

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST MICHAEL'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Louth

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120574

Headteacher: Mr P Fox

Lead inspector: Mr K Williams

Dates of inspection: 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> April 2005

Inspection number: 268098

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4-11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 242

School address: Monks Dyke Road  
Louth  
Lincolnshire  
Postcode: LN11 9AR

Telephone number: 01507 603867  
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Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Rev Leigh Goodwin

Date of previous inspection: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2003

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Michael's is of average size, with 242 boys and girls on roll. When the children join the reception class at the beginning of the autumn term their attainment covers a range of abilities but, overall, it is average. Almost all of the pupils are of white British background and no pupils are learning English as an additional language. Forty-two pupils have been identified with special educational needs, four of whom have a Statement of Special Educational Needs; these figures are about average. A below average proportion of pupils (eight per cent) are eligible for free school meals.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team |                |                | Subject responsibilities  |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|---|
| 21074                          | Keith Williams | Lead inspector | English, information and communication technology, design and technology, physical education    |
| 9003                           | Bryan Findley  | Lay inspector  |   |
| 23566                          | John Iles      | Team inspector | Mathematics, science, history, personal, social and health education, special educational needs |
| 20655                          | Beryl Rimmer   | Team inspector | Art and design, geography, music, religious education, the Foundation Stage                     |

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

This is an improving school that provides a **satisfactory standard of education**. The school is emerging from a difficult period in which it was judged to have serious weaknesses. As a result of the good leadership, management and teaching, the rate of progress made by most pupils is increasing and standards are rising. Overall, the pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards in the key subjects of English and mathematics are about average. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher, staff and governors are committed to raising standards and have a good understanding of what needs to be done to continue to improve
- Standards are rising in English and mathematics, but could still be higher, particularly in writing
- Standards in science are well above average and the pupils achieve very well
- Most pupils have very positive attitudes to school and they take full advantage of the many opportunities provided for them outside of lessons
- The marking of pupils' work in some classes does not sufficiently inform them about how well they are doing and how they might improve and too much of the work is presented untidily
- Children in the Foundation Stage and pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve well

The school has made good progress since it was last inspected in June 2003, particularly in relation to its serious weaknesses. The quality of teaching has improved. Governors now play an influential part in strategic development and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Subject co-ordinators are more involved in keeping a check on their subjects. However, though the marking of pupils' work has improved, it is not yet consistent in each class. The school keeps a good check on pupils' absence; the attendance rate is improving and is now at a good level. Standards in science have risen; while those in English and mathematics, at the end of Year 6, are lower than at the time of the last inspection, the pupils in the upper juniors are those who have been most affected by the previous serious weaknesses.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

The results for mathematics and science in 2004 compare very favourably with other schools nationally and with those working in similar circumstances, while in English they were average. Over recent years the results have generally been above or well above average, although there has been some variation, particularly in English. This is largely due to the differing proportions of pupils with special educational needs. This variability in English is also reflected in the results in recent years for pupils in Year 2; in 2004, the results were average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics.

Inspection evidence indicates that the pupils **achieve satisfactorily**. Across the school, the pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they achieve well. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school covers a broad range but, overall, it is average. They make good progress and achieve well in Reception and the vast majority are well on the way to meeting the goals expected of them by the end of the year. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are average and in science they are well above average. Standards in ICT and personal, social and health education are above those expected throughout the school, while in music in Year 2 and religious education in Year 6 they are also above expectations.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a good quality of education.** Since the last inspection, many of the teachers are new to the school or are teaching a year group for the first time. **The teaching is good** and this makes a significant contribution to the improving rate of progress made by most pupils. Lessons are well planned, interesting and challenging. The teachers are clear about what the pupils are expected to learn and they ensure that work is well matched to the needs of pupils of different ability. The teaching assistants provide good support, particularly for the children in the Foundation Stage and those with special educational needs. As a result, these pupils achieve well. Marking has improved but, in some classes, there is too little emphasis on letting the pupils know how well they are doing and how they can improve. The pupils' presentation of their work is not of a consistent quality. The school provides a good curriculum, enhanced by a good range of enrichment activities, but it does not require pupils to write at length often enough. The care and welfare of the pupils are very well managed and they are offered good support and guidance. The school benefits from good links with parents, the local community and other schools.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are good. Since the last inspection, the headteacher and governors have been determined to address the school's shortcomings and they have achieved considerable success. The governors' role has improved significantly, particularly in identifying the steps necessary to improve. While standards, particularly among the upper juniors, are not as high as they should be, they are improving and a good range of strategies have been implemented to secure the necessary improvement. A closer check is kept on the teaching and learning than at the time of the last inspection, but this has not yet achieved consistency in all classes, particularly in the way the work is marked and in the teachers' expectations of how the pupils should present their work. Parents are very supportive of the headteacher. There is a strong sense of teamwork among the staff and a shared commitment to raising standards. Finances are very well managed and a deficit budget has been turned into a small surplus. Governors are aware of a very small number of omissions from information provided in the prospectus and annual report to parents.

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

Most parents and pupils have positive views of the school. They are particularly pleased that their children enjoy school, are well taught and are expected to work hard. They indicate that their children are well supported when they first start school, treated fairly and encouraged to develop maturity. A few parents would like more information about their children's progress, although inspectors found that, overall, parents are provided with a good range of information. A small number of parents are concerned that the behaviour a few pupils is having an adverse effect on their children's progress. Inspectors found that those few pupils who engage in a low level of disruption are generally well managed.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in English, particularly in writing, and mathematics,
- Keep a closer check on the work of each class and ensure that agreed improvements are implemented to iron out inconsistencies, particularly in marking and presentation

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the prospectus and governors' annual report contain all of the necessary information



## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

The pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. The children in the Foundation Stage and those across the school with special educational needs, achieve well. Standards in English and mathematics are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and in science they are well above average.

