

INSPECTION REPORT

HARTSHOLME PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lincoln

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120687

Headteacher: Mrs Muriel Ellerington

Lead inspector: Mr Brian Gosling

Dates of inspection: 7th – 9th March 2005

Inspection number: 266962

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:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	320
School address:	Carrington Drive Lincoln Lincolnshire
Postcode:	LN6 0DE
Telephone number:	01522 683705
Fax number:	01552 501078
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Roger White
Date of previous inspection:	April 2003

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hartsholme Primary School is bigger than most primary schools. There are, currently, 320 pupils: 174 boys and 146 girls. All but a few pupils are from a White British cultural background and no pupil has English as an additional language. Pupils come from the local surrounding areas, and Census and other national data show that this is an area of significant social and economic deprivation, although the proportion of pupils that receive free school meals is below average. The school's assessment information shows that the overall attainment of the children when they start at the school in the Nursery is well below average, although it varies between years. The proportion of pupils leaving and joining the school at other than the normal times is above the national average in the older classes, but below that average in the younger classes. This is because the number of pupils at the school has been falling in recent years. However, this trend has been halted and the number of pupils increased this year. The proportion of pupils joining the school other than at the usual time is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average, as is the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need.

A new block, built in 2002, is now used as a self-contained Foundation Stage unit for the Nursery and Reception classes. The pupils in Years 1 - 6 are in classes that are organised according to pupils' prior attainment. In addition, classes in Years 3 - 6 are set by ability for mathematics. There has been a substantial amount of teacher mobility, with almost half of the teachers joining the school in the last two years.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22453	Brian Gosling	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Mathematics; History.
08992	Julian Vischer	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
14842	Stephanie Cook	<i>Team inspector</i>	Information and Communication Technology; Art and Design; Design and Technology; Foundation Stage.
20614	Don Kimber	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Geography; Religious Education; Special Educational Needs.
33406	Alan White	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Music; Physical Education; Personal, Social and Health Education.

The inspection contractor was:

VT Education Ltd
Old Garden House
The Lanterns
Bridge Lane
London
SW11 3AD

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Hartsholme Primary School is an effective and improving school that provides good value for money. Pupils' attainment in the national tests when they leave the school matches that of similar schools in mathematics and science and is above the average in English. Pupils are now achieving well throughout the school as a result of the purposeful and very effective leadership of the headteacher, who joined the school in 2002. Almost half of the teachers have joined the school since this time and teaching is good overall, with much that is of a high quality. The good teaching is supported by a very good use of assessment information that shapes the curriculum and matches the pupils' tasks to their learning needs. This enables pupils of all abilities to be fully involved in lessons. These improvements have been secured through the very effective leadership of subject leaders and others in management positions that include the assessment manager and the pastoral manager.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- The headteacher is providing inspirational and clear-sighted leadership that is resulting in rapid improvement.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to lessons because the school promotes their personal development very well.
- Assessment is being used very well to raise the already good quality of teaching and learning.
- Good cross-curricular planning makes learning more interesting for the pupils.
- Some sessions are too long and the time available is not always used well.
- The subject leaders are very effective in raising standards.
- The school has very good management systems.
- Parents are not involved as fully as they might be in their children's education.
- Community links are not exploited fully.

The school has secured very good improvement since the previous inspection. Standards have improved in the national tests and continue to improve because pupils' rates of learning have also improved significantly. This has been achieved through improved structures and procedures at all levels of management in the school. Consequently, the quality of teaching and learning has improved. The main areas for improvement identified in the previous report have been addressed very effectively and with rigour, and attendance is significantly better. In particular, assessment and target setting are used very effectively to inform teaching and guide pupils' progress. The improvement noted in the previous inspection report has been maintained and is resulting in higher standards of attainment and a better quality of education for the pupils.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	E	D	C	B
mathematics	E	D	E	C
science	E*	D	D	C

*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*

Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. Pupils are now starting school with lower standards of attainment overall, and, from a low point in 2002, standards have improved across the school; all pupils, including those with special educational needs (SEN), achieve well. Standards have continued to improve since the national tests in 2004 and are now generally average in Year 2

and Year 6. The school's detailed records show that the children in the Foundation Stage make good progress, and most children attain the goals they are expected to reach by the end of Reception, in all areas except literacy. Standards at the end of Year 2 are satisfactory in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards at the end of Year 6 are also satisfactory in English, mathematics and science. The table shows the improving standards since 2002 in English and science, which the school has focused upon. (E* shows that the results were in the lowest five percent of schools.) The school has focused this year on raising standards in mathematics and this effort has been successful. Standards are also satisfactory in information and communication technology (ICT) in Year 2 and Year 6.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and they behave well. These positive attitudes make a significant contribution to the good progress they are making and to the calm, friendly ethos of the school. Attendance has improved and is now close to the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, with significant amounts of very good teaching in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 - 6. This is the result not only of very capable teachers, some of whom are new to the school, but also the very good use of assessment to ensure that pupils' tasks are matched to their learning needs. This improves pupils' attitudes to learning and promotes their enthusiastic and purposeful response to lessons.

The curriculum has been developed well and it provides good learning opportunities for pupils. The care, guidance and support of the pupils are good and the school has good links with other schools. Its links with parents and the community are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. This is having a clear impact on the quality of education provided and the standards pupils are now achieving. The clear and strong leadership of the headteacher is very good, and the procedures introduced for the leadership of other key staff, including subject leaders, have enabled them to be very effective in their roles. Governance is satisfactory and statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have positive views about the school. They are especially positive about the teaching and the expectation that their children are doing their best, and on the approachability of the school. They are most concerned about the range of extra-curricular activities offered to pupils and the quality of information about how their child is getting on. Pupils are also positive about the school and Year 6 pupils are very positive. Pupils are especially pleased with the support they receive from adults in the school and say they find most lessons interesting. They are concerned that some bullying still goes on but feel that problems are sorted out well by members of staff. Older pupils say that this is better than it used to be.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Reorganise the curriculum, both within the school day and in the longer term, to use time more effectively.
- Develop opportunities for parents to be more involved in their children's learning.
- Find ways to exploit links with the community in a way that enhances the curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is good in the Foundation Stage, Years 1 – 2, and Years 3 - 6. Standards are improving and are now broadly average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and standards are improving across the school.
- The trend in the school's results is rising faster than the national trend.
- Standards in the national tests at the end of Year 6 are not high enough, particularly in mathematics.

Commentary

1. Children's attainment when they start at the school in the Nursery is lower than it has been in previous years. The school's detailed records show that the attainment of most of the children currently in the Nursery did not meet national expectations when they started school. The careful use of assessment to plan tasks and activities that match the children's learning needs is ensuring that the children achieve well in both the Nursery and Reception. Most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals¹ expected of them by the time they enter Year 1, in all areas of learning except some aspects of literacy.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.7 (15.9)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.6 (16.0)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.6 (16.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 49 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The school's results² at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were well below the national average in reading, but above average in writing and below average in mathematics. Compared to those of similar schools, the results were average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. In science, the proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected Level 2³ was close to the national average. The results in writing are, unusually, significantly higher than the results in reading. The school monitors pupils' attainment carefully and has identified discrepancies in teacher assessments of pupils' attainment and has taken action accordingly. Consequently, the results in the national test at the end of Year 2 are not entirely secure. Nevertheless, the school monitors and evaluates pupils' learning very well and has taken effective action to improve the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 - 2.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

¹ On Early Learning Goals: QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of Early Learning Goals for children in the Foundation Stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve, by the time they start the National Curriculum in Year 1, in six areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development; and personal social and emotional development. The Foundation Stage continues until pupils enter Year 1, when they begin Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.

