

INSPECTION REPORT

LONGTHORPE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Longthorpe, Peterborough

LEA area: Peterborough

Unique reference number: 110736

Headteacher: Mr B White

Lead inspector: Mr N Hardy

Dates of inspection: 17-20 January 2005

Inspection number: 267240

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: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 400

School address: Bradwell Road
Longthorpe
Peterborough
Cambridgeshire
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Telephone number: 01733-265959
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body
Name of chair of governors: Mr A Kirby

Date of previous inspection: 23 – 26 November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school has 400 full-time pupils on roll from the Reception class to Year 6. There are rather more boys than girls overall, although the figure varies from one year group to another. The number of pupils who join or transfer to other schools during the year is fewer than average. Children enter the Reception class full-time in the September of the year in which they are five years old. Analysis indicates that the percentage of children joining the school in the Reception year with typical or better attainment for their age is now slightly below average. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is rising. Approaching 60 per cent of pupils are from a white ethnic background. Other pupils come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds, including 14 per cent Asian British Pakistani, about nine per cent Asian British Indian, and about five per cent from other Asian backgrounds. For almost 20 per cent of pupils, English is an additional language, and this is a high figure. Of these pupils, about three per cent are at an early stage of acquiring English. The school has no Traveller children, no pupils in public care, and no children of refugees or asylum seekers. The number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is about nine per cent, which is below average. Seven pupils have a statement of special educational need, which is well below average. Rather more than ten per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is also well below average. Pupils' special educational needs are mainly speech or communication difficulties, autism, physical difficulties or moderate learning difficulties. Since the last inspection, the staffing position in the school has been broadly stable, though more recently four experienced teachers have retired or have moved and the school recruited two newly qualified teachers from September 2003. The school received a School Achievement Award in 2003 and Investor in People status in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
29262	Mr N Hardy	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Citizenship Design and technology Physical education Religious education
19320	Ms B Attaway	Lay inspector	
23453	Ms C Cressey	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Geography Music
19774	Ms M Docherty	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language English History
26232	Mr C Grove	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school with several very good features. It is a happy place where pupils achieve well, display very positive attitudes and behave very well. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Teachers and other adults form very good relationships with pupils. The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by other key staff, notably the deputy headteacher, and by a governing body which both supports and challenges to good effect. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- in Year 6, pupils are attaining above average standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology;
- the school has a good ethos and is effective in promoting equality of opportunity for all its pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language;
- the school provides pupils with very good care, and very successfully seeks and responds to their views;
- provision in the Reception year is very good, including very effective teaching and a curriculum of high quality, and is very well led and managed;
- the subject co-ordinators do not have sufficient impact in raising the standards of pupils' work;
- very good opportunities are provided for pupils through the range of extra-curricular activities;
- opportunities to use computers in classrooms and to pursue learning independently of teachers are limited;
- the assessment and marking of written work are not sufficiently focused on helping pupils to improve;
- links with parents are very good, and the school is benefiting from these.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. All issues in the previous report have been dealt with effectively. The curriculum policy for Reception children has been updated, and the outdoor area for these children has been improved, although it is still restricted in terms of space. The range and quality of computers have been updated through the development of the suite and the acquisition of the bank of laptop computers. The quality of the provision in information and communication technology has also improved. The extension of the school hall and the greater space provided in some junior classrooms have afforded additional space for teaching purposes.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	A	A	A	A
Mathematics	A	C	B	B
Science	B	C	C	C

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

The overall achievement of pupils is **good**. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is presently below average. Children in the Reception year make good progress and most will meet the national goals for early learning, which indicates good achievement. Pupils make steady progress in Year 1 and Year 2, where their achievement in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology is good. The standards of Year 2 pupils in reading are above average, and in writing, mathematics and science, they are average. Their standards in information and communication technology, religious education and music are also average. From Year 3 to Year 6, pupils' achievement is good in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Standards in Year 6 are presently above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in information and communication technology are also above average and in religious education and in music they are average. Standards in art and design are above average in Year 1 and Year 2, and average in Year 3 to Year 6. Standards in design and technology, geography, history, physical education and personal, social and health education could not be securely judged.

Throughout the school, pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **good**. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Levels of attendance are in line with national figures and are satisfactory. Pupils' punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall, and is sometimes better than this. Teachers are good at promoting equality of opportunity for all their pupils. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, form very good relationships and often provide a good level of challenge, to which pupils respond very well, resulting in good learning. The school's assessment of pupils is satisfactory, but the marking of the work of individual pupils is not as effective as it might be. The school's curriculum provides a good range of learning experiences, and the opportunities for enrichment through extra-curricular activities are very good. The school's accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The school provides very good levels of care for its pupils, and the support and guidance offered to pupils is good. Links with parents are very good, and with the wider community and with local schools, they are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher provides effective leadership for the school. The governing body is good in maintaining a strategic overview and in providing both support and challenge for the headteacher. The leadership of the Reception year is very good. The leadership of key staff and the management of the school are good overall, but the role of subject leader is underdeveloped.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school in the main. In their questionnaire responses, and at their meeting with inspectors, parents were complimentary about the school. Pupils are confident in expressing very positive views about the school, and particularly about exciting lessons and the range of extra-curricular activities provided.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- increase the opportunities for senior managers and subject leaders to monitor more rigorously teaching and learning and pupils' standards;
- increase the range of opportunities for pupils to undertake more independent learning, including through the use of information and communication technology, in the full range of subjects;
- provide better guidance to pupils on how to develop the quality of their recorded work in all subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Children's achievement in the Reception year is good in all areas and most of them will meet the national goals for early learning. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Year 1 and Year 2. Standards in Year 2 in reading and mathematics are currently above average and broadly average in writing. Pupils' achievement in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology is good. Pupils progress well from Year 3 to Year 6. Standards in Year 6 are presently above average in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Pupils' achievement is good in all four subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make a good start in their Reception year, and achieve well.
- Achievement is generally good across the school, but is better in Year 3 to Year 6.
- Standards are generally above average at Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language achieve well.