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

- The children in Reception make a good start to their education
- Standards in English and mathematics are rising, but could still be higher, particularly in writing
- Standards are high in science because the subject is very well taught
- Those pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress

#### **Commentary**

1. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school varies from year to year and covers a broad range but, overall, it is average. The good provision in the two classes containing reception children enables the children to make a good start to school and achieve well. They respond well to the supportive environment and the good range of activities provided. The majority are well on track to reach the goals expected of them by the end of the year. Across the school, the pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good support they receive. The planning takes good account of their specific needs and the teaching assistants have prominent and successful role in helping them to achieve well.
2. The school's results in the 2004 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 were average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to all schools and to similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. The results in recent years have been improving at a similar rate to the national picture, although they show some variation from year to year and across the subjects due, largely, to a varying proportion of pupils with special educational needs and those capable of reaching the higher levels in each year group. The teacher assessments in science have been consistently well above average.
3. Inspectors found that the pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. By the end of Year 2, standards in English and mathematics are average and they are well above average in science.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading       | 16.1 (15.2)    | 15.8 (15.7)      |
| writing       | 14.9 (16.0)    | 14.6 (14.6)      |

|             |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| mathematics | 16.7 (16.3) | 16.2 (16.3) |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|

*There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. In Year 6, in 2004, the national test results were average in English and well above average in mathematics and science when compared to all schools and those in similar circumstances. The proportion achieving the higher Level 5 was average in English, well above average in mathematics and above average in science. As with the picture in Year 2, there has been some variation in the results in English and mathematics in recent years, due to cohort differences. The results for science have been consistently well above average. Taking account of all three subjects, the school's results have been improving at a slower rate than the national picture.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English       | 27.2 (27.7)    | 26.9 (26.8)      |
| mathematics   | 29.1 (27.4)    | 27.0 (26.8)      |
| science       | 30.0 (30.9)    | 28.6 (28.6)      |

*There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

5. Inspectors found that in most subjects the achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory and, by the end of Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are average and in science they are well above average. These findings reflect the variation from year to year in the national tests. Despite this variability, the pupils are now benefiting from teaching that is regularly good and sometimes very good and their rate of progress is increasing. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when teaching in Years 3 to 6 was judged to be unsatisfactory. Standards are rising, too, but many of the new initiatives have not yet had time to have the desired impact and, particularly in English and mathematics, they could still be higher.
6. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 were those most affected by the unsatisfactory teaching identified in the last report. Those in Year 6 are very well taught and are improving briskly, but there is much catching up to do, which accounts for the current average standards in English and mathematics. The school recognises the need to raise standards and has effected many improvements. There remains more work to do, particularly in developing the pupils' writing. While this is a priority for the school, at present the pupils' progress is limited by too few opportunities for them to write at length in English lessons and in work in other subjects. Similarly, there is too little emphasis on celebrating the pupils' writing in displays around the school. In mathematics, more use could be made of the results of assessments to enable staff to identify more closely what individual pupils are doing well and the areas they need to improve. The pupils achieve very well in science because there is a strong emphasis on learning through well structured and challenging practical activity.
7. Among other subjects, standards in ICT are above what is expected of pupils in Years 2 and 6 because the teaching is good, the pupils have positive attitudes and make good use of computers in other subjects. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus for pupils in Year 2 and above those expectations by the end of Year 6. Progress is particularly good in Year 6, where the pupils are very well taught. Standards in music are above the expectations of pupils at

the end of Year 2 and in line with what is expected at the end of Year 6. The younger pupils benefit from a rich, exciting and expertly planned music programme.

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

The pupils' attitudes to school are very positive. They behave well and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pupils enjoy school life and they support the activities offered very well
- Good provision is made for the pupils' personal development
- The pupils perform their responsibilities diligently and are keen to help in school
- The procedures for monitoring attendance are much improved and the attendance rate has risen

### **Commentary**

8. The pupils' attitudes to school are very good because they are provided with interesting and varied activities, which capture their attention and concentration. This was seen in lessons throughout the school. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson on the habitats of different creatures, the pupils' excitement and enjoyment created an atmosphere of adventure in learning. Many opportunities in group or paired activities increase the pupil's confidence to be involved and this encourages in them a desire to learn. Consequently, the pupils enjoy their time in school and soon settle down to work at the start of each session. Parents agree that their children enjoy their time in school and the pupils attend extra-curricular activities in large numbers to develop their individual areas of interest. There have been no exclusions, so the table showing exclusions is omitted.
9. Behaviour is good across the school. In the Reception class, and those classes containing pupils in Years 1 to 3, it is often very good. This is an improvement on the last inspection, when behaviour was judged to be unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4. Behaviour is improving because of a good range of strategies adopted by the school, with the help of the local education authority (LEA) behaviour support service. School rules and codes of conduct are made clear and discussed with the pupils, who prepare their own class rules each year. The pupils who were in the lower juniors at the time of the last inspection are now in Years 5 and 6. While there are a few pupils in these classes who lose concentration easily and frequently require the attention of the teacher, in the main they are well managed and, overall, the behaviour in these year groups is good. A successful system of responding to misbehaviour is applied consistently across the school and leads to the tracking of individual pupils and the provision of appropriate support that can involve parents. Parents agree that the pupils generally behave and mature well and that a few older pupils cause a low level of disruption, but they are aware and approve of the measures the school is taking to improve behaviour.
10. The provision for pupils' personal development remains good and pupils mature well because they are fully included in the life of the school. They are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves from an early age, such as when changing for PE in the Reception class and when organising themselves for the start of the school day. All this adds greatly to the smooth running of the school day. All pupils are given

responsibilities appropriate for their ages, such as collecting registers, taking responsible for playtime equipment or helping with safety inspections. The pupils' perform these responsibilities well and they want to be helpful. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 are also included in decision making through the school council.

11. The school is building successfully on the good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development seen at the previous inspection. Provision for spiritual development has improved and Year 6 pupils feel they mature well and learn a lot about personal values and values promoted by different religious groups. In lessons and assemblies, the pupils now have greater opportunities to explore their own values and their ideas about themselves. This was seen in an assembly about Moses and the need to be supportive of each other, which was linked well to their earlier work about poverty and fair trade.
12. Attendance during the current year is good and unauthorised absence is low because procedures for recording and monitoring attendance have improved. Difficulties with using computer software resulted in attendance during the phased introduction of children to the reception class being recorded at an artificially low level until this year. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced a system of telephoning home on the first day of absence, where an absence is unexplained. This has dramatically reduced the amount of unauthorised absence.