² On the school's results: An average points score provides schools with a single statistic with which to compare the overall grades attained by their pupils with the grades attained by pupils in other schools. At Key Stage 1, the National Curriculum Levels of attainment are given a score. For example, in mathematics Level 1=9 points and Level 2=15 points, and so on. The average test score achieved by a school is calculated by adding up all the scores achieved by the pupils and then dividing by the number of pupils who took the test. These comparisons are the ones used in the figures printed in the summary of the report. When the percentage of pupils attaining a particular level is compared to that in other schools, this is stated clearly in the text.

³ On Levels: The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that, by the end of Year 2, pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 3 are therefore attaining above nationally expected levels. It is a national expectation that all pupils should reach Level 4 by the end of Year 6. Pupils who reach Level 5 are therefore attaining above the nationally expected level for their age.

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.8 (26.4)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	25.5 (26.1)	27.0 (26.8)
science	27.5 (28.2)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. The school's results at the end of Year 6 in 2004 were average in English, well below average in mathematics and below average in science. Compared to those of schools with a similar proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, the results were above average in English and average in mathematics and science. (The results have not been compared with those of schools with similar prior attainment, as results at the end of Year 2 have not been entirely secure.) This indicates that standards are rising and, indeed, the trend in the school's results is rising faster than the national trend. The reason for the lower results in mathematics is that the school had concentrated on English and science, as standards in these subjects had been identified as the major areas for improvement. However, the school responded to the 2004 results by focusing on mathematics in the current year and this has been successful in improving standards in mathematics.

4. The school monitors pupils' attainment closely and this, along with inspection evidence, shows that pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are likely to attain standards in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science this year. Standards are also satisfactory in ICT in Year 2 and Year 6. This continues the improvement noted in the previous inspection report in 2003 and is being achieved through the concerted efforts of the school. Central to these efforts has been the role of the subject leaders, which has been established very effectively. The subject leaders monitor and evaluate standards and provision very well and they create good action plans to address weaknesses and raise standards. This has led to the careful assessment of pupils' learning, the setting of targets for classes and individual pupils, and the improvement of teaching through rigorous evaluation and a programme of improvement. The weaknesses identified and effectively addressed by subject leaders include the need for greater links with other subjects in English, regular practice of mathematical facts and more opportunities for practical investigations in science.

5. Pupils achieve well because the school has effectively put into practice a rigorous system that is designed to maintain the best rate of learning for every pupil. The school identified the fact that more able pupils were not attaining the standards they were capable of, and consequently has set challenging targets for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics in the national tests. These targets focus on enabling a greater proportion of pupils to achieve the higher Level 5. This is supported by the careful use of assessment to identify ability groups and to set tasks that match pupils' learning needs. The school has identified gifted and talented pupils, and teachers devise suitably challenging tasks for them. The challenging targets set by the school reflect the commitment to raising the achievement of these pupils. Targets are set in English and mathematics for classes, groups of pupils and individual pupils. These are displayed in classrooms or kept in pupils' books and provide good guidance for pupils of all abilities in achieving the standards of which they are capable. Although boys generally did better than girls in the national tests in 2004, the average for the last three years shows that there is little difference between boys' and girls' attainment. Nevertheless, the school has recognised this difference in 2004 and is looking at its provision to ensure that it meets the needs of both boys and girls.

6. It is not secure to compare one year group with another as an indication of pupils' progress and their achievement. This is because standards had been low until they began to rise across the school in 2002. From that starting point, pupils' achievement is good in all the core subjects. Pupils with SEN achieve well because they are supported well, which represents continuing improvement since it was last reported on. Some pupils joined the school during Years 1 – 6, and the very good use of assessment is ensuring that these pupils achieve as well as other groups of pupils. The school has established very good systems to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning throughout the school, and this is a sound basis to ensure further improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are very good and their behaviour is good. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are keen to participate in lessons and take a lively interest in school activities.
- Pupils form constructive relationships with staff and one another, which help foster their learning and a spirit of community.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons.
- Behaviour in the playground is not as good as that in the classrooms.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection.

Commentary

7. In most lessons, pupils are very keen to join in and have a go. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. They sit patiently on the carpet in their respective groups and listen to the teacher very attentively. There is a keenness to participate in lessons. When talking about the school, many pupils praise its qualities. One boy in Year 5, for example, considered that, if he were inspecting the school, he '...would give it ten out of ten'. When pupils come in at the beginning of the day, they get on readily with the writing or the mathematics set for them while the registers are being taken. Moving from the carpet to their tables is efficient and sensible, and pupils settle quickly to the tasks prepared for them. Occasionally, pupils' interest wanes when sessions are too long and the learning activities lack variety.

8. Very positive attitudes are reflected clearly in the very good relationships between pupils and between adults and pupils. These relationships foster a spirit of common purpose and give lessons and extra-curricular activities an added liveliness. Pupils know where they stand and have high levels of self-esteem. Much of this building of relationships relies on the concise and consistent guidance of the behaviour policy. The school has made it clear both to pupils and to parents that it sets great store by getting this foundation established with the active involvement of all. For example, classroom rules are negotiated at the beginning of the year and then prominently displayed in each classroom, and all together in the main thoroughfare. The good code of conduct drawn up by the school is the foundation that forms the basis for these rules. The range of awards, which include a house point system and the celebration of weekly achievements, complement this code very well. Prefects from Year 6 fulfil an established role well in monitoring fellow pupils' activities both at lunchtime and during assemblies, as well as when moving around the school, and this also contributes markedly to their own maturity.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Any other ethnic group

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
316	1	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0

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

9. Another result of the clear expectations of pupils' conduct is the improvement of behaviour in the classroom and around the school, which is usually very good. Pupils are very willing to hold open doors for visitors and staff, sometimes vying with each other for the privilege. At lunchtime, pupils wait until the entire 'sitting' has come in before any of them sit down and begin eating. Thanks are then given. The lunchtime supervisors are respected by the pupils and they, in turn, respect the pupils by not fussing over minor details of eating habits and by allowing them to leave on their own initiative. Pupils' behaviour is good in the playground. Here, pupils play with gusto and enthusiasm.

Sometimes, however, a significant minority can be reckless, racing around the playground with far less care for others than they show inside the building. There was one temporary exclusion in the last year. This is indicative of the school's insistence on good standards of pupils' behaviour and its willingness to take firm action when those expectations are not met.