Commentary

1. Children begin in the Reception classes with a broad spectrum of attainment and skills, and in general these are now below the attainment typically found. They achieve well and make good progress in all aspects of their learning. There is some variation between year groups, so that in past years, more children entered the Reception year with average skills and attainment.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.9 (17.4)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.9 (16.0)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.9 (17.8)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The attainment of Year 2 pupils in National Curriculum tests in reading and mathematics over the last four years has been above average, and in writing attainment has generally been average. In 2003, results were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, standards in 2004 were lower in all three subjects.
3. In recent years, results in National Curriculum tests in Year 2 show that girls have tended to attain higher standards than boys, especially in reading and writing, and this was the case in 2004. In 2004, more than one in every three pupils reached the high Level 3 standard in reading, and about one in every six pupils reached the high standard in writing. In mathematics, more than one third of pupils reached the high Level 3 standard. All three of these results represent above average standards. Pupils'

achievement in the current Year 2 has been good in mathematics and information and communication technology, and satisfactory in English and science because of staffing issues, but is now improving. Pupils' achievement in art and design and music is good, and in religious education it is satisfactory.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.7(29.7)	26.9(26.8)
Mathematics	27.8(26.9)	27.0(26.8)
Science	28.7 (29.3)	28.6(28.6)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Although there has been some variation from year to year, the attainment of pupils in Year 6 in National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science over the last four years has mostly been above average. In 2003, results were well above average in English and average in mathematics and science. In 2004, results were the same in English and science, but mathematics was above average. These results indicate good achievement in English and mathematics and satisfactory achievement in science since Year 2. High expectations and good challenges for pupils have meant that achievement in most lessons is most often good for pupils of all levels of attainment.
5. In recent years, pupils' results in National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 show that girls have tended to perform slightly better than boys, and this was also the case in 2004. But the attainment of boys and girls is not significantly different. In English, four pupils in every ten reached the high Level 5 standard, which is well above average. In mathematics, one pupil in every three reached the high standard, and this is above average. The proportion of pupils reaching the high standard in science was about four in every ten, which is average. Analysis of the progress of these pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 shows that their achievement in English and mathematics was good, and their achievement in science was satisfactory. In information and communication technology, pupils' attainment is above average, and their achievement is good. Pupils' work in Year 6 shows that their achievement is satisfactory in art and design and in religious education, and good in music.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, particularly when they are supported by the learning support assistants, who help them to achieve the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve well overall. The progress of the most able is similar to that of their classmates, but lower-attaining pupils are making slower progress than the rest, particularly in writing. For example, of the few pupils who did not achieve expected levels in the 2004 national tests for eleven-year-olds, the majority were pupils who were learning English as an additional language. The school has analysed their performance to target areas of weakness and to ensure that pupils are helped to achieve the standards of which they are capable.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their personal development is good. Attendance is satisfactory. Their spiritual, moral and cultural development is good; their social development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good range of extra-curricular activities makes a significant contribution to pupils' enjoyment of school.
- Attendance has fallen from well above average, mainly because of extended holidays or low attendance by a small number of families.

Commentary

7. This is a happy school where pupils, especially in the Reception year and in older year groups, want to learn. Pupils say the artefacts teachers use, such as an ice sculpture, make lessons exciting. They like developing additional skills, joining in the extra-curricular activities enthusiastically, and praise the residential visit. They are articulate and confident, expressing their views of the school with pride.
8. The school expects high standards of behaviour and the majority of pupils respond by working hard in lessons; this promotes learning. Although a significant minority of parents responding to the questionnaire expressed concern about bullying, pupils described it as very rare and said that any incident is dealt with very quickly. No incidents were observed during the inspection. There have been no exclusions.
9. Relationships throughout the school are very good because this is a school where pupils are all included and work and play very well in mixed ethnic and gender groups; staff act as very good role models. Pupils share and support one another well, applauding others' success; pupils say that everyone is treated fairly.
10. Pupils with special educational needs show positive attitudes in class, and teachers respond well to their contributions. Pupils for whom English is as an additional language have very good attitudes to learning. They work well in small groups, contributing their own ideas, even when their linguistic skills in English are not fully developed. This positive picture reflects the school's commitment to doing the best for all pupils.
11. A tiny minority of families take extended holidays or do not send their children to school regularly, and this has had an adverse impact on overall attendance levels. Parents have to re-apply for a school place if holidays extend beyond agreed policy and this is good practice. Contacting parents on the first day of absence has helped reduce unauthorised attendance. The school works closely with the education welfare officer to try to ensure high attendance rates.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
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School data	5.2
National data	5.1

School data	0.3
National data	0.4

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

12. Pupils' personal development is high on the school's list of priorities, and as a result provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The good quality of personal development throughout the school promotes confidence and maturity. In assemblies and lessons, pupils have good opportunities to think about the things that have a profound effect on their lives and those of others around the world. During the inspection, pupils considered the impact of the Indian Ocean tsunami and are planning how best to support the people affected.
13. Members of staff give a positive lead in fostering good relationships. The pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong because they are consistently encouraged to consider the right choices and reflect on the impact of their actions. Through their personal, social and health education lessons, pupils learn a range of life skills for dealing with the difficulties they may encounter both in and out of school.
14. Pupils take the responsibilities of living in a community seriously, and develop very good levels of maturity by the time they transfer to secondary school. Responsibilities range from acting as a school councillor, helping with equipment and assemblies and taking on the role of office monitors at lunchtime. Year 6 playground pals are proud of their responsibilities, supporting pupils at break times. In studies such as religious education, art and design and music, pupils learn about the beliefs and practices of others, which effectively promotes mutual respect, tolerance and understanding. Pupils' backgrounds and experiences are shared, celebrated and valued.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education based on a good curriculum and good teaching. The care provided for the pupils is very good. Links with parents are very good and with the community they are good. Links with other schools are good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. In the Reception classes, teaching and learning are very good, and this is a strength of the school. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Year 1 and Year 2, and good in Year 3 to Year 6. Assessment procedures are good in the Reception classes, and satisfactory in Year 1 to Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Across the school, teachers create very good relationships with pupils.
- Teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour.
- Teachers set a good example through their choice of language, and are adept at explaining and questioning.
- There is limited use of computers in classrooms to support pupils' learning.
- The marking of pupils' work is not sufficiently directed at improvements.

Commentary

15. Teaching and learning are good overall. Two lessons in every three are now good, or very good. Of all lessons seen, nearly one quarter was graded as very good. One lesson in every three is satisfactory. No lessons were judged as less than satisfactory. Across the school, pupils are confident and well motivated as a result of teachers' high expectations of their behaviour and the quality of their work. Teachers speak carefully and respectfully to pupils, and have a good use of voice and English, which sets a good role model for pupils, and encourages those who are less confident. They are good at clarifying new words and ideas in the different subjects, and often use good techniques of questioning.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	10 (23%)	20(45%)	14(32%)	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.

16. Teachers and teaching assistants build effectively on the already well-developed personal and social skills of Reception children. Pupils share and co-operate well and make rapid progress in their learning. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is very good. Activities provided for children are well planned so that a good variety of experiences is offered. Teachers provide children with good models of writing, for instance, as well as sensitive support and imaginative activities which together lead to good achievement. Pupils with special educational needs, or for whom English is an additional language, are particularly well supported by teachers and teaching assistants.
17. Teaching in Year 1 and Year 2 is satisfactory overall, and some lessons are good. The planning for teaching is satisfactory. Effective lessons are often characterised by the enthusiasm communicated by the teacher and the good pace of work. Less effective lessons lack these features, so that pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Teaching assistants are well deployed. There were instances where pupils spent overlong periods of time in listening activities in the first part of lessons. There was also some variability in the quality of the match of work to pupils' needs. In much teaching, activities were well matched to the prior attainment of different groups of pupils but in other instances, pupils' tasks were not so appropriately designed.
18. About two thirds of the teaching in Year 3 to Year 6 is good or very good. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subjects and often provide effective demonstrations and illustrations of work to be completed. They set a good pace in lessons, which maintains interest. Effective planning includes good classroom organisation and tasks which are appropriately demanding for different groups of pupils. The best teaching is characterised by an imaginative approach, which sets pupils effective challenges. Good use is made of 'talk partners', when pupils help each other to develop and clarify their ideas.
19. Effective use is often made of pupils' developing language and literacy skills in other subjects, for instance science, music and religious education lessons. Pupils have opportunities to answer teachers' questions and discuss their knowledge and experience with one another. Pupils also use their numeracy skills in some lessons, for instance in information and communication technology and in science. However, there was only very limited evidence of the use of information and communication

technology in the learning of other subjects and its use is an important point for improvement.