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

| Authorised absence |     | Unauthorised absence |     |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data        | 6.6 | School data          | 0.0 |
| 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.*

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides a good quality of education. The teaching, learning and curriculum are good and there are very good arrangements for securing the care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils. Links with parents, the local community and other schools are good.

**Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is good and there are satisfactory procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Lessons are well planned, interesting and challenging and the teachers are clear about what the pupils are expected to learn
- The pupils with special educational needs are well supported and the teaching assistants make a positive contribution to their learning
- Marking has improved but it is not used consistently across the school to inform the pupils about how well they are doing and how they can improve
- The teachers' expectations of how the pupils should present their work are not always sufficiently high

## Commentary

13. Taking account of the lessons seen, the pupils' previous work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers, the quality of teaching and learning is good. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and this is having a significant impact on the improving rate of progress made by most pupils and their rising achievement.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons**

| Excellent | Very good | Good     | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 1 (3%)    | 13 (32%)  | 19 (46%) | 6 (15%)      | 2 (5%)         | 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.*

14. The teaching in the reception year is good overall and enables the children to make a good start to their education, make good progress and achieve well. The planning is good, the classrooms well organised and a varied and interesting range of activities is provided that cover the six areas of learning. There is a good balance between activities led by the adults and those initiated by the children. Teamwork among the adults is a strong feature and they have a good understanding of how these young children learn. Procedures for assessing the pupils are good and a close check is kept on their progress, although more could be done to use this information to identify strengths and weaknesses and match the tasks more closely to the children's individual needs.
15. Across the school, the teachers make sure that lessons are well organised, so that they run smoothly. They are clear about what the pupils are expected to learn and share this important information with the pupils at the start of lessons. Those pupils capable of reaching the higher levels are generally well catered for, so that there is a suitable level of challenge to stretch and motivate them. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good, which contributes to the improving picture. Questioning is brisk and purposeful, setting the tone for the rest of the lesson and capturing the pupil's attention. Consequently, most lessons take place in a calm and purposeful atmosphere. The behaviour of pupils in Years 3 and 4 was a serious weakness in the last inspection. Some of these year groups are now in Years 5 and 6. Their behaviour has improved and, on the few occasions when a small number of pupils create low level disruption, they are usually well managed using the school's clear procedures. This is most effective in lessons when there is adult support for the teacher. A particular strength is the very good teaching in science, where the teachers have high expectations of the pupils and provide challenging and practical investigations. The teachers enable pupils to analyse their findings and find solutions to questions and problems. As a result, the pupils achieve very well and standards are well above average.
16. Many of the teachers are new to their current year groups and they have worked hard to gain a good grasp of the work they teach. They are settling in well and the pupils are benefiting from teaching that is regularly good and sometimes very good. Many new initiatives, strategies and systems have been established, particularly in relation to the serious weaknesses identified in the last inspection. The rate of progress made by many pupils and the standards they attain are rising. This is particularly evident in the current Year 6, who are responding very well to the very good teaching in that class and

are making brisk progress. However, many of the new procedures are not yet fully established and there are inconsistencies from class to class. Very occasionally, a limited knowledge of subject limits the progress made by the pupils, for example in religious education. The school is addressing this need in music by providing a scheme of work that supports non-specialist teachers. Across the subjects, expectations of the pupils' presentational skills are not consistently high, which results in too much work that is untidily presented in some classes. Homework is used appropriately to support the pupils learning.

17. The teaching of those pupils with special educational needs is good and, consequently, they achieve well in relation to their particular targets. The provision is well led by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). The pupils are identified at an early stage and a suitable programme of learning, including the management of behaviour, is planned that is well matched to the pupils' needs. The specialist expertise of outside agencies is called in and used if necessary. The teaching assistants make a strong contribution to the education of these pupils, explaining subject-specific vocabulary and ensuring that the pupils are able to play a full part in the lessons. There are regular reviews of the pupils' progress and the pupils and their parents are appropriately involved.
18. The quality of assessment has improved since the last inspection and it is now satisfactory. Regular assessments are made in each subject so that the progress of individual pupils can be tracked. Much of this is being developed by the assessment co-ordinator in a computer-based system. The information is well used to set statutory targets for the school's performance in the national tests. The pupils are becoming increasingly involved in assessing and reflecting on their own achievement. The marking of pupils' work has improved and there are many examples of the pupils receiving good information about how well they are doing and how they need to improve. However, this is not yet consistent across the school, which limits the pupils' knowledge of their performance.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is good with very good opportunities for enrichment. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and this enables them to make good progress and achieve well
- The school provides well for the pupils' personal, social and health education
- The pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education
- There are good opportunities for pupils to attend clubs and take part in a range of activities outside of lessons
- There are not enough planned links between literacy, numeracy and other subjects, particularly in the opportunities for pupils to write at length

## **Commentary**

19. The school has a broad and balanced curriculum that generally meets the needs of pupils well. The two-year programme in Years 1 and 2, designed to meet the needs of

mixed-age classes, is effective. The provision for those pupils with special educational needs is a strength. The curriculum is adapted to ensure that they are fully included and provides appropriate challenges to enable them to reach their particular targets and achieve well. The staff understand their roles and responsibilities and provide these pupils with strong support and guidance.

20. There is a good emphasis on practical approaches to learning that make the curriculum relevant and exciting. Consequently, the pupils enjoy their work. While there are some good links between subjects, there is no systematic programme to ensure that the pupils use and develop their literacy and numeracy skills to support their work in other subjects. This is most evident in the few opportunities that the pupils have to write at length in subjects such as geography, history and RE, which limits their progress in writing.
21. There are some exciting innovations in the curriculum. French is taught in Year 6 and there are very good opportunities for the pupils to learn to play musical instruments and develop their sporting interests. The range of out-of-school activities is good and includes sports and craft clubs, musical groups and a choir. These are well attended and provide valuable links with the community, for example when pupils sing and perform in the local church. Visitors to the school also enrich learning experiences and support pupils' understanding of how to take responsibility and contribute to their local environment. Very good links with the local secondary school enable resources to be shared and the pupils benefit from specialist staff support. These arrangements also support the preparation for transfer. Links between year groups are good and staff liaise together to ensure consistency between stages of learning.
22. There are sufficient resources and staff to deliver the curriculum. However, there has been little recent expenditure on books and equipment due to budget constraints, a situation that has now been resolved. The school's accommodation is currently being redeveloped and refurbished. This exciting programme will enhance the quality of the learning environment and improve facilities. Despite the disruption, the outdoor learning environment is attractive and offers good opportunities for extending the curriculum beyond the classroom, although the children in reception are currently without their dedicated area.