10. All aspects of pupils' personal development are good. The moral and social aspects are developed well through the very good management of behaviour that sustains an ethos of mutual respect. The spiritual aspect is developed well through incidental provision such as the saying of 'Grace' everyday in the dining hall and the consistent use of a moment of reflection in assemblies. Cultural aspects are covered well through subjects and through visits and visitors, and the school consistently uses opportunities in teaching and assemblies to inject a multicultural flavour to enhance pupils' learning experience.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.2	School data :	0.4
National data:	5.1	National data:	0.4

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

11. Attendance has risen from well below average to average since the time of the last inspection. This very good improvement has come about through a consistent and clear policy which has been discussed with parents, and which ensures that parents, pupils and staff are quite clear about the school's expectations. Termly awards have been introduced recently to boost levels of attendance further.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching is good and the pupils are provided with good curricular opportunities. The care, guidance and support of the pupils are good and the school's links with other schools are also good. The school has satisfactory links with parents and the community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school. The use of assessment is very good and makes a significant contribution to the improving standards in the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and reflects the school's commitment to improvement.
- The pace of some lessons is too slow and opportunities for pupils of different abilities to work together collaboratively are limited.
- Teachers and teaching assistants in the Reception and Nursery classes work together very effectively to create an exciting place for children to learn.
- The school now has a very effective system of assessment, which is being used successfully to raise standards.
- Guidance and professional development by highly skilled colleagues is improving the quality of teaching.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	13 (27%)	21 (44%)	14 (29%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	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.

12. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection, when it was judged to be satisfactory with some significant weaknesses. The barriers that hindered improvement have been tackled and overcome by the headteacher. Changes in staffing, very effective monitoring procedures, carefully focused professional development, and peer coaching and mentoring have led to significant improvements in the overall quality of teaching. The contribution of senior members of staff, including teachers with significant and acknowledged expertise, together with very good subject leadership, is ensuring that pupils learn at an improved rate, and this is driving up standards. The headteacher has made sure that very capable teachers have been appointed to the school. Induction procedures for these and for newly qualified teachers are very good and are instrumental in guaranteeing that new teachers are fully informed and familiar with the school's routines and expectations.

13. The great majority of lessons observed during the inspection were successful in challenging the pupils, stimulating their interest and helping them to make good gains in their learning. Several teachers in Years 3 - 6 have particular, recognised teaching strengths, and their lessons are consistently very good. Although all the teaching was at least satisfactory, teaching is not yet consistently good in all classes. On a few occasions, learning is too carefully controlled by the teacher and is in contrast to the stimulating, exciting and consistently challenging teaching and learning observed in many of the lessons. In some lessons, the pace slows when pupils spend too long sitting on the carpet, or the lesson is overlong because it repeats an aspect of the previous lesson. As a result, pupils can become restless and inattentive.

14. The school organises most classes by prior attainment so that pupils of similar ability work together in one class. This works very well in helping to raise standards, especially when combined with the school's 'rainbow' system. This groups the pupils according to ability within the class, not only for work but also in other situations, such as when sitting on the carpet for discussion. Lower attaining pupils sit at the front so the teacher can make sure they are listening, and the higher attaining pupils sit at the back. Teachers also target specific questions to particular groups of pupils of differing abilities so they can assess what pupils have learned. One of the most significant factors in improving the quality of teaching and consequently raising standards is the way these school systems result in a close match of work to pupils' abilities. However, this organisation does mean that pupils with SEN and lower attaining pupils are all together in one class, which limits the opportunities for them to interact and work collaboratively with pupils of other abilities.

15. As well as the above major factors which have significantly contributed to the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning, many other features have contributed, of which the most notable are:

- * What is to be learned in the lesson is communicated effectively to pupils, displayed on the board and often written into their books. In most lessons, teachers refer to these points and teachers effectively evaluate what has been learned at the end of the lesson.
- * Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well and, as a result, pupils are enthusiastic and keen to learn.
- * Lessons are interesting and a good range of motivating resources is used.
- * Pupils have class and group targets, which they know. The new individual targets for English and mathematics are often 'bookmarks' that can be moved from page to page to act as reminders to the pupils.
- * Pupils make good gains in their knowledge and skills in most lessons because questioning is used well and teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects.
- * Where classrooms are fitted with interactive whiteboards, these are used very effectively to motivate and involve pupils in their learning.
- * The effective deployment of well-trained and experienced teaching assistants adds considerably to the quality of education provided.

16. The attitudes and values that pupils are encouraged to form are influenced in practice by the school's approach to teaching pupils to be responsible learners from an early age. This starts in the Foundation Stage unit, where confidence, self-esteem and independence are cultivated very successfully. The team spirit in this new unit is high and members of staff have worked extremely hard to create an exciting learning environment for the children. All members of staff in the Foundation Stage have a very good knowledge of how young children learn, and the direct teaching of the whole class or groups of children is very good. Staffing levels are reduced in the afternoons, when there are fewer children in the Nursery and, as a result, children do not benefit as much from direct teaching or from sustained interactions with adults.

17. The teaching of the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT is good and pupils make good progress. Subject leaders have audited provision for their subjects and produced effective action plans, based on an evaluation of teachers' planning, samples of pupils' work and lesson observations. Consequently, they have exerted considerable influence over the teaching of their subject and ensure that new initiatives are implemented successfully. The headteacher's monitoring of teaching shows that significant improvements have taken place because individual members of staff have been helped to improve their practice by working alongside teaching colleagues. The school plans to increase this use of the particular expertise of some teachers to ensure that teaching is consistently good in all classes.

18. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils, and high expectations of their behaviour. Consequently, pupils try hard to please and want to do their best. In most lessons, they apply themselves conscientiously to their tasks, are keen to discuss issues and are enthusiastic in their responses to teachers' questions. There is good support for pupils with SEN, and this helps them to make good progress towards their targets. Teachers consistently involve all pupils well in classroom

activities, and teaching assistants also make a good contribution to support the learning of these pupils. The very good assessment procedures are currently being refined to track the progress of pupils with SEN more carefully. Teachers typically promote good interpersonal relationships, which helps to boost the confidence and self-esteem of these pupils and thus enrich their learning.

19. The school has addressed very well the weaknesses in assessment identified at the time of the last inspection. The headteacher has established a very effective, balanced range of procedures that provide very helpful information to aid planning and teaching. There are robust procedures for tracking pupils' progress, which teachers use to inform teaching, and targets are set for each class, groups and individual pupils. The work of each pupil is carefully assessed and tracked. This information, together with a forecast of individual progress, is displayed in the staff-room for the interest and discussion of all staff. Marking was previously reported as variable. The school has devised a simple but effective marking system that all teachers are using successfully, and marking gives good information to pupils about how they can improve. Year 6 pupils concur that marking is better and that they find it helpful.

The curriculum

The quality and breadth of curricular opportunities are good, and include a good range of activities to support learning outside the school day. The accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory in Years 1 - 6. In the Foundation Stage, the accommodation is good and learning resources are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good cross-curricular links make learning more interesting for the pupils.
- The length and organisation of some sessions do not readily sustain pupils' interest.
- The provision for pupils with SEN is good.
- The very good provision for pupils' personal and social development contributes strongly to the school's supportive ethos and boosts learning.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The children in the Foundation Stage unit benefit from good accommodation and very good resources.

Commentary

20. The school has successfully developed an exciting curriculum that embraces all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum, the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The headteacher has been very effective in inspiring and encouraging colleagues to develop the curriculum in interesting and exciting ways. The planning of the curriculum reflects and draws upon the high quality assessment and monitoring and evaluation procedures. For example, the improvement of medium-term plans has led to the provision of greater detail and promotes further the importance of the use of assessment in planning pupils' learning tasks. Other improvements in the current year include the development of 'thematic planning', which forges cross-curricular links between subjects. In giving an emphasis to the pupils' excellence and enjoyment of learning, the school has successfully promoted creative aspects of the curriculum. An arts week was introduced within the last year, and the school has clear plans to increase the use of drama to support learning in different subjects.