20. Teachers provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs through briefing and deploying classroom assistants. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well taught and learn well, particularly when they are given support by the bi-lingual teaching assistants. Teachers generally explain tasks well and provide good support by giving good opportunities for these pupils to talk as they work together. In several lessons, however, the initial sessions were over-long and teachers were not always sufficiently aware of the linguistic demands of the work set, and therefore did not offer these pupils enough help.
21. Some effective use of ongoing assessment was observed, for instance when a Year 2 teacher noticed a common error in a mathematics lesson and took time to clarify the problem for all pupils. However, in English and mathematics, in particular, there are inconsistencies between teachers in the marking of pupils' work. Marking is not always sufficiently aimed at helping pupils to understand how they can improve their work.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum for its pupils. The curriculum for children of Reception age is very good. The school provides a wide range of activities for pupils outside the school day, particularly in sport and music, and this provision is very good. The school's accommodation is satisfactory and the level of resources is satisfactory in most areas.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children of Reception age are provided with a very good range of stimulating activities, particularly those to develop their speaking and listening skills.
- Pupils in the Year 3 to Year 6 are provided with a wide curriculum that includes opportunities to learn Spanish and to benefit from expert tuition and coaching in music and sport.
- Limits in classroom resources inhibit pupils' opportunities to carry out their own enquiries using information and communication technology.

Commentary

22. The school provides a wide curriculum in which all the required subjects are taught. Checks are kept on the amount of time spent on the different subjects, and this ensures that there is an appropriate balance in the curriculum. Many pupils take advantage of the additional activities on offer during lunchtimes and after school. This increases their enthusiasm and interest in school, helping them to develop their social skills and their wider interests.
23. Educational visits and visitors to the school widen pupils' interests and understanding well. Expert coaching in sports such as rugby and athletics is offered, and friendly competition against other local schools is effective in extending pupils' social skills. Musical activities, such as the choir, recorder and ocarina groups, and additional instrumental tuition, cater well for the development of pupils' cultural needs. There is also a flourishing art class.

24. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and bi-lingual pupils, have access to the full curriculum. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The identification of pupils with special educational needs is accurate and individual education plans provide an appropriate guide for teachers to meet their needs. Support for children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language in the Reception classes is very good, and enables them to make very good progress. In the rest of the school, teaching assistants are effectively deployed to support pupils, and in lessons where support is available, the progress of these pupils is often good. Bi-lingual assistants provide good support for pupils who have English as an additional language, but there are lessons when this support is not available and this slows the progress of these pupils significantly.
25. Pupils with special educational needs are assessed as early as possible, and their well-written individual education plans provide good information for teaching assistants. Targets are reviewed regularly, so that pupils' progress is monitored but the period between reviews is too long for small steps in achievement to be noted and targets re-set if necessary. Bi-lingual pupils' stages of English language acquisition are identified each year, but are not always used by class teachers to inform their planning. For example, there are not always enough visual prompts to help pupils understand what is happening as the lesson unfolds.
26. The school has sufficient teachers to cover all classes. Several classes are taught by part-time teachers, and good co-operation in the planning process ensures that pupils' progress is not interrupted. Teachers plan their work in teams and this is effective. The accommodation is satisfactory and has been improved since the last inspection by the provision of additional space in the hall. However, some classrooms, especially those accommodating junior pupils, are cramped and limit some teaching opportunities. Resources for learning are satisfactory in most subjects. Although the school has a well-equipped computer suite, information and communication technology facilities in classrooms are much more limited. The outdoor facility for children in the Reception classes is small and restricts learning opportunities for all but small groups.

Care, guidance and support

The provision of care, welfare, health and safety is very good. There is good support and guidance. The involvement of pupils in the school's development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The trusting relationships between pupils and adults are excellent.
- Induction arrangements for pupils entering all year groups are very good.
- Assessment practices are underdeveloped.

Commentary

27. Pupils work and play in a very safe environment, making them feel secure. Child protection procedures are firmly established and all members of staff have had training. The importance of establishing a healthy lifestyle is addressed effectively, not only through the curriculum but also by considering the food which children eat in school. This is supported further by the daily availability of fruit, milk and water. The school is proud of the Healthy Schools award they are shortly to receive. First-aid training and records of medicines administered in the school are very good. The

school makes very good use of a governor's professional expertise in health and safety.

28. Pupils enjoy contributing to the school's development. The school has responded well to pupils' suggestions, such as ideas for improving the toilets, and it has provided blackout curtains for plays. Pupils have offered ideas for raising money for the Asian tsunami appeal, and there is to be a pupil-staff debate about this; this raises self-esteem and makes pupils feel valued. Pupils interviewed all the candidates for the headship, asking searching questions.
29. Parents praise the quality of induction for the youngest pupils. The school works hard to support pupils who enter the school with little or no English and the bi-lingual members of staff provide good support. When a language is not spoken by any member of the school, as is the case with Lithuanian, the school determinedly seeks outside support. This helps these pupils to feel secure and means they are fully included in school life. Effective curricular links with local secondary schools enable Year 6 pupils to move on with confidence.
30. At a personal level, the support, advice and guidance which pupils receive is good, but monitoring of academic progress is inconsistent, especially in exercise books. In the Reception year, assessment is used very well to guide pupils' learning. In older years, it is underdeveloped and responds only to the needs of individual pupils. There is space in pupils' annual reports for reflection on what they have enjoyed and how they can improve. This self-assessment allows pupils to contribute to the monitoring of their progress.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are very good; with the community and with other schools, they are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents receive information of very good quality.
- Pupils' learning at home is supported very well by parents and by the school.
- The school is very effective in seeking and responding to the views of parents.
- In their responses to the questionnaire, almost a quarter of parents believed they were not kept well informed about their child's progress but the inspection team did not find evidence to support this concern.

Commentary

31. The home-school relationship is enhanced by the quality of communication. Parents receive half-termly information about the curriculum, which tells them in advance how they can help their children. Meetings for parents about the curriculum are also supportive. Pupils' annual reports are very good and better than in most schools. They identify progress very well, highlighting areas for improvement. The inclusion, in all years, of National Curriculum Levels attained, together with the expected Level nationally, tells parents exactly how well their children are doing. Nevertheless, a significant minority of parents did not think the school told them enough about how their child was getting on. This perception was not supported by the inspection team who found no evidence that this is the case. Parents of pupils with special educational

needs are effectively involved in the development of individual education plans and work with the school to help their children achieve short-term targets.