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

The care, welfare and safety of pupils are very good. The staff provide good levels of support and guidance and the school takes good account of the pupil's views.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The procedures for securing the pupils' health and safety are very good
- The pupils have very high levels of trust in the staff
- The tracking of behaviour leads to good support for individual pupils
- The pupils make a positive contribution to the work of the school

### **Commentary**

23. These aspects of the school's work have improved significantly since the last inspection. There is now a rigorous approach to health and safety, particularly with

regard to the assessment of risk in curriculum activities. Routine site inspections, including the designated governor and, sometimes, the pupils take place each term and are recorded and reported on to the governing body. Very effective procedures for reporting day-to-day concerns ensure that any hazard is dealt with promptly. Arrangements for welfare and medical needs are very good and all non-teaching staff are trained in first aid. Child protection arrangements are effective and meet all local requirements and Internet security is effective. The school has gained the Healthy School Award.

24. Adults in the school enjoy very high levels of trust from the pupils, who say they are well cared for and that teachers are helpful and friendly. This is supported by the views of parents and confirmed by inspection findings. All of those pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that there was someone they would turn to in school if they had any worries. During the inspection, members of staff presented very good role models of how to treat others through politeness and respect. This was reflected in the high levels of co-operation and peer support seen among the pupils.
25. The monitoring of personal development is good because any concerns are identified and dealt with quickly, for example through the tracking arrangements and support for pupils with behavioural difficulties. Assessment is also made of pupils' progress in personal, social and health education. Academic support is good for those pupils with special educational needs, although this is also limited by inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' work. The school council continues to provide good opportunities for pupils from Year 3 upward to influence change in the school. Any issues for pupils are discussed as a class and referred to the council if it is thought appropriate. These older pupils value this opportunity and take pride in the things they have brought about.

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

The school promotes a good partnership with parents. Links with the community and with other schools are also good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The parents are well informed about their children
- Good account taken of parents' views
- The pupils benefit from close educational links with the local technical college
- There are a few omissions in the prospectus and governing body's annual report to parents

### **Commentary**

26. Most parents think highly of the school and value the good quality and range of information they receive. The school prospectus is of a high quality, although it omits to include information about the parents' right to withdraw their children from RE. Similarly, information about school targets and the provision for pupils with disability is omitted from the governors' annual report to parents. Regular newsletters provide valuable information and a web-site includes contributions from pupils. A significant minority of parents would like more frequent information about how their children are getting on, especially when they start in the Reception class. The school has modified the annual report on pupils' progress as a result of consultation with parents and the reports now indicate progress on a graded scale in all subject areas. Areas for



improvement are made clear, with targets for English and mathematics, but where room for improvement is indicated in other subjects, the detail is not specified and merely left to be discussed at parents' consultation evenings.

27. The school consults systematically with parents, who take a keen interest in what the school does and feel comfortable approaching with their ideas. Information about the results of consultation and any action being considered is shared with parents as, for example, in the improved use of homework books and reading records as a means of keeping parents better informed. Parents also have very good access to staff in the playground at the start and end of each day. Complaints are resolved well. The pupils also benefit from the parents who help in school and from the activities of the home-school association.
28. Good links with other schools and colleges help to enrich the curriculum and support school developments. For example, Monks Dyke Technical College works very closely with the school to provide specialist teaching, technical support and facilities. An advanced skills teacher provides lessons in dance and drama and is helping in the development of a scheme of work. In turn, the school provides facilities to support the training of college students in child care. Transfer arrangements are well managed. The parents are very pleased with the induction arrangements for pupils joining the school and there is a programme of activities to aid the pupils' transfer to secondary school. This includes provision beyond that normally found, such as a small transition group, supported by the educational welfare officer, for those needing additional support. There is also an 'e-buddy' system of emailing between the pupils and those in Year 7 at their prospective new school.
29. Links with the community are good because of the support provided by the school for community activities, including a concert given to Allegro Passionato, a free centre in Louth for the encouragement of music. The school also makes effective use of the community for visits and visitors to the school. Benefits include support for activities outside of lessons, such as the Baseline Club led by a local church group.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher, staff and governors have a shared vision for the school that is focused on raising standards
- The governors' role has improved significantly and they have a clear sense of strengths and weaknesses
- The monitoring procedures have not yet brought about consistency of teaching throughout the school
- The new deputy headteacher has had a significant impact on school development

### **Commentary**

30. The governing body has responded very positively to the serious weaknesses identified in the last inspection and has made very good progress. Governors fulfil their statutory duties well. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and a clear idea of its priorities for development. They are included in the newly created

Change Teams and provide both challenge and support for the headteacher and staff. There is a renewed vigour and determination to play an increasingly strategic role. The senior managers, staff and governors have worked hard and successfully to improve the quality of teaching, although there is still more to do to increase consistency.

