. The range of historical topics provided in the curriculum meets national requirements, and they are adequately resourced. The school's development of particular themes, some of which are historical in character, as the focus for work in a variety of subjects over a period of time gives history appropriate prominence in the curriculum. Good use is made of literacy skills in writing for history; there is less evidence of the use of mathematics in gathering and handling data. The work provided for different ability and age groups in classes is suitably matched to the pupils' capabilities. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by this and achieve well.
77. Currently there is no identified history co-ordinator, because of staffing changes. The headteacher is providing day-to-day management for the subject. There has been a satisfactory level of improvement in the subject since the previous inspection.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

There were limited opportunities to observe lessons in this curriculum area. Conversations were held with pupils and staff and, where available, previous work was examined. On the basis of this information, standards in all these subjects are, at the very minimum, at least in line with national expectations for pupils aged seven and eleven.

### **ART AND DESIGN**

78. During the inspection it was possible to observe only one art and design lesson. The outcomes of another lesson were scrutinised towards its conclusion. Work attractively displayed around the school was also scrutinised and a discussion held with pupils about their artistic experiences and understanding. On the basis of this evidence, it indicates that standards are above those expected for primary schools and that the pupils achieve well.
79. The enthusiasm shown for their work in art and design by a group of pupils in discussion was mirrored in the one observed lesson in Year 6. Pupils concentrated very well and worked hard to improve their techniques. They showed a very good understanding of technical language, for example by the accurate use of such terms as 'iconic image' and used a good range of skills, such as layering to build up detail from a flat background. Good levels of skill were also seen in the outcomes of a Year 2 lesson. The pupils had moved successfully from their previous experience of painting to show great detail to the Australian aboriginal style, where the emphasis is on shape. This progress represents good levels of achievement.
80. When discussing style in art and design, the pupils showed a good appreciation of abstract interpretations and more representational work on 'real painting' as they called it. They were able to competently discuss a number of well-known artists and the differences in their styles.

81. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to work in a range of media, such as pastels and clay. The subject is also integrated well into other subjects, for example science in work on light and dark, and history in work on the Ancient Greeks. Pupils make good use of drawing and art programs in ICT. There is little evidence of the use of sketchbooks to support the development of pupils' drawing.

## **Music**

82. Other than the pupils' singing in assembly, which was satisfactory, no music was available for observation during the period of the inspection. Music in the curriculum is provided by a visiting teacher, who takes each class in the school. The school also facilitates and supports financially the provision of violin tuition, currently for seven pupils. There are plans to extend this provision to brass instruments.
83. In discussions with some of the pupils, they spoke knowledgeably about the range of instruments in the orchestra and the families to which they belong. They appreciated and spoke about the different styles of music to which they had listened, and the range of percussion instruments they played in lessons. Their knowledge of musicians was limited but one boy spoke with amazement about the ability of Beethoven to compose while deaf. They were generally enthusiastic about their musical experiences.
84. Parents, at the pre-inspection meeting, spoke with particular enthusiasm about the music in the Easter and Christmas productions seeing it as one of the strengths of the school. The pupils' musical experiences are also enhanced by the music played for them to listen to as they leave the assembly hall.

## **Design and technology**

85. As no lessons were seen, these observations of provision are based on a scrutiny of photographic evidence, discussion with pupils and staff and the analysis of some work completed during the current term.
86. The standard of work seen in design and technology is broadly in line with national expectations. There is also evidence of imaginative and well produced work associated with a history-based project. This is indicative of the way in which the subject is used as a support for other subjects in the curriculum.
87. The resources provided for the subject are adequate for the needs of the work planned. The emphasis on first-hand experience in learning, which is a significant feature of the schools educational outlook, provides a sound basis upon which the subject is taught. The interesting visits, which motivate learning in general, also provide a stimulus for this subject. The pupils are enthusiastic 'makers' and 'doers' though in general they are less keen on preliminary planning.
88. The cramped accommodation limits the ease with which some 'construction' work could be undertaken but the careful management of the subject ensures that this does not affect the range of activities provided, nor the sound achievement of the pupils.

## **Physical education**

89. Pupils, in discussion, spoke with very great enthusiasm about the range of sports they could take part in. For its size, the school offers a commendably large number of sporting activities, for example lacrosse, rounders, soccer, cricket, rugby, athletics and netball. There are school teams in all these activities, except rugby. Many parents were also pleased with the improvement in the level of provision; swimming is provided throughout the school from the very youngest pupils. As a result, no pupil has left the school unable to swim the nationally expected 25 metres. This is a very good record of achievement.

90. In addition to swimming and games, the school provides for the full range of physical education activities, including dance. In one of the two lessons it was possible to observe, Year 3 and 4 pupils participated with exceptional enthusiasm and skill, making very good progress and attaining high standards. This excellent lesson challenged the pupils exceptionally well, leading to outstanding performances of Greek dance. Year 1/2 pupils also showed positive attitudes to their physical education work showing good interpretative skills. The control of movement, balance and co-ordination was satisfactory. The success of this good lesson was the effective way in which the recorded lesson was used by the teacher. She ensured that opportunities were taken to stop and reinforce the essential skills. This is good teaching practice which resulted in effective learning.
91. In both of these lessons, it was clear the teachers realised the importance, for safety reasons, that response to the directions must be immediate. Whilst the importance of systematic warm-up activities is also realised and undertaken, the 'cool down' sessions are sometimes insufficient. Resources to support the subject are good and the good-sized hall and field are used effectively. Work in this subject adds significantly to the pupils' social and cultural development.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

92. The school provides good, and regular, opportunities for the pupils to discuss a wide range of issues that affect their daily lives. This work is central to the very good provision made for the pupils' personal development through the delivery of the curriculum. Good preparation is made in class, by the teachers, for meetings of the school council. The pupils are provided with good opportunities to discuss forthcoming issues, so that the class representation can reflect opinion in the school council meeting. In the meetings, good 'procedural' methods are effectively being introduced.
93. The good range of extra-curricular and school visits is an effective support to the pupils' social education and growing independence.
94. Good 'conventions' for discussions are well established from Reception onwards so that this time is profitably spent and all pupils feel able to contribute. This was clearly evident in a Reception and Year 1 session where the pupils expressed their feelings about anger and when saying sorry is appropriate. The school takes every opportunity to support, for example, healthy eating and the importance of exercise through some well-focused work in science and in the nature of the food provided for school lunches. Visits to the school by representatives of a variety of communities help the pupils effectively to understand and respect differences.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
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	2

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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