21. The school has properly organised lessons to provide a strong focus on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, which is successfully raising standards. However, this leads, on occasions, to a lack of variety in pupils' learning tasks, which makes it difficult for some pupils to sustain their concentration throughout the day. For example, a literacy hour is followed by a lengthy reading

lesson in one class, and four out of the five lessons on one day during the inspection were either English or mathematics. This limits the breadth and balance of learning experiences within the day and has a negative effect on some pupils' ability to sustain interest and enthusiasm. As a result, pupils' rate of learning is not as good during these sessions as it is when there is a variety of learning activities with a brisk pace which helps to sustain pupils' concentration and interest.

22. The school consistently seeks to ensure that all pupils are fully included in all activities, whether in lessons or at other times. The needs of gifted and talented pupils are met and the provision for pupils with SEN is good. This is reflected in the good quality of pupils' individual education plans (IEPs). The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) works closely with colleagues, and teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with SEN, both in lessons and in groups that are withdrawn from class. The very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is making a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Regular lessons are planned to give pupils the opportunity to consider their rights and responsibilities within a school community and the requirements to provide sex education and drugs awareness are met. The personal and social development of older pupils is developed well by the residential visits that have been introduced recently.

23. There is a good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities that are popular with pupils. The school has responded well to the expressed concern of parents by providing more extra-curricular activities. These now include an arts club, which brings visitors into school. During the inspection, an after-school physical education club was led sensitively and successfully by two young people from the YMCA, and about 20 upper junior pupils enthusiastically took part. Other clubs that take place during the lunch hour or after school include recorders, two computer clubs, a story-telling club, a choir and a textiles club. They provide opportunities for pupils in all years from Year 1. The school is currently seeking parents' views on the provision of peripatetic music lessons.

24. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. Many features add to the welcoming atmosphere in the school and enhance the learning environment for pupils. Classrooms are spacious, and the new entrance lobby provides space for an interactive sculpture that pupils re-design during the day. There is also a well-stocked library. The good accommodation and very good resources for Nursery and Reception children have been established in the last year. The computer suite and four other classrooms now have interactive whiteboards, which are used very well by teachers and pupils to heighten pupils' motivation and understanding. A very impressive feature of the school is the quality of display and decoration, and the great care, skill and effort put into making it an attractive place in which to learn and to work. Not only are there good standards of cleaning and maintenance, but there are the colourful and attractive wall displays. These frequently include pupils' work; many are interactive and make a positive contribution to pupils' self-esteem and the learning environment.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. The support, advice and guidance pupils receive are good. The involvement of pupils is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good and trusting relationships with several adults whom they can turn to if they have concerns.
- First-aid procedures are very good.
- Pupils' views are listened to well but they have no formal say yet in the development of the school.
- There are good induction procedures.

Commentary

25. The advice, support and guidance pupils receive are good because of the good monitoring of their progress through the school. The charts of pupils' progress in English and mathematics on display in the staff-room are indicative of the good knowledge teachers have of all pupils at any given time. In addition, a pastoral record of achievements and development is held on each pupil. The pastoral manager co-ordinates this aspect well, offering a cohesive overview that includes the PSHE programme. These exemplify the good improvement since this aspect was last reported on. Good support and guidance are also given to pupils through the very clear behaviour policy with its associated system of awards. The Year 6 prefects contribute well to pupils' welfare, and fellow pupils willingly turn to them for help. There are several adults for pupils to turn to if they have concerns, because relationships in the school are very good. As a result, pupils feel safe and very well supported. There is good support for pupils with SEN. The very good assessment and tracking of pupils' learning ensure the clear identification of their individual needs and monitor their progress closely. Those pupils with statements of SEN are supported well.

26. A large number of staff has been fully trained in First Aid provision, and many have the basic training. All members of staff have been provided with diabetics training. Good medical folders on pupils with any form of medical need are printed with a photograph and issued to all staff. These records are simple and easy to use, permitting ready access to essential information. These very good procedures are supported by good health and safety provision. Conscientious monitoring and regular involvement of governors support a good range of risk assessments.

27. The very good relationships between adults and pupils ensure that pupils are listened to and their views taken seriously. There is no school council, currently, but plans are in place to establish a school council next term to involve pupils more closely in school development.

28. The good induction procedures extend beyond a standard familiarisation with the school. For example, pupils enjoy a Teddy Bears' Picnic in the school grounds when new pupils are invited to bring their teddy bears. Parents praise this event, saying that it breaks down barriers and also offers them a very good opportunity to get to know other parents. Workshops to aid new parents to become involved in their children's work support the pupils' settling in process well.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has satisfactory links with parents and the community. Links with other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The approachability of the school and how it deals with complaints are good.
- The school involves parents well through listening to their views and responding to them.
- Opportunities to involve parents in their children's learning are not fully exploited.
- Community links are not fully exploited.

Commentary

29. Since this area was last reported on, the headteacher has introduced several good features and the links with parents are now satisfactory. The way the school has created an approachable ethos has not only increased the opportunities for parents to come into the school but it has also changed the reputation of the school to one that welcomes parents. Parents feel that their concerns are listened to and dealt with more effectively now. The school issued a parent questionnaire at the start of this year, and with the assistance of the governors this has been analysed and responded to. One of the outcomes of this is the establishing of a parent forum, which is soon to hold its first meeting. This is a good and quick response.

30. Information for parents on matters such as their children's progress is satisfactory. Curriculum information of a reasonable quality is issued once per term, and the school informs parents about

events and ongoing challenges and achievements in the newsletter, which is helpfully augmented by a regular newsletter from the Friends' Association. Annual reports of pupils' progress say a good deal about what the pupil can do but lack information on what they need to do to improve. This is a pity, because the school collects this information well and shares it with the pupils effectively. English and mathematics are covered best, sometimes with a good target to work towards, but none of the subjects is given a National Curriculum Level of attainment to give parents a sense of comparative achievement. Parents of pupils with SEN are well informed about their children's targets and how they can support their learning at home. However, there are limited opportunities for parents to become more fully involved in their children's learning.

31. There are links with the local church and with, for example, the local old peoples' home, but there are none with business or other wider links that would make the school more of a focal point within the community. The school has, however, signed up to the Young Enterprise scheme in an effort to establish links with business. The school is hampered by its small hall, and seating for parents at performances is heavily restricted. The active and well-established Friends' Association raises good sums of money for the school, which fund additional learning opportunities of various kinds. The headteacher has initiated a local carnival that involves pupils creating various costumes and displays, which are then paraded around the immediate vicinity. However, the school has yet to use fully the learning opportunities offered by the community to enrich and enhance the curriculum.

32. One of the school's good ties with other schools gives it the occasional use of the hall in the nearby secondary school so that performances can cater for a larger audience. This secondary school also supports the funding of Year 6 science and design and technology, as well as computer-aided design facilities for pupils in Years 5 and 6. It has two further links in music and drama. Various projects have been carried out in association with this school, such as the art and dance project. Most pupils transfer to this local secondary school, and the established familiarity makes the changeover less stressful, with the result that pupils settle in more quickly. A computer technician is employed by the local group of schools, providing expertise at a low individual cost. An ICT lesson for older pupils takes place each year in another neighbouring secondary school, to which some of the pupils transfer.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher and key staff, including subject leaders, are providing very effective leadership. The school has very good management systems and subject leaders fulfil their monitoring and evaluating role very effectively. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is a very effective leader.
- Subject leaders and other key staff are proving to be very effective in raising standards.
- The school has put into practice very good procedures for monitoring and evaluating its performance
- The school's very good self-evaluation procedures are used very well to inform and evaluate its work.
- Very good induction procedures have enabled new members of staff to settle quickly and make a very positive contribution to school improvement.