31. The headteacher provides good leadership. He has gained the confidence and trust of parents, staff and pupils and has established a happy, secure and caring environment, based on firmly held Christian values. His clear vision for the school and explicit aims are promoted well and clearly reflected in many aspects of the school's work. The headteacher has been effective in creating a hardworking and confident team of people. Open discussion takes place both formally and informally and the views of others are listened to and welcomed. Both teaching and support staff work well together; they have a shared sense of purpose and a commitment to raising pupils' standards of attainment and their overall development.
32. The senior management team has been considerably strengthened by the appointment of a new deputy headteacher. She has formed very good relationships with all staff, gaining their support and respect. Her willingness to share her expertise and lead by example has helped to increase the confidence of her colleagues and is bringing about change and improvement. The senior managers, supported by the LEA, have accurately identified the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result, the newly formed School Change Teams are providing the impetus to successfully improve the quality of work in areas such as marking, assessment and writing.
33. Good systems are used to monitor, review and evaluate the school's performance. The senior management team's thorough and detailed review of the school's work, contained in the school improvement plan, outlines relevant priorities for development. An efficient computer system collates assessment data which enables the tracking of pupils' progress in the core subjects. Through the careful analysis of detailed assessments and the school's national assessment results, the senior management team has successfully arrived at realistic targets. The staff are becoming increasingly familiar with the system although, as yet, the co-ordinators make too little use of the assessment data to identify areas for improvement in their subjects. Arrangements for managing and improving the performance of staff are appropriate. Support is provided to improve teaching but this is not as rigorous as it could be, resulting in inconsistencies in areas such as marking and the quality of presentation.
34. The role of subject co-ordinators has improved since the last inspection. The co-ordinators show a good understanding of what is happening in their areas and form an enthusiastic and committed team. They have conducted detailed reviews through the examination of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils; they are clear about the contribution they need to make in bringing about improvements. First-hand opportunities to observe lessons are limited until the staff have received appropriate training. While this is a sensible approach, it is important that this happens as soon as possible to help bring about a greater consistency in teaching and learning in their subjects.
35. The school's systems for managing finance are very good. The educational priorities outlined in the school improvement plan are well supported by prudent financial planning. Careful management over the last three years has successfully turned around a substantial budget deficit, as outlined in the table below. The school administrator has high levels of experience, expertise and efficiency. She provides very good support to the headteacher and the governing body and plays a pivotal role in the

financial management of the school. The school uses the principles of best value appropriately by comparing their own results and costs with those of other schools and seeking the fairest price for supplies and maintenance.

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

| Income and expenditure (£) |         | Balances (£)                        |         |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| Total income               | 587,347 | Balance from previous year          | -67,088 |
| Total expenditure          | 554,223 | Balance carried forward to the next | -38,794 |
| Expenditure per pupil      | 2,262   |                                     |         |

36. Substantial building work currently taking place should improve the access to classrooms, which are presently reached through other rooms. Outdoor activities in the Foundation Stage were not possible during the inspection. Otherwise, the disruption to school life is minimal because of good discipline and organisation.

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

**AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

37. There are 27 children in the reception class and a further 8 children in a mixed reception and Year 1 class. They are admitted in September, aged four years, having had a variety of pre-school experience. Although there is a wide range of attainment on entry to the school, standards are broadly average. Achievement is good in almost all areas of learning because the teaching is consistently good in both classes. Good planning and organisation provides a varied and interesting range of activities that prepare children well for more formal learning. There is a good balance between adult-directed and independent activities. The adults work closely as a team and show good knowledge and understanding of the needs of the age group. They provide good support for children with special educational needs through the capable teaching assistants. Thorough and detailed assessments are used accurately to group children. Procedures for ongoing assessment are good. However, these are not analysed sufficiently to identify overall strengths and weaknesses and to match the tasks more closely to learning. By the end of the reception year, the children reach the expected levels of development in all the areas of learning. The Foundation Stage is efficiently and ably led. The co-ordinator is part of the school's senior management team and has been successful in raising the profile of this stage of development.

**PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The routines and procedures are quickly established
- There is a good balance between teacher-led and child initiated activities
- The adults have high expectations of behaviour

**Commentary**

38. The children enter reception with wide ranging personal, social and emotional development but overall it is below that usually found. Good links with the nurseries and playgroups contribute to the smooth arrangements for introducing children gradually to full-time school. Relationships among staff, parents and the children are very good. The children settle happily and soon become familiar with the well-established patterns and routines in both classes. The adults provide good role models and take every opportunity to promote good manners, politeness and consideration for others. As a result of their consistently high expectations, the children behave very well. They share resources and negotiate sensibly with one another during activities. The children follow clear instructions well and concentrate for long periods, engrossed in purposeful activities. Their achievement is very good because of the high quality teaching in this area of learning. The majority of children reach beyond the goals expected of them by the time they reach Year 1.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a good emphasis on developing speaking and listening
- The basic skills of reading and writing are taught systematically
- Writing tasks sometimes lack relevance or interest

### **Commentary**

39. The children start school with reading and writing skills that are just below average. They achieve well because of good teaching and, by the end of reception, most are likely to reach the goals expected of them by the end of reception. The more able children reach standards beyond those expectations. Lively and enthusiastic lesson introductions promote a love of books and language. The adults make good use of questioning and provide good role models when they listen carefully to the children's replies. They create frequent opportunities for the children to discuss their ideas with a partner and the children make good gains in their speaking and listening. They enjoy sharing books, listening to tapes of stories and enjoy experimenting with the sounds that words make. There is a strong emphasis on teaching the children to sound out words and they recognise simple words. They tackle unfamiliar words with confidence, using their good knowledge of sounds and other clues. Letter formation and pencil control is developed effectively through a range of, at times, rather mechanical tasks. Although some reach a good standard, when, for example, they make books of their own, or write messages in a bottle during role play activities, for many, formal copying tasks lack sufficient relevance or purpose. The tasks, organised on a carousel basis, are not always matched sufficiently to children's stage of learning.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The children have frequent opportunities to practise their number skills
- Good use is made of mathematical vocabulary

## Commentary

40. When the children start school, initial assessments show a broad range of mathematical ability, with a significant proportion below average. The teaching is good overall and by the end of the reception year, the majority of children reach the goals expected of them. The children count and sing number songs and rhymes with great enjoyment and carry out a considerable volume of work to record their progress in counting, sorting and ordering. The majority of children manipulate number bonds to 10 confidently and with good levels of understanding, which they then apply during daily activities, such as registration. They recognise shapes and patterns - a minority to a very high level - and have a good understanding of the principles of addition and subtraction. The teachers take advantage of every opportunity to develop their mathematical understanding and progress is good. They make good use of mathematical vocabulary, reinforcing number names and comparative and positional language, such as 'more', less and 'forwards' and 'backwards'. The children achieve well when they are involved in practical tasks, such as exploring capacity, and are encouraged to think and make estimates. The earlier recording of children's work is not always appropriate to their ability and does little to aid their mathematical understanding.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children benefit from the good opportunities for investigation and exploration
- The adults make good use of questioning