32. The school operates an open-door policy, and the head teacher is regularly in the playground at the start of the school day. In response to the school's annual questionnaire to parents, class teachers have allowed more time to talk to parents at the end of the school day. Parents who have significant concerns about their child's progress over time are always welcome to discuss these. When pupils move to Year 3, the school expects them to begin taking greater responsibility for their own learning. This natural progression is conveyed to parents at the start of that school year. As in most schools, parents are invited to discuss progress with class teachers in the autumn and spring terms and to review the end-of-year report; this is accepted good practice.
33. Parents play an active role in school life. Some were observed helping enthusiastically and effectively in lessons. Their help with some extra-curricular activities such as football, chess and cross-country running, allows more pupils to participate. The re-timing of class assemblies has allowed more parents to share in their children's learning and the annual questionnaire enables working parents to play a full role in the school's development. The Friends of Longthorpe School are very active, and pupils are benefiting from additional items such as the extended stage and large playground apparatus.
34. The school is effective in seeking ways of extending present links with the community. For instance, the curriculum is usefully broadened through younger pupils observing the local recycling process or learning at a local supermarket how jam is put into doughnuts. Arrangements for pupils transferring into or out of the school are very good. The variety of effective links with local secondary schools, one of which is a Beacon school, enriches the curriculum and also challenges more able pupils. Singing to senior citizens helps strengthen cross-generation relationships. Local companies have responded well to older pupils' requests for raffle prizes.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership of the head teacher is good, as also is the governance of the school. The leadership of the Reception year is very good. The leadership of key staff and the management of the school are good overall, but the role of subject leader is underdeveloped.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors and head teacher have an effective vision for the school.
- A more strategic view for the development of the school has been taken.
- Financial management is good.

Commentary

35. The head teacher and the deputy head teacher have a clear vision for the future direction of the school, including a good commitment to the educational needs of all pupils regardless of their gender, ability or background. The school improvement plan is well focused on raising pupils' standards and achievement, and is effectively prioritised. Improvements to the leadership of the curriculum have been made through the creation of teaching teams responsible for sections of the school. However, the

role of subject leader, particularly in the case of some of the main subjects, is still in transition; some subject leaders have only recently taken up the position, and the role itself does not yet include checking the quality of subject teaching.

36. The governance of the school is good. The principal governors are very well experienced, and clear about the role of the governing body. Governors have a good range of strategies to keep themselves informed so that they can form independent views of the school. They demonstrate a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, including any circumstances which are having an adverse impact. Governors have recognised the need to take a more strategic view of their role, and have accordingly re-formed the remit and structure of committees to affect a sharper focus. The governing body is meeting statutory requirements.
37. The management of the performance of both teachers and support staff is well established and effective. The school's commitment to the continuing development of school staff is good and is reflected in the award of Investor in People status. The most recent newly qualified teacher was well supported by the school mentor, and by the team of which she was a member. In a local climate where it is not always easy to retain teachers, the school is fully staffed, which includes some posts that are shared between two members of staff. The school is making satisfactory use of various forms of self-evaluation and analysis of data about school performance but these activities are not as rigorous and effective as they could be and are not yet impacting sufficiently on pupils' standards and achievement.
38. The newly appointed co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs ensures that all statutory requirements are met, including the production of individual education plans with well-written and achievable targets. A learning support teacher assesses pupils with identified needs early in their school career. More pupils for whom English is an additional language have joined the school in recent years. The school has identified a member of staff to exercise oversight of the progress of these pupils. The school is beginning to plan effective action, including further training for members of staff to meet their needs.
39. The governors and head teacher, assisted by the school's administrative officer, monitor and control the school's finances effectively and adhere to principles of best value. The school does what it can to maximise its income through careful budgeting, and seeks to supplement its basic funding from other sources. The Friends of Longthorpe School also contribute additional funding. The school provides good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	952,271	Balance from previous year	36,897
Total expenditure	956,947	Balance carried forward to the next	32,221
Expenditure per pupil	2,351		

40. The school is for the most part well placed to improve further. There are two significant barriers to achieving improvement. The first of these is the decline in recent years in

the typical attainment of pupils entering the school. The second is the comparatively low income and expenditure per pupil, which result from the criteria of the local formula by which funding is dispensed.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

41. Provision has been maintained since the last inspection and is a strength of the school. About 30 per cent of the children now entering the school are from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. Attainment on entry to the Reception year covers a broad range. Overall, it is below that found typically in other schools, reflecting the fact that 20 per cent of the children are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Teaching is consistently of a high standard. As a result, almost all of the children, including those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress and achieve well. Nearly three quarters of the children are on course to attain the national goals for early learning before the end of the Reception year. This is similar to that found in other schools.
42. The Foundation Stage is very well managed. Members of staff are well informed about the curriculum for young children. There is very good teamwork and all staff encourage and engage the children very well in their activities. They use the available resources and accommodation well, making the best use of space and organising sessions effectively to benefit children's learning. All teaching assistants are very well deployed, particularly to support children with special educational needs or those learning English as an additional language. This has a positive effect on the rapid progress these children make. Assessment is good and used effectively to plan what children are to learn, based on perceptive and regular observations of learning. Although provision for outdoor play has improved since the last inspection it is still restricted by the limited space available.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are confident, independent, secure and eager learners, who behave very well.

Commentary

43. Most children come to school with well-developed personal and social skills. The members of staff build well on this. The very good teaching results in good achievement and the majority of the children reach the national goals for early learning before the end of the Reception year, thus exceeding expectations. The staff ensure that there are very good opportunities for the children to develop their confidence and self-esteem, valuing their contributions and encouraging them to be active participants in their learning. Relationships are very good. This means that children are secure and approach adults in the school readily because they know that their suggestions and ideas will be valued. Children share resources and work together in a variety of situations, such as role-play, and using construction toys and games. They willingly help other children in the class and are especially kind and supportive to children with

special educational needs. Children confidently select their own activities from the good range offered and are given time and support to develop their play. Members of staff have good strategies in place to ensure that all children are included in the range of activities provided. Children with particularly complex learning or medical needs take a full part in school life. Adults have high expectations of children's behaviour. As a result, behaviour is invariably very good and children show mature levels of courtesy and good manners.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils are very well included in lessons.
- Very good opportunities for talking are provided in all areas of learning.
- The teaching of basic skills is very good.

Commentary

44. VERY EFFECTIVE TEACHING RESULTS IN GOOD ACHIEVEMENT. ABOUT SEVENTY PER CENT OF CHILDREN ARE ON TARGET TO REACH THE NATIONAL GOALS FOR EARLY LEARNING BY THE TIME THEY TRANSFER TO YEAR 1. TO ACCELERATE CHILDREN'S PROGRESS AND ENSURE THEY ACHIEVE AS WELL AS THEY CAN, THE TEACHING OF LITERACY SKILLS IS GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY AND IS A FEATURE OF MOST OF THE CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES. ADULTS PLAN FOR CHILDREN TO TALK IN ALL AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM.