Commentary

33. Since her arrival in 2002, the headteacher has provided inspirational and clear-sighted leadership that is focused on raising standards. This very strong leadership is clear about the need to identify and address the weaknesses in the school's provision. The management structure has been reorganised and leaders have been identified for assessment and the pastoral care of the pupils. As a result, clear lines of responsibility have been established throughout the school and members of staff work well as a team. School self-evaluation is very rigorous and is focused clearly on the evidence of pupils' learning. This determined commitment to school improvement is leading to rapid improvement and the raising of pupils' attainment. A very productive climate for learning has been established in the school, and significant efforts are made to ensure that pupils of all abilities are fully included in the school's educational provision.

34. Subject leaders are very effective in their roles, and new subject leaders have been appointed where improvement had not been sufficient. They use very good procedures to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning, and pay close attention to the outcomes in terms of pupils' progress. Subject leaders monitor pupils' work and curriculum planning regularly, and enough time is provided for them to monitor, evaluate and improve teaching practices throughout the school effectively. This permits them to be very effective in taking action to address weaknesses, and its effect can already be seen in the good quality of teaching and learning across the school. The deputy headteacher, who is new to the post, is the assessment manager. He is developing his role very well in giving subject leaders information that identifies weaknesses in pupils' learning.

35. The governing body is well led by the chair of governors, who has developed a good working relationship with the headteacher, and there is a suitable number of committees for the governing body to carry out its duties. Each governor is assigned to a subject and regular meetings are held each term, with a written report shared with the whole governing body. Governors share a clear commitment to improvement. A governor has been appointed to monitor each of the areas identified for improvement in the previous inspection report, and training has been arranged for governors to develop their ability to interpret national test information. However, there are no planned, focused visits to classrooms, as governors visit the school informally, and there is scope for governors to take a more active involvement in strategic planning. Statutory requirements are met.

36. The school is managed very well and the headteacher has ensured that the recruitment and deployment of teachers are very effective. A particular challenge has been to introduce new teachers to the school, many in senior positions, quickly and effectively. The headteacher has ensured very good procedures for introducing these teachers to the school and this has enabled them to make their own strong contribution to school improvement. The good procedures for

professional development are closely linked to the school's strategic plans for improvement. The recently appointed deputy head is the SENCO. He has ensured that the management of SEN has continued to be of very good quality. In his role as SENCO, he has maintained close liaison with staff and parents, as well as the experienced and well informed SEN governor.

37. The school has developed very good procedures for self-evaluation. These draw upon the regular observations of teaching and learning, and upon the very effective analysis of assessment information. Self-evaluation has been used very effectively to identify the priorities to help the school continue to move forward and to continue to raise standards. The headteacher works closely with all members of staff and governors to inform the continuing review of the good school improvement plan. This offers clear guidance for the school and provides a focus for school improvement.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	708,131.00	Balance from previous year	21,193.00
Total expenditure	732,126.00	Balance carried forward to the next	-2,802.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,507.00		

38. Good approaches to financial planning and monitoring support the efforts of the school to achieve its educational priorities. There was a small and understandable deficit in the last academic year. This was unavoidable, and due to the illness of a member of staff. The governing body has taken requisite steps to achieve a budget surplus during the current financial year.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

39. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and children achieve well. There are 31 children in the Reception class, and 46 children attend the Nursery part-time. Attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below average, particularly in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. By the end of the Reception year most children are likely to reach the goals expected of them in the personal, social and emotional, mathematical, physical and creative areas of learning. Despite achieving well, children are unlikely to meet the expected standards in communication, language and literacy. No judgements are made in respect of the wide area of knowledge and understanding of the world.

40. The staff, working as a tightly knit team, has worked extremely hard to create an exciting new unit which allows for children in both classes to work together on many occasions. Teaching is good overall. It is judged to be very good for personal and social education and good for all other areas of learning, except for knowledge and understanding of the world, for which there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement. The direct teaching, where children are taught in small groups or the whole class, is very good and children achieve very well. Teachers are skilful in their questioning, match work closely to individual needs, and provide imaginative activities. The very good assessment of children's progress underpins the wide range of imaginative activities provided. As a result, children are very well motivated, have very positive attitudes and behave very well. In the afternoons, staffing is reduced, which makes it difficult for the teacher to give the same level of provision as in the mornings. Although provision is mostly good, the level of interaction with the children is reduced in the afternoons and a few children are not supervised as well as they might be in their independent activities.

41. The curriculum provides a wide range of challenging and stimulating activities, and there is a good balance between those chosen by the child and those led by the staff. The induction procedures for children are good. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management, and the provision for the Foundation Stage has improved well since last reported upon.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have very good opportunities to develop self-confidence and extend their relationships.
- Achievement is very good because teaching is focused on promoting children's confidence and independence.
- Children have very positive attitudes to all the activities offered and their behaviour is very good.

Commentary

42. Children achieve the goals expected of them because of the high quality experiences they receive. The lovely, warm and calm manner used by staff is apparent in lessons and they provide very good role models for the children. All children are encouraged to tidy up after themselves and they do this willingly and to the best of their ability. Children show enthusiasm for their tasks, and when working independently are just as well behaved and work as hard as when working with an adult. They confidently and sensibly choose their own activities and access the range of materials on

offer. The organisation of the unit ensures that children learn from a very young age to work co-operatively. This enables them to develop their social skills by working in different groupings. Children with SEN are integrated well and receive sensitive, effective support. During the inspection numerous examples were seen where children worked unsupervised for extended periods, behaving sensibly and sharing resources that meet the teachers' high expectations of them. Many of the children, particularly in Reception, are keen to complete the challenging tasks set for them.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are expected to listen carefully and have very good opportunities to develop their speaking skills.
- Letter sounds are taught systematically.
- The staff uses literature very effectively to ensure that children develop a love of stories.
- The shared reading sessions, where children read in a group with a teacher, are very good.
- Writing does not have a high enough profile.

Commentary

43. A very strong emphasis is put on children speaking and listening in a wide variety of activities and, as a consequence, children's attainment and achievement are strongest in this element of language. They confidently come to the front of the class to recall and talk about their work. When prompted, most will talk in sentences. Letter sounds and blends are taught imaginatively, so children are enthusiastic about their learning and they try hard to learn new sounds. Teachers are skilled in teaching children to read. They make sure that children pay full attention to the text, and use good questions to make the children think about the story the pictures tell. Individual children practise their recall of common words with an adult, which helps them to read the words in a different context. Although the direct teaching of handwriting and spelling is very good and children are achieving very well, the focus on children learning to write independently could be higher. In the 'travel agent's' and home corner, there are opportunities for children to write. However, there is a lack of an attractive, well-resourced and defined area where children can choose to write, and of enough regular opportunities to write with a teacher.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide a variety of practical tasks and skilful questioning to help children learn and use mathematical language confidently.
- Teachers carefully match the work to the ability of the child and give children individual support.