## Commentary

41. The children enter reception with below average attainment in this area. The school provides an interesting range of worthwhile practical activities and visits to broaden their experiences. There are good opportunities for the children to investigate, experiment and explore objects and materials. The children learn about their senses, listen to sounds on a 'sound walk', experiment with instruments and sort them according to the sound they make. They develop a sense of chronology when they sequence pictures and compare old and new forms of transport. The teachers make good use of resources to provide stimulating and, at times, exciting introductions that capture the children's imagination and interest. They use ICT well to support and consolidate their learning and develop computer skills. The teaching and learning are good and, as a result, the children achieve well. By the end of the reception year, the majority of children reach the goals expected of them.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The comprehensively planned programme develops co-ordination and control

- The skills are very well taught
- The outdoor space is temporarily limited due to building work and this hinders progress

### **Commentary**

42. There are no assessments to indicate children's level of physical development on entry to the school. A programme of physical activities provides good opportunities for children to develop their skills. In a very good lesson in the mixed-age class, the children showed a good awareness of space. They improved their aiming and throwing skills as a result of an interesting variety of challenging games and activities. The children gain a good understanding of the rules of team games and show good co-ordination and control. They learn to handle and manipulate small construction equipment, scissors, brushes and writing tools with increasing control. During the inspection, because of construction work, the children lacked access to a suitable outdoor space. The teachers' planning and photographs of the children working show that there are sufficient opportunities for physical activity using climbing equipment and wheeled toys. The teaching is good overall and the children achieve well. By the end of the reception year, the majority of children will reach beyond the goals expected of them.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The children experience a suitable range of materials and media
- There are too few opportunities to experiment and express themselves creatively

### **Commentary**

43. It is not possible to ascertain the children's attainment on entry to the reception year. All children have regular, but infrequent, access to a suitable range of picture making activities. They paint, stick, draw and make models to illustrate a particular topic. In largely teacher-led activities, they gain experience with colour, texture and shape. They confidently participate in organised role-play activities, although resources and equipment to stimulate excitement and imagination in both classes are limited. The teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The children achieve appropriately and, by the end of reception, they reach the goals expected of them.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching and learning are improving, but standards could still be higher
- Lessons are interesting and enjoyable and the pupils have positive attitudes
- The school has rightly identified the need to improve writing and there is still more to be done to develop the pupils' ability to write at length

- The teaching assistants provide good support for those pupils with special educational needs
- There are inconsistencies in the way the work is marked and the expectations of how well pupils should present their work are too low in some classes

## Commentary

44. By the end of Years 2 and 6, the pupils attain average standards and their achievement is satisfactory. This is similar to the performance of seven and eleven-year-olds in the 2004 national tests. Recent results have varied from year to year due, largely, to the differing proportions of pupils with special educational needs and those capable of attaining the higher levels in each year group. The quality of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory in the last inspection. The school has worked hard to improve the quality of provision and the measures it has taken are paying off. Many of the teachers are new to the school or are teaching an age group for the first time. The pupils are benefiting from teaching that is consistently good and sometimes very good and the rate of progress made by most pupils is increasing. As a result, standards are rising. This is seen to good effect in Year 2, where a good proportion of the pupils are likely to reach the higher Level 3 by the end of the year. The older pupils are making brisker progress, too, but the school recognises that there is still more to be done to raise standards, particularly in writing.
45. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and this has a positive impact on the improving picture. The teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and how pupils develop their literacy skills. Across the school, lessons are well planned, brisk and enjoyable. The teachers are clear about what the pupils are expected to learn and the planning ensures that the more able pupils are stretched. Those who need more support with their work get it and the pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants, which contributes to their good progress and achievement. Very good teaching was seen in Years 4 and 6. In Year 4, the teacher very carefully set the scene for what the pupils were about to learn and set it in the context of their previous work and what would follow in future lessons. This approach made the work meaningful and captured the pupils' attention. They responded well by working hard, concentrating throughout and they achieved well. Similarly, in Year 6, the pupils made good progress because the teacher's very good questioning challenged the pupils to think deeply and build on their previous learning. These positive attitudes were reflected in lessons across the school. The pupils respond well to the many opportunities for them to ask and answer questions, offer opinions and listen to others in the discussions in literacy sessions and lessons in other subjects.
46. The teaching of reading builds upon the good start made by the children in reception. The reading programme is well organised across the school and the teachers keep a close eye on how the pupils are doing. Reading diaries provide a useful link between home and school and the support given by parents at home makes a sound contribution to the progress made by the pupils. A few parents indicate that the range of reading books offered by the school is limited. The school acknowledges this, but its plans to improve the book stock have been limited by budget constraints. The school plans to address this now that financial issues have been resolved. The pupils read with increasing accuracy as they move through the school and the older pupils, in particular, speak confidently about their favourite stories and authors.

47. The co-ordinator is new to the school and, through her role as deputy headteacher, has quickly gained a secure understanding of the strength and weaknesses in each year group. She is providing determined leadership and sets a good role model for staff through her own very good teaching. The school has identified the improvement of writing as a priority and has reviewed its approach. Basic skills are taught well and the pupils have many opportunities to analyse writing and practise the component parts of what makes good writing. They write for a variety of purposes and to different audiences. While the school has worked to develop the opportunities for the pupils to write at length, this is not yet reflected in their work. There are too few examples of the pupils producing longer pieces of writing, sustained over a period of time, in English and in other subjects. This remains a key area for development in the school's quest for improved standards.
48. The co-ordinator has also, rightly, identified inconsistencies in the quality of work from class to class. Procedures for assessing the pupils' work are satisfactory and there are increasing opportunities for the pupils to assess their own progress. The quality of marking has improved since the last inspection; and there are examples of good information provided to the pupils about how they are doing and how they can improve. However, this is not sufficiently evident in each class and, in some cases, there is too little emphasis on setting personal targets for the pupils. Similarly, the expectations of some teachers about how well the pupils should present their work are too low, which results in too many examples of untidy, poorly corrected work.