45. TEACHERS MODEL PATTERNS OF SPEECH WELL, AND ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO BECOME ATTENTIVE LISTENERS TO STORIES, COMMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS. NEW VOCABULARY IS CONSTANTLY INTRODUCED AND MEMBERS OF STAFF CONSISTENTLY CHECK THAT ALL CHILDREN UNDERSTAND NEW WORDS AND PHRASES. TEACHING ASSISTANTS SIT CLOSE TO CHILDREN DURING CLASS AND GROUP LESSONS TO PROVIDE THEM WITH AN EXPLANATION OF WHAT IS BEING TAUGHT AND TO CHECK THAT THEY FULLY UNDERSTAND. MEMBERS OF STAFF SYSTEMATICALLY INTRODUCE LETTER NAMES AND INITIAL SOUNDS TO PROVIDE CHILDREN WITH THE TOOLS THEY NEED TO BE INDEPENDENT READERS AND WRITERS. THERE IS A VARIETY OF WELL-PLANNED TASKS TO ENABLE CHILDREN TO WRITE FOR DIFFERENT PURPOSES AND AUDIENCES. CHILDREN EAGERLY WRITE LABELS FOR THEIR BEARS OR SEND MESSAGES TO CHARACTERS IN THEIR STORYBOOKS. MOST CHILDREN MAKE ATTEMPTS TO WRITE THEIR WORDS USING RECOGNISABLE

LETTERS AND SOUNDS. HIGHER-ATTAINING CHILDREN WRITE THEIR OWN SENTENCES USING FAMILIAR WORDS AND USE THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF SOUNDS TO WRITE MORE COMPLEX WORDS, CAPITAL LETTERS AND FULL STOPS WITH INCREASING ACCURACY. CHILDREN ARE AWARE OF THE CONVENTIONS OF READING, AND MOST CHILDREN ARE 'READING' SIMPLE STORYBOOKS USING PICTURES OR FAMILIAR SOUNDS AND WORDS. PROVISION FOR THOSE PUPILS WHO ARE LEARNING ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE AND THOSE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IS VERY GOOD. FOR EXAMPLE, VERY EFFECTIVE TEACHING BY CLASS TEACHERS OFFERS CHALLENGE FOR THESE PUPILS, AND AS A RESULT THEY ACHIEVE WELL.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Basic number skills and mathematical vocabulary are reinforced at every opportunity.
- Very good use is made of play and other planned activities to promote mathematical development.

Commentary

46. THE VERY EFFECTIVE TEACHING RESULTS IN GOOD ACHIEVEMENT. ABOUT SEVENTY PER CENT OF CHILDREN ARE ON TARGET TO REACH THE NATIONAL GOALS FOR EARLY LEARNING BY THE TIME THEY TRANSFER TO YEAR 1. OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE CHILDREN TO TALK ABOUT NUMBERS AND MAKE COMPARISONS ABOUT QUANTITY AND SIZE OCCUR FREQUENTLY, FOR EXAMPLE, COUNTING THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN PRESENT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SESSION. CHILDREN LEARN TO USE THE CORRECT VOCABULARY WHEN COMPARING WEIGHT OF DIFFERENT ITEMS. MOST CHILDREN, INCLUDING THOSE LEARNING ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE MAKE RAPID PROGRESS IN THE ACQUISITION OF VOCABULARY AND QUICKLY LEARN TO USE THE NEW WORDS IN THEIR INDEPENDENT PLAY. CHILDREN WHO ARE LEARNING ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE ARE GIVEN SUPPLEMENTARY HELP TO LEARN NEW WORDS AND ARE KEEN TO PRACTISE THEIR SKILLS. ACTIVITIES ARE WELL PLANNED TO PROVIDE A RANGE OF EXPERIENCES FOR THE CHILDREN TO SOLVE SIMPLE PROBLEMS IN A PRACTICAL SETTING. COUNTING, RECOGNISING AND RECORDING NUMERALS ARE REINFORCED EFFECTIVELY, AND WHEN CHILDREN ARE INVOLVED IN DESIGNING AND MAKING MODELS, THEIR SKILLS IN

COMPARING MEASUREMENT AND NUMBERS ARE PROMOTED VERY EFFECTIVELY. CHILDREN ARE ENCOURAGED TO USE CORRECT MATHEMATICAL VOCABULARY TO SOLVE PROBLEMS OF SIZE, SHAPE AND POSITION AS THEY PLAY WITH TWO- AND THREE-DIMENSIONAL SHAPES AND SMALL-WORLD TOYS. CHILDREN'S ACHIEVEMENTS ARE OBSERVED CAREFULLY AND THE INFORMATION IS USED TO PLAN THE NEXT ACTIVITY.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a very good range of activities and experiences which fascinate the children and develop their scientific knowledge well.
- Children are developing good skills of information and communication technology.

COMMENTARY

47. VERY EFFECTIVE TEACHING RESULTS IN GOOD ACHIEVEMENT. ABOUT SEVENTY PER CENT OF CHILDREN ARE ON TARGET TO REACH THE NATIONAL GOALS FOR EARLY LEARNING BY THE TIME THEY TRANSFER TO YEAR 1. NATURAL MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE ON A DAILY BASIS TO EXTEND THE CHILDREN'S IDEAS ABOUT THEIR ENVIRONMENT. THEY EXCITEDLY USE MAGNIFYING GLASSES TO EXPLORE AND EXAMINE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OBJECTS AND TO OBSERVE CHANGES AND PATTERNS IN NATURE. CHILDREN ARE CAREFULLY TAUGHT THE SKILLS THEY NEED TO USE TECHNOLOGY. THERE IS GOOD USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO ASSIST THE CHILDREN'S LEARNING, FOR EXAMPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO USE TAPE RECORDERS, COMPUTERS AND KEYBOARDS. CHILDREN LEARN TO VALUE EACH OTHER'S CULTURES AND FAITHS THROUGH ANTICIPATING SIGNIFICANT CELEBRATIONS, SUCH AS CHRISTMAS, EID, DIWALI AND CHINESE NEW YEAR.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have very good opportunities to develop all aspects of their physical skills.