Commentary

44. Teachers plan a wide range of practical activities, using attractive resources, to engage children's interest in number. All members of staff ensure that children use correct mathematical vocabulary from an early stage. Good questioning helps children to develop a sound understanding of numbers and of which coins to use when playing in the shop. In one lesson observed, many children knew the missing numbers on a number line to ten, learnt to recognise a selection of real coins and, in a few cases, successfully added 2p and 1p coins to make 5p. A feature of the lesson

was how well the teacher assessed what children already knew and how she built upon this to extend their knowledge and understanding. This has a powerful impact on the good progress they make. All members of staff carefully observe what individual children achieve, and make notes on labels so they can use the information to plan for the next step in learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

It was not possible to make a secure judgement of provision or standards in this wide area, but the work and the teaching seen indicate that children achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Displays of books and artefacts around the unit provide a stimulating environment.
- Children's geographical knowledge is promoted well through a wide range of activities.
- Many opportunities are provided for children to engage in activities such as model making.
- Children have good access to computers.

Commentary

45. The attractive displays of books and objects all relate to current or past work and provide a good resource to foster children's interest in learning. A wide variety of tasks and resources reflect the present emphasis on geography. Children decide which items to take on holiday to both cold and hot climates, and they locate countries on a globe. Reception children enjoy deciding where to put forests, mountains and volcanoes on a computer map and make sensible suggestions for their locations. Lots of chances are offered to children to build models, using many different types of material, and they are keen to complete a challenge to make an aeroplane outside, using crates. Children enjoy using the computers and a programmable toy, as well as using the computer suite each week. They are provided with a suitable range of computer programs and have free access to the computers in the classrooms. Reception children benefit from the mapping program where they can choose to locate geographical features on a map.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good because the outside area is large and well resourced and children have enough time to practise their skills.
- Children are taught how to hold a pencil and cut with scissors carefully.

Commentary

46. Most children move confidently on the large climbing apparatus, swinging, jumping, climbing, balancing and sliding with agility. Their good achievement is as a result of the good management that encourages daily experiences. All children confidently pedal wheeled toys along pathways and up the 'hill'. Members of staff are on hand to offer support to children. They are quick to spot any who might need help and they join in with activities to provide encouragement and support. Children's fine motor skills are promoted well, because they are taught how to use well such equipment such as pencils and scissors.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have lots of opportunities to develop their creativity and imagination.
- Teachers provide very stimulating resources for children to use.

Commentary

47. There is good access to a wide range of materials, with children able to choose to paint, make models, produce collages or explore musical instruments. Adults interact well with children, encouraging them to make reasoned choices in their work. Play is enhanced and children are challenged in their thinking when adults join in children's play in, for example, the 'travel agent's' and home corner. The high quality resources motivate and stimulate children's imagination. For example, the stage set is always popular and children love dressing up and performing. Children's voices are bright and clear when they sing.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 - 2 and Years 3 - 6 because of the good teaching.
- The very good quality of assessment procedures helps to provide rigour and focus for teaching and learning.
- Good cross-curricular links and good use of resources enrich and support pupils' learning.
- The very good quality of subject leadership and management drives continuing improvement.
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their literacy skills in other subjects.

Commentary

48. Pupils achieve well. Standards in English overall in Year 2 and Year 6 are satisfactory and are continuing to improve. Standards of reading are good by Year 6 and many pupils are fluent and confident readers. In the national tests in 2004, standards in English attained by Year 6 pupils were above those of similar schools nationally. Standards in Year 6 have also shown marked improvement compared to those attained in the national tests at the time of the last inspection. Inspection evidence and school assessments indicate that the standards achieved in 2004 are being consolidated and likely to be improved by the current Year 6 pupils. The very precise monitoring and evaluation of the subject, and the analysis of the high quality assessment data of pupils' learning, are all used very effectively to raise the quality of teaching and learning, which is contributing to pupils' good achievement. Pupils with SEN also make good progress in relation to their needs and capabilities.

49. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the books they read, and their enjoyment of reading has a positive effect upon the progress they make. Some Year 2 pupils cite everyone reading in class ('ERIC') and 'joined up writing' among the things they like best about school. Reading is well supported by giving pupils books to take home to read with family members. It is also promoted well by the colourful and attractive displays seen in all classrooms and around the school. Standards of reading and writing are satisfactory in Year 2. However, the standards of many pupils' handwriting in Year 2 are unsatisfactory, with reversals and weak orientation of letters. Standards of speaking and listening skills vary, and some are still building confidence in using their speaking skills.

50. Standards of writing in Year 6 are satisfactory, and those of reading are good. Pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 respond well in class, showing great interest and endeavour as they apply themselves to developing skills in persuasive writing. Year 4 pupils, including those with SEN, work well together in a very productive and well-behaved manner, to create advertising jingles to sell a chosen product. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 similarly work well to produce the cover of a brochure to entice tourists to visit particular attractions in the rainforest. In lessons, teachers provided many opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills. Standards of speaking and listening and those of handwriting are satisfactory overall by Year 6. Some handwriting is still inconsistent, reflecting the lack of tuition in this area in earlier years in school. Handwriting standards are improving as a consequence of dedicated lessons being established throughout the school. This clear focus on improving pupils' basic skills has ensured that pupils are now achieving well.

51. The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school, and the thoroughness and very good quality of assessment and tracking of pupils' progress support this very effectively. Pupils' progress has been advanced by the introduction of individual targets for literacy throughout the school. Teachers ensure that the tasks set in lessons meet the different levels of capability and varying needs of the pupils well, and this makes a significant contribution to the good achievement of pupils of all abilities. In the most successful lessons, teachers make very good use of a range of attractive resources, providing visual and audio stimuli. Pupils also benefit from a variety of teaching methods that involve and motivate pupils, and contribute to a positive classroom ethos. Teaching assistants contribute very effectively to teaching and to the assessment of pupils' learning. Some teachers are particularly skilful in helping pupils to check for themselves whether they understand precisely the nature and purpose of their tasks. However, pupils' concentration and interest wanes when lessons are too long or lack a sufficiently brisk pace.

52. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. Pupils benefit from teachers and teaching assistants being well informed about curriculum plans and the procedures for assessing pupils' progress. Pupils also gain from the very good analysis of performance data that is used to ensure that groups are organised according to pupils' capabilities and learning needs. Their learning is also strengthened by cross-curricular links made between English and other subjects. These measures have helped to achieve and consolidate the improvement in standards. However, there are occasions when a literacy session is followed by a lengthy reading session. This limits the variety of learning experiences provided and makes it difficult for some pupils to sustain concentration.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. There are good planned opportunities for speaking in listening in other subjects. Speaking and listening skills are promoted strongly as pupils are encouraged to engage in discussion in pairs and in groups and also to take part in drama activities. Writing is practised well in many subjects, such as religious education, history and geography, as pupils record their work.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject leadership is very good.
- Pupils achieve well and standards are improving.
- Teaching is good.
- Very good use is made of assessment and the analysis of test results.
- Pupils do not produce enough work in some lessons.