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

49. Appropriate use is made of the pupils' language and literacy skills in other subjects, which supports their sound achievement in English and the progress they make in other subjects. The pupils' speaking and listening are promoted well through the many discussions at the beginning and end of lessons. There are many opportunities for them to read a variety of texts, non-fiction books and to search for information on the Internet. There are, however, too few opportunities for the pupils write at length in other subjects.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

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

- The pupils have positive attitudes to their work and are eager to achieve their best
- The teaching in Years 3 and 6 is very good
- Those with special educational needs receive good support and achieve well
- Insufficient use is made of assessment information

#### **Commentary**

50. Standards in the 2004 tests were above average for Year 2 and well above average for Year 6. Variations in results from year to year reflect the different proportions of more able pupils and those with special educational needs in each year group. The analysis of the pupils' work and the evidence from lessons observed during the inspection show that standards are currently average in both Year 2 and Year 6, where there are more pupils with special educational needs. Across the school the pupils make satisfactory



progress overall. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 continue the good progress made in reception because they are well taught.

51. Overall, the quality of teaching is good but there is an inconsistency in the teaching between year groups and this slows the pace of progress. Where teaching is satisfactory, there are areas for improvement relating to the management of the behaviour of a small group of pupils, variability in the quality of marking and an occasional imbalance in the provision of adult support that does not always meet the needs of the pupils. Those pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they receive good support and have specific targets set out in their individual plans.
52. The very good teaching seen in Year 6 and Year 3 was characterised by brisk introductions and clear direction and challenge. The pupils enjoy a broad range of activities, working collaboratively, discussing problems and describing their reasoning. The use of a range of strategies was highly productive and increased the pupils' confidence to apply their skills and knowledge in relevant contexts. This made learning enjoyable. Good support for pupils with special educational needs reinforced important vocabulary and ensured they succeeded in meeting their targets. In most lessons, there is a calm working atmosphere and the staff encourage all pupils to concentrate and meet the expectations set for them. In the good lessons there is good pace and balance of activities which interest and motivate the pupils. Practical approaches engage the pupils and the effective use of ICT, for example the use of interactive whiteboards, inspires them. Good modelling by teachers, the involvement of pupils in using ICT, and support for pupils to evaluate their own work help to deepen their understanding.
53. The subject co-ordinator analyses test results and tracks the pupils' progress. He knows how standards in mathematics compare against national and local benchmarks and identifies strengths and weaknesses. The information is not yet shared sufficiently with staff and the co-ordinator has too little opportunity to monitor the teaching across the classes to improve consistency.
54. The pupils say that they enjoy mathematics, particularly when they have opportunities to solve problems together and take responsibility for planning investigations. They enjoy lessons where teaching is challenging and well matched to their needs. The pupils are confident to ask and answer questions and apply mental arithmetic skills in a range of situations across subjects, for example, in science and design and technology

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

55. There is some good evidence of pupils applying their mathematical skills and knowledge to other subjects. However, there is no clear programme to ensure these links are built in systematically and this is an area for further development.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well above average by the end of Years 2 and 6
- The teaching is very good in Years 1, 2 and 6

- The subject is very well led and managed
- The pupils benefit from a very good range of opportunities to investigate and experiment

## **Commentary**

56. The standards attained in the 2004 tests in science in Year 6 were well above average. Teacher assessments in Year 2 were also above average. The inspection confirms that standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are well above average, with a high proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels. All groups of pupils achieve very well and make very good progress. Standards are higher than at the time of the last report and good progress has been made in raising the quality of provision.
57. The teachers plan work that supports the pupils with special educational needs and challenges the more able pupils through structured, relevant and practical investigations. The teaching is very good. Expectations are high and the quality of the pupils' presentation of their work is very good, particularly in Year 6 where they take great pride in discussing their work. Literacy and numeracy skills are applied well. Strengths in the teaching include the very good subject knowledge of the co-ordinator and staff and the enthusiasm to develop enjoyment in science for pupils. This results in positive attitudes, success and a high level of personal achievement. The teachers use questioning techniques and scientific language very effectively and the pupils use these words well in their responses. Very good use is made of the outdoor environment to make learning meaningful. The pupils benefit from interaction with adults who extend their questions and support their research, for example when investigating mini-beasts in the school grounds.
58. The teachers enable pupils to analyse their findings and find solutions to questions and problems. This extends their learning and is supported by homework and research. Discussions with pupils and the analysis of their work shows the curriculum is interesting and exciting. The pupils in Year 6 plan and investigate hypotheses competently, interpret a range of data and decide for themselves the direction to take to investigate problems. This approach enables them to use and apply their skills and knowledge and prepares them well for the next stage of their education.
59. Very good self evaluation strategies are introduced to engage the pupils in discussing how to improve and learn from one another. Science makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They have very positive attitudes to science, understanding the links between healthy living and personal, social and health education, and many say science is a favourite subject. Detailed analysis of data and regular assessments are undertaken to monitor progress. The pupils are helped to evaluate their own progress and understand their targets. There is a clear understanding of how to maintain high standards through monitoring and evaluation.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pupils achieve well and attain above average standards
- They enjoy using computers and make good use of them in other subjects

- The subject is well led and organised and the teaching is good

## **Commentary**

60. By the end of Years 2 and 6, the pupils attain standards that are above those expected of pupils of this age and they achieve well. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator who has identified what needs to be done to improve the provision and has a clear plan of action to achieve it. Plans are well in hand to improve the quality and size of the computer suite and to use the computers currently in the suite to supplement the provision in classrooms. Interactive whiteboards have been introduced into Years 3 to 6. The staff are quickly embracing their potential and they are a regular, and positive, feature of lessons in many subjects.
61. The school aims to teach ICT through other subjects and the evidence of the work seen indicates that, overall, the quality of teaching is good. The staff have a good knowledge of the subject. In a very good lesson in Year 2, the pupils used the Internet to carry out research linked to their work in literacy earlier in the day. The teacher presented the work in a lively manner, provided very clear explanations and focused firmly on what the pupils were expected to learn. As a result, they picked up the new skills impressively quickly and achieved very well. In a good Year 3 geography lesson, the pupils made good use of the Internet to research the temperature and rainfall in a variety of places across the world. The pupils used their mathematical skills well to interpret the graphs and data and answer questions provided by the teacher. The pupils in Year 5 used a computer program to design a playground. Many of the pupils showed a well developed sense of design and used their sound keyboard and mouse skills to plan a range of playground activities. Good links were made to the school's current building development to make the work relevant.
62. The staff have responded well to the co-ordinator's expertise and enthusiasm and adopt a range of strategies to deliver the full ICT programme. Of the preferred methods of organisation - whole class sessions in the suite or half-class groups – the lessons are most effective when the teacher maintains a good overview of how the pupils are progressing and intervenes to support individuals and pairs of pupils or to guide the whole class. This was seen to particularly good effect in the lesson in Year 2 and had a positive impact on the pupils' achievement. Computers are well used in classrooms to provide further opportunities to extend or consolidate the pupils' skills and understanding. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were observed making good use of an art package to draw pine cones.
63. In a recent survey held by the co-ordinator all of the pupils indicated that they enjoy using computers and this is borne out by inspection evidence. The pupils listen attentively to the teacher's explanations and instructions. They work hard, concentrate well and take pride in what they are doing. More confident pupils take delight in supporting their less capable classmates. The pupils share the computers well, taking turns to take control, and their behaviour is invariably good.