Commentary

48. THE VERY EFFECTIVE TEACHING RESULTS IN GOOD ACHIEVEMENT. ABOUT SEVENTY PER CENT OF CHILDREN ARE ON TARGET TO REACH THE NATIONAL GOALS FOR EARLY LEARNING BY THE TIME THEY TRANSFER TO YEAR 1. MEMBERS OF STAFF COMPENSATE WELL FOR THE LIMITATIONS OF THE OUTDOOR PLAY FACILITIES, AND AS A RESULT CHILDREN'S PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT SUFFER. CHILDREN'S NATURAL EXUBERANCE AND ENERGY ARE DEVELOPED VERY EFFECTIVELY THROUGH WELL-PLANNED LESSONS, TOPICS AND ROUTINES, WHICH PROVIDE REGULAR OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN TO MOVE BOTH IN A CREATIVE AND A CONTROLLED WAY. SESSIONS IN THE SCHOOL HALL, WHICH PROMOTE AN AWARENESS OF SPACE, OBSTACLES AND OTHER CHILDREN, ARE WELL PLANNED. MEMBERS OF STAFF INTERACT WELL WITH THE CHILDREN, PARTICIPATING IN ACTIVITIES AND ENCOURAGING THEM TO TRY TO DEVELOP THEIR BODILY CONTROL AND CO-ORDINATION. CHILDREN ARE GIVEN VERY GOOD HELP TO DEVELOP DEXTERITY WHEN HANDLING PENCILS, SCISSORS, BRUSHES, MODELLING TOOLS, CONSTRUCTION TOYS AND JIGSAWS.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Creative play is a central part of the curriculum.

Commentary

49. THE VERY EFFECTIVE TEACHING RESULTS IN GOOD ACHIEVEMENT. ABOUT SEVENTY PER CENT OF CHILDREN ARE ON TARGET TO REACH THE NATIONAL GOALS FOR EARLY LEARNING BY THE END OF THEIR RECEPTION YEAR. CHILDREN ENJOY TAKING PART IN THE HIGH-QUALITY ROLE-PLAY SITUATIONS PROVIDED. THEY DEVELOP THEIR IMAGINATION AND EXTEND THEIR LANGUAGE SKILLS VERY WELL AS THEY PLAN AND PERFORM THEIR OWN DRAMAS IN THE CLASS THEATRE OR WHEN PLAYING IN A MINI ARCTIC ENVIRONMENT, COMPLETE WITH ICEBERGS AND POLAR BEARS. A VERY GOOD RANGE OF MUSIC, SONGS AND RHYMES HELPS CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT SOUND, RHYTHM AND PATTERN. CHILDREN DEVELOP THEIR SENSES WELL THROUGH INVESTIGATING TEXTURE, SHAPE AND COLOUR. THEY ARE LEARNING TO MIX PAINTS TO CREATE DIFFERENT

SHADES AND ENCOURAGED TO CHOOSE DIFFERENT MATERIALS TO CREATE THEIR OWN HIGH-QUALITY DESIGNS, PICTURES, MODELS AND COLLAGES.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**. Standards are above average in Year 2 and in Year 6. Pupils achieve well. Teaching and learning are good overall, and consistently so in Year 3 to Year 6. Assessment is satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Improved opportunities for speaking and listening work are being provided.
- The quality of marking of pupils' work in books is inconsistent.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs or those who are acquiring English.
- The subject leader does not yet have opportunities to check the quality of teaching across the school.

Commentary

50. Standards attained in the 2004 national tests were above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. The majority of pupils attained expected levels and a significant percentage exceeded expectations. In Year 6, of the small number of pupils who did not attain expected levels, the majority were pupils who are learning English as an additional language. The school has rightly analysed their performance to identify teaching strategies which will ensure that bi-lingual pupils attain the levels of which they are capable. Work in Year 2 has been affected by staffing issues which are now rectified, and pupils are beginning to reach better standards in lessons than their last term's work in books suggests.
51. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and consistently so in Year 3 to Year 6. Lessons are generally well planned, drawing on the National Literacy Strategy's teaching framework to ensure a balance of work between the different language skills. Pupils make good progress in word and sentence-level work and in the construction of longer pieces of writing for a range of purposes. Older pupils are aware that the purpose and audience for a particular piece of writing, for instance a balanced argument or a piece of newspaper reporting, determine the type of writing required and its organisation. Some teachers are also building in good opportunities for speaking and listening, which allow pupils to develop their skills by sharing ideas in pairs or small groups before feeding back to the whole class. Teachers' good questioning skills in many classes allow pupils to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, and members of staff model appropriate responses for those pupils who need this extra support. No effective use of information and communication technology was seen in lessons.
52. In many lessons, pupils at different levels of attainment achieve well. Planning indicates different follow-on tasks for particular groups, which allow pupils to make progress at their own pace. Where bi-lingual teaching assistants support pupils

learning English as an additional language, they achieve well. For example, in a Year 2 class a newcomer to English was introduced through Panjabi to the story which the class was studying. This very effective strategy meant that the pupil already knew the detail of the story as it unfolded in English. Pupils with special educational needs are also well supported by appropriately briefed teaching assistants who are familiar with the pupils' targets and work effectively to ensure those targets are met and the lesson objectives are achieved.

53. The systems in place to record and assess pupils' attainment are satisfactory overall, and targets are set to help pupils make progress. Teachers' marking is inconsistent, however. In the best practice, pupils' errors are identified, guidance is given on how improvements might be achieved and progress is acknowledged. In other classes, marking does not sufficiently contribute to pupils' progress.
54. The subject leader is new to the role, and is keen to see the English curriculum adapted in ways which are more responsive to pupils' needs. One current focus is to improve the use of speaking and listening work as a preparation for writing. The role of subject leader involves checking teachers' planning, analysis of patterns of performance in national and optional tests and some scrutiny of pupils' work, but does not yet encompass the monitoring of teaching across the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory. In the light of national guidance, the school is beginning to provide more opportunities for speaking and listening across the curriculum to ensure that more pupils contribute throughout lessons. This is beneficial to all pupils, particularly to those who are learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, who are able to discuss ideas in groups before reporting back to the whole class. Current national advice on curriculum planning is being implemented by the school, so that links are being made between subjects, and pupils are employing their language and literacy skills in subject-specific tasks.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**. Standards are broadly average at Year 2 and above average at Year 6. Achievement is good. Teaching and learning are good overall, and sometimes very good. Assessment is satisfactory. Leadership and management are good. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning is well sequenced, and mathematical terminology is effectively introduced and used.
- Where investigative work takes place, it is of good quality.
- Most lessons are well paced.
- The range of work at Year 1 and Year 2, including investigative and problem-solving activities, is limited.
- The quality of teaching is not yet being effectively checked.
- The subject leader does not yet have opportunities to check the quality of teaching and pupils' standards of work across the school.