Commentary

54. Standards of attainment are satisfactory in Year 2 and Year 6, and all pupils, including those with SEN, are achieving well. This is an improvement on the test results at the time of the last inspection. It has been achieved by very good leadership that has evaluated the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and taken effective action to improve teaching and raise standards. The school had previously focused on English and science, as these subjects had been identified as major areas for improvement. As standards have improved in those subjects, the school has focused on mathematics this year and this has been very successful. The school has organised ability sets for mathematics in Years 3 - 6. This has allowed assessment information to be used even more precisely in matching tasks to pupils' learning needs and is a significant factor in the better achievement of pupils of all abilities. In particular, it has allowed the school to provide greater challenge for those pupils who are capable of attaining Level 5 and helped to meet the challenging target the school has set for these pupils in the subject.

55. The subject leader, who is a leading mathematics teacher with a very strong knowledge and understanding of the subject, was appointed last September. She analysed the national test results and identified the weaknesses in pupils' learning as being the lack of a quick, mental recall of number facts, problem solving, and the use and application of mathematical knowledge. A scrutiny of pupils' work is conducted each term and this supported the subject leader's view of weaknesses. Curriculum planning is monitored regularly and this year the subject leader has observed all colleagues teaching mathematics at least once, and some many more times. Some observations have been ten-minute 'drop-in' sessions to a number of classes to focus on a particular element of the lesson. This has identified weaknesses in the level of involvement of many pupils and in teachers' understanding of the progressive nature of the National Curriculum. A variety of techniques have been used to improve teaching and learning, including after-school sessions with teachers, peer mentoring, professional development courses and the opportunity to work alongside more experienced colleagues. These initiatives have had an immediate impact on the quality of teaching and learning in the school.

56. Every lesson now begins with a short session of mental mathematics and there is regular homework to learn mathematical facts. This has had a significant impact on pupils' ability to produce a quick, mental recall of mathematical facts and has helped to improve standards in all aspects of the subject. Pupils work confidently at number problems, and one lesson each week is now given to giving pupils the opportunity to use and apply their mathematical skills in a variety of contexts. In addition, pupils have a good knowledge of shapes and measures.

57. Teaching is good in Years 1 - 2 and in Years 3 - 6. There is much high quality teaching in Years 3 - 6, where half of the lessons seen were very good. Teachers plan their lessons well, carefully identifying what pupils will learn and providing tasks that are planned at different levels of difficulty. The learning objective of the lesson is shared with pupils, with the result that they are clear about what is expected of them in the lesson; it also helps to engage all pupils fully in their tasks because they are set at an appropriate level of challenge. Explanations and demonstrations are clear and teachers who have electronic whiteboards in their classrooms use them very well. Number fans and small whiteboards are used well to involve all pupils in the mental arithmetic sessions and most lessons proceed at a brisk pace. However, some lessons do not move quickly enough to the tasks

set for pupils. Too much time is spent listening to the teacher and answering questions as a class group, with the result that pupils in these lessons do not produce as much work as they could and opportunities to learn at a faster rate are missed. Nevertheless, teaching and learning are improving significantly and this is contributing to the better standards being achieved by the pupils.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. A good link with ICT has been established, with all classes using the computer suite once each week to focus on developing pupils' numeracy skills. This is making a significant contribution to the improving standards achieved by pupils. There are good opportunities to use and develop pupils' mathematical skills in other subjects, such as science and design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and standards are improving.
- Teaching is good throughout the school.
- The pace of some lessons is too slow and sometimes too much time is spent before pupils are actively engaged in their tasks.
- Very strong leadership by the subject leader has identified clearly the areas for improvement.
- The high quality of the displays around the school celebrates pupils' scientific learning.

59. Standards are satisfactory in Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils' achievement is good. This shows a significant improvement on the test results at the time of the previous inspection. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they make good progress across the school, and the school's detailed system to track pupils' progress indicates clearly that standards are continuing to improve. Pupils plan and organise their own investigations. They work collaboratively, formulate hypotheses and explain their findings well. Pupils take a pride in their work and are proud of their achievements.

60. Teaching is good overall in Years 1 - 2 and in Years 3 - 6, although it varies from satisfactory to very good. In all lessons, it is apparent that the school's priority on using correct scientific language is being implemented consistently. Good questioning by teachers allows pupils to consider and articulate their thinking. The very secure assessment procedures that the school has established enable teachers accurately to identify the learning needs of the pupils. Pupils' work is carefully differentiated to meet individual learning needs and good use is made of teaching assistants. However, when the introductions to lessons and explanations of tasks are too long, and the pace of the lesson is too slow, pupils' interest wanes and they do not work with the same level of commitment as when lessons proceed at a brisk pace.

61. In the short time since her appointment to the school in September 2004, the subject leader has already vigorously analysed the school's provision in science. The areas for improvement that this has identified, such as practical investigations, are becoming established practices in the school. Very effective monitoring by the subject leader ensures that teaching is improving throughout the school, and this is promoting the better achievement of the pupils. The implementation of the current improvement plan for the subject and its relevant targets mean that standards are rising rapidly throughout the school. Good use is made of cross-curricular opportunities in science and this is reflected in the class and corridor displays. The pupils value interactive displays, and the work that is displayed in classrooms and around the school reflects the improving standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving and pupils are making better progress.
- Teachers with interactive whiteboards in their classrooms use them effectively.
- The subject leader is knowledgeable and leads the subject very successfully.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is used very well to promote skills in mathematics.

Commentary

62. Standards in ICT at the end of Years 2 and 6 are at least in line with national expectations and pupils are achieving well. Standards are rising, and are higher than at the last inspection. The school is better equipped now than at the last inspection and this has led to improved standards.

63. Planning covers all aspects of the subject, and examples of pupils' work show particular strengths in the use of word processing and the element of modelling. For example, pupils' newspaper reports show that a good level of word processing skills has been used and that pupils are familiar with combining text with graphics. Plans for the design of playgrounds and kitchens in three dimensions show imagination and attention to detail, as well as a thorough understanding of the work. Younger juniors and Year 2 pupils are becoming competent at programming different types of robots to carry out a set of instructions.

64. Each class has two one-hour sessions in the computer suite each week, one of which is to support the teaching of numeracy. The teaching of the mathematical content in these lessons is very good and is helping to raise standards in mathematics. A good range of pupils' work was provided by the school and it shows clearly that teaching is good. Pupils are challenged by the tasks and have opportunities to think for themselves and to make their own choices. What is to be learned is identified, and marking is helpful to pupils. In one lesson observed in Year 2, specifically targeted at promoting ICT skills, the teaching was good and pupils learnt new skills. Teachers use the four interactive whiteboards in classrooms very effectively to motivate and excite pupils in their learning in all subjects.

65. Pupils thoroughly enjoy working with computers and are keen to demonstrate what they can do. A higher attaining group of Year 6 pupils are adept at accessing programs, files and folders, and retrieve past work quickly. They explain their work succinctly and fully understand what they have learned. Pupils demonstrate their skills in using different programs or the internet and they recall past work in previous classes well. Their good level of recall, their ability to investigate the program further, and the level of enthusiasm shown testify to the good teaching they have received. Lower attaining pupils in one lesson were disappointed when the lesson ended because they were so engrossed in beating their own targets. Pupils appreciate being able to learn new skills in the computer club and they demonstrate what they can do to their parents at the parent/child workshops.

66. The subject manager leads the subject very well. She is knowledgeable and has particular expertise that helps her to support colleagues well, and she provides training for them. The subject is very effectively monitored and samples of work have been scrutinised, lessons observed and feedback given to staff. There is a good system of pupils assessing their own work after each completed unit, and of being given targets for improvement, and this is helping to raise standards. The school has good plans to improve the use of ICT in all subject areas.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. Although interactive whiteboards are used successfully and ICT is used in effectively mathematics, there is scope for its further use in subjects, particularly science and music.