Commentary

56. In recent years, there have been no significant differences in the attainment of boys and of girls at Year 2 or Year 6 in national tests. Since 2001, results in both year groups have mostly been above average. In 2004, the numbers of pupils attaining higher than the expected levels were above average. The 2004 tests show that Year 6 pupils achieved very well, when their results are compared with those they reached when they were in Year 2.
57. Achievement is especially good in Year 3 to Year 6. In Year 6, higher-attaining pupils made good progress in using more than one method to check the accuracy of their results. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 4 achieved well as they quickly converted decimals into fractions, and many showed mathematical insights without any prompting from the teacher. In Year 3, pupils achieved well as a consequence of an imaginative approach to teaching how to calculate and record in pounds and pence. In Year 2, achievement is good as a result of effective matching of tasks to pupils of varying levels of attainment and understanding. However, much work earlier in the year indicates only satisfactory achievement, because pupils were not sufficiently challenged. Pupils in Year 1 made satisfactory progress in working out subtraction sums.
58. Most pupils concentrate very well, displaying positive attitudes and confidence in their learning. Teachers' careful choice of language and effective use of voice regularly set a positive tone. Planning is frequently good, and in the best teaching involves the prior preparation of exciting resources, which arouse pupils' interest. Much teaching is brisk, and offers a good sense of challenge through activities which are well matched to pupils with differing levels of attainment. In Year 6, in particular, more able pupils are expected to think independently and encouraged to develop their mathematical understanding through investigative work.
59. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. There are instances of effective ongoing assessment, for example additional explanation to the whole class where a common error is noticed. However, other aspects of assessment are satisfactory only; marking is not sufficiently focused on helping pupils to improve, and target setting for individual pupils is not yet being exploited to best effect.
60. The subject leader is highly committed, and is aware of the best practice in the school. However, the role of subject leader does not yet include checking the quality of teaching across the school. Pupils' performance in national tests is effectively analysed, and teachers' planning is checked.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils in a Year 3 science lesson, for instance, had good opportunities to measure others' heights and arm-spans to a good level of accuracy, and compared their measurements, including calculating differences. Elsewhere, pupils in Year 2 had satisfactory opportunities to interpret a bar graph in an information and communication technology lesson.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**. Standards are average at Year 2 and above average at Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory in Year 1 and Year 2 and good at Year 3 to Year 6. Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is satisfactory. Leadership and management are good. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The skills of scientific investigation are taught well which has helped to raise standards.
- The marking of pupils' recorded work does not give sufficient guidance on how to improve.
- English skills are used well when pupils write up investigations and record their findings.

Commentary

62. Standards are at similar levels to those seen at the time of the last inspection. The curriculum is firmly based on the teaching of the skills of scientific enquiry, and this enables pupils to develop a secure understanding of scientific principles. Pupils progressively develop skills in observation and prediction and have a secure understanding of what comprises a fair test. Most pupils have a broad scientific knowledge that they are able to apply to their investigations. Pupils achieve well in Year 3 to Year 6. However, because of earlier staffing issues in Year 1 and Year 2, which resulted in slower progress, the achievement of these pupils is satisfactory. Where pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language receive additional support from teaching assistants and bi-lingual support staff, their achievement is good.
63. Teaching and learning are good overall, with particular strengths in Year 6. Teachers plan carefully and ensure that all aspects of the science curriculum are covered. Pupils' work is consistently marked in all classes, but the quality of comments on pupils' work does not give them sufficient guidance on how to improve. Although the level of challenge is appropriate for the majority of pupils, the work provided for the most able pupils does not always extend them fully. Most teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the quality of work produced and this results in attentive and interested pupils. During their investigations, pupils co-operate well together discussing their ideas sensibly. Teachers ensure that pupils understand the necessary scientific vocabulary. For example, in a Year 6 lesson pupils showed a good understanding of words such as 'solvent' and 'solution'. By the end of the lesson, pupils confidently used these words to describe what they had achieved. Pupils could also accurately explain the nature of a fair test. Teachers ensure that pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills when recording their observations, and these are developed well. There is little evidence of information and communication technology skills being used in this subject.
64. The subject leader is enthusiastic and has developed rigorous systems to analyse pupils' results and monitor their progress through regular assessment. A regular scrutiny of the quality of pupils' work is undertaken, and teachers' planning is monitored to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between all the aspects of the subject. This is enabling the school to set more challenging targets for pupils and to ensure that they achieve as well as they can. Although rigorous monitoring of the quality of work has been identified as an area for improvement, it has yet to be fully developed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**. Standards are broadly average at Year 2, and above average at Year 6. Achievement is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. Assessment is satisfactory. Leadership and management are good. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers show confidence and good skills in teaching the subject.
- Pupils display enthusiasm and engagement in learning to use information and communication technology.
- Pupils' standards and the quality of teaching are not yet being effectively checked.
- The use of information and communication technology in learning other subjects is restricted.

Commentary

65. Year 6 pupils achieved well in giving commands in a drawing program to produce letter shapes. In Year 5, pupils made satisfactory progress in using a program to produce geometric shapes. Pupils in Year 3 achieved well in inputting information, and in learning how to interrogate, a database. In Year 2, pupils made satisfactory progress in interpreting a bar graph of information on data which their class had gathered. Year 1 pupils achieved well when they learned how to give instructions to control the movement of a person, in readiness for subsequent information and communication technology work.
66. In the computer suite, teachers display good skills in teaching information and communication technology, which enable them to provide a good model, and to demonstrate, including effective use of the interactive whiteboard. Teachers also set a good tone to lessons, engaging pupils' interest through effective use of voice and promoting good learning through careful choice of language and clear introduction of relevant vocabulary and ideas, such as 'field' and 'data'. Good teaching methods are evident, ensuring that all pupils have opportunities to gain hands-on experience when working in the suite. Effective organisation includes working with a partner to make inputs, or to generate ideas for discussion with the whole class.
67. Much teaching is brisk, but not pressurising. In the best teaching seen, the teacher provided a strong lead for pupils' work by setting a task which was appropriately challenging for pupils of different standards of attainment. This included a separately planned, and more practical, activity for a pupil with special educational needs, undertaken with his teaching assistant. This enabled him to make progress on the lesson objective and to succeed at his own level. In other lessons, teaching assistants also provided good support for pupils with special educational needs.
68. The subject leader has just taken over responsibility from her predecessor. Both have a good understanding of the present stage of development of the subject. The role of subject leader does not yet include checking the quality of teaching or pupils' standards across the school. Good use has been made of external expertise. A consultant has provided a range of staff training. Ongoing technical support for the suite has been effectively organised under the aegis of a local Technology College, and the Excellence in Cities initiative has allowed the school to trial software materials in advance of purchasing.

69. Effective development planning in recent years has resulted in the acquisition of the computer suite and a bank of laptop computers. A good range of appropriate software had been purchased, and members of staff have been trained to make effective use of these. Together, these improvements are raising standards.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. In classrooms, only limited evidence of the use of information and communication technology in the teaching of other subjects was seen, and this is unsatisfactory. In learning to do simple subtraction sums, some pupils in Year 1 used a mathematics program, but this was inappropriately pitched for their present level of experience.

HUMANITIES

71. **Geography** was not a focus of the inspection and no lessons were observed. A scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils indicate that the school provides a good curriculum to promote pupils' interests in people and places across the world. Standards appear to be broadly average. Cross-curricular links are used effectively to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding and to add focus and interest to their learning. Ideas of sustainable development and responsibility for the environment are covered well as pupils consider the impact of climate, transport, housing and leisure on the well-being of communities.
72. **History** was not a main focus of the inspection and no lessons were observed. Inspectors looked at a limited range of pupils' work in the subject assessment portfolio and on display, along with curricular plans for each year group. A scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that pupils cover the appropriate topics of the nationally approved scheme of work which the school has adopted. The work is linked, where possible, to other subjects. For example, pupils have good opportunities to employ their literacy skills in subject-specific tasks, such as writing accounts of child workers in Victorian times. Pupils have opportunities to visit places of historical interest and to see important historical events acted out by invited drama groups or to be involved in role-play themselves, which makes history come alive for them.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**. Standards are average at Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory. Teaching, learning and assessment, are satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

- By Year 6, pupils have a good knowledge of both the Christian faith and several other world faiths.
- There is little evidence of pupils using their writing skills to record what they know.
- Pupils extend their knowledge well through a wide range of visits.

Commentary

73. Discussions with pupils and observations in lessons reveal that pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 have an above average level of knowledge of religious education. This results from a well-organised and structured curriculum together with a wide range of opportunities to visit places of worship associated with the Christian and other faiths. Pupils are developing a good understanding of Christianity and the stories associated

with that faith. For example, pupils in Year 1 have a good understanding of the story of Joseph and his coat of many colours and the impact of his relationship with his brothers. Pupils in Year 2 show considerable respect for the views of others when they consider special books and religious practices as they discuss the place of the Bible in Christianity and the Qu'ran in Islam. Visits to the local church, a mosque all help to raise awareness of the values of the differing faiths. As one pupil put it, "We are all put on Earth to live in peace and harmony".

74. Lessons are largely based on discussion and in the lessons seen pupils had the confidence to give their views and opinions. Little religious education work is recorded and opportunities are therefore missed for pupils to use their writing skills to set down what they have learned and know. There are, however, good opportunities for pupils to work together to discuss their views. There is very little evidence of information and communication technology being used to further pupils' work and enquiry in religious education. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are usually supported well. Assemblies add satisfactorily to pupils' learning and understanding in religious education.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

75. **Art and design, design and technology** and **physical education** were not focuses of the inspection. Because too few lessons were seen it was not possible to reach any judgements on the quality of teaching in these subjects. Judgements on the standards reached and the achievement of pupils were not made in the previous report.
76. Pupils' **art and design** skills are developed well in Year 1 and Year 2 and the standards attained are above average at this age. Pupils produce closely observed studies of buildings taking considerable care with colour and scale. Good attention is paid to proportion when pupils produce self-portraits, showing the correct positioning of features. Pupils use a wide range of natural objects to create sensitive and imaginative collage pictures. Pots made from clay are carefully produced and decorated. Pupils at this age achieve well and develop their skills and experiences well.
77. Standards in Years 3 to 6 in **art and design** are average. While art and design still forms an appropriate part of the curriculum for older pupils, and skills such as printing and sculpture are developed, work is often incorporated into other subjects. Where this happens, insufficient attention is paid to the quality of the artwork and standards suffer. Interviews with pupils indicate that they have produced work in the style of famous artists, although their recall of the names of these was limited. Techniques such as batik printing are still developed and pupils have a secure understanding of how these are created. The use of sketchbooks is appropriate and the outside environment and visiting artists are used well to extend pupils' experiences. The subject leader has collected photographic evidence of pupils' work but has not yet had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching. Standards of work are at average levels and pupils achieve satisfactorily at this age.
78. Samples of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and observations of two lessons form the evidence for judgements in **design and technology**. Pupils have a secure understanding of the design process and samples of this work show that skills learned in English are extended well when pupils write up their work. Care is taken to evaluate the quality of their work. In the two lessons seen, the teaching was good. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and ensure that all the necessary aspects of the

subject are taught. Discussions with pupils indicate that they are interested in the subject and enjoy the challenges provided, for example, when investigating differently shaped beams made from paper to determine the one with the greatest strength. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has a clear programme to develop the subject. There have, however, been too few opportunities to check on the quality of colleagues' teaching.

79. In **physical education**, pupils experience the full range of activities. Very few lessons were seen and so no judgement can be made on the overall quality of teaching. However, during the lessons seen, pupils were given the opportunity to extend their skills and control the quality of their movements. Good opportunities were provided for pupils to comment on the quality of movement produced by others and this helps to raise standards. Pupils work well together and the standard of work seen in the dance lesson was above average. Pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 attend residential camps and are able to take part in outdoor activities such as archery, orienteering and canoeing. The school organises a very comprehensive programme of extra-curricular sporting activities including, for example, rugby and athletics, and pupils benefit from expert coaching in these. The subject leader has good subject knowledge and is working hard to improve the quality of provision.

Music

Commentary

Provision in music is **good**. Standards are average in Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement is good across the school. Teaching, learning and assessment, are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective teaching helps the pupils to build progressively upon their earlier skills.

Commentary

80. Teachers are confident in teaching the subject and use a commercial scheme effectively to build systematically on pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. Lessons are well structured and tasks are challenging, maintaining pupils' interests and enthusiasm. Pupils are given very clear strategies to improve their skills. They are encouraged to think as musicians, and to use correct musical terms. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, receive extra help to enable them to take a full part in music lessons and achieve standards similar to their peers.
81. Pupils in Year 6 use musical vocabulary accurately when talking about their work and in answering questions posed by their teachers. They make good progress in playing instruments and in developing their skills of composition.
82. Music makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal, spiritual, and cultural development as they learn about the music of countries such as Egypt and Italy and the place of music in Victorian England. In assemblies, the songs and hymns chosen are challenging, and pupils sing with enthusiasm and clarity and sustain a steady pulse. Singing is well taught and pupils are encouraged to sing with accuracy, expression and articulation as they learn and rehearse new hymns.
83. The school choir and recorder group are involved in school and community performances. These activities make a positive contribution to the curriculum and provide pupils with good opportunities to extend their creative skills.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

84. **Personal, social and health education** was not a main focus of the inspection. Because too few lessons were seen, it was not possible to reach any judgements on the quality of teaching in this subject.
85. The school provides well for the personal development of its pupils. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility through the school council and through the jobs they undertake to help with the smooth running of the school, for example telephone duty at lunchtimes. Pupils behave responsibly in and around the school and demonstrate good levels of care and consideration for each other. This helps to create a positive ethos within the school. Social skills are developed well. In almost all lessons, pupils are provided with good opportunities to work with each other in discussing their work, and to show respect for the ideas of others.
86. The wide range of sporting activities enables pupils to enter into competition with pupils from other schools in friendly rivalry. Those who join in with these activities have good opportunities to encounter skilled and supportive adults who provide additional training and who are good role models for pupils. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to be involved in the local community through charity work and their involvement in environmental issues, such as the re-cycling of waste. There is an effective programme of health education, much of which is taught through the science curriculum, but additional opportunities are provided through the visit of the 'health bus' which promotes healthy living. The school's provision is well supported through visiting outside agencies. Although there is evidence of integration with learning in other subjects, monitoring procedures do not ensure that the most important aspects of the programme are always taught in sufficient depth.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE 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	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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