HUMANITIES

68. No history lessons and only one geography lesson were seen during the inspection. Evidence was gained from discussions with pupils and teachers, and from a scrutiny of teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work, including those on display.

69. In **history**, planning documents show that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. A feature of both history and geography is the way that pupils' learning is enriched by 'thematic' planning which enables strong links to be made with other subjects. Year 6 pupils discussed some of these links in their work in history. They described enthusiastically how their work on Ancient Egypt had involved art, ICT and design and technology. Literacy skills were used to compose letters to newspapers. Pupils also outlined how their learning benefited from handling historical artefacts, and from using drama to promote their understanding of people and past events. In the **geography** lesson observed, pupils developed their understanding of people and places well. The lesson focused upon environmental problems associated with the Brazilian rainforest. Good questioning by the teacher, and motivating resources, encouraged pupils in Years 5 and 6 to become engrossed in considering how choices we make can affect the environment and the welfare of other peoples and their ways of life. In Year 4, drama is used well to help pupils develop their understanding of deforestation issues in Brazil. They take on the role of different interest groups and make up short plays to present their different points of view.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils gain a sound understanding of the main features of the world's major faith traditions.
- Good use is made of artefacts, drama and visits to enhance pupils' learning.

Commentary

70. Pupils' attainment meets the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus in both Year 2 and Year 6. In addition to Christianity, pupils become familiar with major religions, including Judaism in Years 1 - 2, and Hinduism and Islam in Years 3 - 6. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 were fully engaged when learning about the five pillars of Islam. In a lesson on the Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca), they prepared and posed questions to a class member as he took the role of a visitor to Mecca. The teacher successfully sought to promote speaking and listening skills well in the lesson. Pupils' interest and learning are also fostered by good use of the interactive whiteboard and internet.

71. The school has also enhanced the religious education curriculum by increasing visits to places of worship, such as Lincoln Cathedral and a mosque, and by inviting visitors into the school. The use of drama is being promoted strongly through the whole-school promotion of thematic planning and the increasing links between subjects. The result is an increased relevance to pupils that has a positive impact upon their learning. Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

72. One lesson was seen in each of art and design, design and technology and music, while two lessons were seen in physical education. Subject leaders' planning files were considered and pupils and teachers were consulted. Samples of pupils' work were examined in art and design, and in design and technology. Pupils were observed singing in assemblies and participating in after-school sports clubs.

73. The subject leader has raised the profile of **art and design** as the school works towards the nationally recognised 'artsmark' award. Individual pupil sketchbooks provide good opportunities for pupils to plan their work and for teachers to assess their progress. Teachers create good opportunities for pupils to use a wide variety of materials to develop their skills in different artistic techniques, and work in three dimensions is particularly evident. An art club gives pupils the opportunity to develop their skills further. Visits to local art galleries provide good opportunities for pupils to appreciate art at first hand, and a recent visit clearly inspired pupils in their current work on sculptures. Pupils value each other's work and this is evidenced by the sculpture on display in the entrance hall. Each day pupils take turns to make their own sculptural design by varying the arrangement of shapes of balsa wood. This creates interest amongst other pupils, who take care not to disrupt the design. The subject leader is passionately interested in promoting the subject and has been responsible for the very good planning of pupils' work. The subject is monitored and evaluated effectively so that provision is steadily improving.

74. **Design and technology** is taught in blocks of time in Years 3 – 6, and pupils have not yet had sufficient opportunities to produce finished products. Pupils in Year 2 make toys with a winding mechanism and, in the lesson observed, they worked hard to follow the teacher's directions for making a spider that wound up and down from an axle. The teacher had high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and as a result all pupils worked very carefully and were extremely aware of the need for safety. Pupils understood how the mechanism worked and what they had to do, but they were not encouraged to plan their toy and they were all given the same materials. The teaching was over directed and pupils did not make as much progress as they could. An audit of the subject last year discovered the lack of pupils' design plans and evaluations in some classes. The subject leader developed good plans for improvements in the subject but, currently, there is no subject leader to implement them.

75. In **physical education**, one lesson was seen in Years 1 - 2 and one in Years 3 - 6. In both lessons, pupils reached the expected levels of attainment for their age. Year 1 pupils followed dance sequences and developed and extended their movements satisfactorily. Year 6 pupils engaged in warm up activities and took part in an indoor ball game suitably, using skills previously learned to move into space to receive passes and score points. The school provides extra-curricular opportunities for sport, with two YMCA students coming in once a week to teach games to pupils in Years 4 - 6. These popular clubs are well run and enable pupils to extend their skills and experiences in hockey and other ball games.

76. In **music**, pupils in Years 4 and 5 listened to a protest song and were taught the features of this musical genre. They were given other songs to listen to for comparison and they were encouraged to join in and take part. Full use was made by the teacher of the opportunity to discuss the political and historical context of the songs. The school is well resourced with musical instruments, and pupils listen to operatic pieces in assembly. They also participate well in singing during assemblies, learning songs related to the theme of the week.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

Provision for PSHE is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils' attitudes have improved since the last inspection as a result of the school's clear focus on their personal development.
- The school gives high priority to this area of pupils' learning and has appointed a pastoral leader who is providing very good leadership.
- The school ensures that specific lessons are taught to every class each week.
- Clear cross-curricular links have been established for PSHE.

Commentary

77. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is well developed in the school. The school gives a high priority to pupils' personal and social education, as it sees the improvement of pupils' attitudes as vital to raising standards. The success of these efforts is reflected in the very good attitudes throughout the school. Specific issues are also addressed, and pupils show a very good awareness of environmental problems facing the society in which they will grow up and what they can do to improve things. As a result, Year 6 pupils ensure that the lights are switched off when they leave the classroom for a lesson elsewhere in the school. Pupils exercise their responsibilities conscientiously and with maturity. For example, they organise equipment at playtimes and take responsibility for putting it away properly. Older pupils have roles as prefects, which enables them to take responsibility for promoting a positive ethos around the school with younger pupils. However, the organisation of many classes by prior attainment restricts the opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively with pupils of different abilities.

78. The priority that the school gives to PSHE is reflected in the fact that a pastoral manager has been appointed to co-ordinate all aspects of provision for this area of learning throughout the school. She has been in post since September 2003 and has very effectively developed the PSHE curriculum, which is having a positive impact on pupils' attitudes. The pastoral manager ensures that regular lessons, which have strong links to the national initiative on citizenship, are allocated to PSHE throughout the school. In these lessons, pupils are taught, for example, about the role of the local police force and how to look after their pets.

79. Good links have been established across the curriculum, and assembly themes reinforce values of working together and as a community. In one assembly, for example, the theme of working together as a family was developed, and the quality of such provision is reflected in pupils' attitudes and behaviour throughout the school. Pupils' health education is good and includes work on diet, health and personal safety, which includes sex education and drugs awareness. They are encouraged to pursue a healthy life style and are supported in this by visits from outside agencies. Residential visits have been introduced recently for older pupils, and this supports their personal and social development well. There are good induction procedures, and individual records are kept of all pupils' personal development. These ensure that all pupils are effectively equipped with the positive attitudes necessary to benefit fully from the school's good and improving educational provision.

PART D: SUMMARY OF MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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