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

64. During the inspection, computers were seen in use in a number of subjects including English, art and design, geography and history. The pupils in Year 1 have explored patterns and designs inspired by Mondrian and Kandinsky. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 manipulated an art package to draw pinecones, while those in the Year 2 class quickly gained the skills necessary to use the Internet for research. The pupils in Year 3 made

good progress in a geography lesson because they were well taught and used their ICT skills effectively. There are many opportunities, too, in Years 3 to 6. The use of the Internet is well established, often supporting work in history. Word processing skills are well used. The pupils in Year 4 learn to edit and reorganise text and import pictures. Those in Year 6 used similar skills to present information on the genetically-modified food debate.

## **HUMANITIES**

65. It is not possible to make judgements on the quality of provision in geography and history. The planning indicates that the requirements of the National Curriculum for both subjects are met. In the one **geography** lesson seen, in Year 3, the pupils made good progress in their understanding of climatic patterns as a result of good teaching. The pupils made very good use of computers and their mathematical skills to research and interpret rainfall and temperature data. The teacher captured the attention of the pupils with a lively introduction that made good use of the interactive whiteboard.
66. In **history**, discussions with the staff and pupils, a sampling of planning and the pupils' work show that attitudes to the subject are positive. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and all groups of pupils are fully included in the activities. The pupils are able to discuss their learning about people in the past, for example those in Year 5 study Tudor times, while those in Year 6 learn about the life of John Lennon. There are too few opportunities for the pupils to extend their learning through drama and writing.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching and learning in Year 6 are very good and these pupils achieve well
- The pupils' learning is enhanced by very good assemblies
- The teachers' inconsistent subject knowledge leads to patchy progress

### **Commentary**

67. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 but an examination of the pupils' work indicates a suitable coverage of the curriculum. Standards are in line with the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus and the pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The pupils learn about special places, people, books and Christian festivals. The recording of work is rather superficial, with an over-reliance on uninspiring work sheets. The pupils make rapid progress in Year 6, where the teaching is very good and, by the end of the year, standards are above the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. The pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall, but it is good in Year 6.
68. The pupils make appropriate progress in learning about world religions such as Islam, Buddhism, and Judaism. In Year 5 they compare the Christian and Hindu creation stories to good effect through a combination of discussion and mime. The pupils gain a greater understanding of the importance of belief and begin to recognise the differences and the similarities in those beliefs. In a very good lesson in Year 6, the pupils built on their knowledge and understanding of Judaism most effectively when they considered the meaning of idols in their own lives. The teaching provides an interesting and

stimulating variety of activities and good opportunities for discussion and debate. The pupils begin to consider fundamental issues such as faithfulness and trust in a mature and sensible way.

69. The evidence from lessons, from talking to the pupils and scrutinising their books indicates that the teaching is satisfactory overall. A lesson in Year 4 was less successful due to an insecure subject knowledge. Where planning does not build sufficiently well on the pupils' prior knowledge and understanding of religion, the learning is limited.
70. Displays covering religious themes are prominent in the school. One such display in the hall, based on 'The Misereor Lenten Veil' by Azaria Mbatha, was used to very good effect as the focus for a series of assemblies. These assemblies made a positive contribution to the pupils' knowledge of religion.

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

71. Only one lesson was seen in **art and design**, so no judgement is made about the quality of the provision. Discussions with staff and pupils and an analysis of the pupils' work show that the pupils experience a suitable range of materials and media. There is a strong determination on the part of the co-ordinator to improve the way that skills are developed from year to year. Art work in most classes is mainly used to illustrate topics in other subjects such as history, geography and religious education. There are good cross-curricular links with ICT and the pupils in Year 4 produce creative collage pictures using art and graphic skills. Examples of Years 2 and 6 work were of very good quality. The pupils in Year 6 show a good sense of design and colour in their pastel pictures based on 'cubism'. They develop techniques of line, shape and shading in drawings depicting movement and there are examples of work of a high standard. The pupils gain a suitable understanding of the styles of different artists, such as Monet and William Morris.
72. Year 2 pupils, in the one lesson seen, created their own sculpture of a sea monster using a wide range of techniques, including papier-mâché. They had good opportunities to discuss artists and their techniques. The teaching was good in this lesson and benefited from a good level of adult support. Organisation and planning was of a high quality and resulted in a productive and enjoyable experience for the pupils. This built well on the work in Year 1, where the pupils make gains in their understanding of shape, texture and pattern from looking at the work of Andy Goldsworthy.
73. It was not possible to observe lessons in **design and technology**, so no judgements are made about the overall provision. The evidence indicates that the work is well organised and the pupils have a worthwhile range of experiences. Design projects are a prominent feature on display in many classrooms and those pupils spoken to speak proudly about their achievements. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 have explored the best material and construction for an axle and have investigated the properties of a variety of materials. In Year 3, the pupils have made and evaluated sandwiches, while those in Year 4 have created good quality pop-up books. One pupil proudly described the alarm system he had devised for his 'ghost house', partly completed at home. Linked to their history studies, the pupils in Year 5 have designed ships biscuits in the Tudor style. A Year 6 project on shelters resulted in well constructed models that took good account of the strengths and weaknesses of the materials used. There are appropriate opportunities for the pupils to evaluate their work and the older pupils, in particular, are able to draw conclusions and use their findings to improve their designs.

74. Only one lesson in **physical education** was seen in Year 1 and 2, and only two were seen in Years 3 to 6, one of which was led by a visiting specialist teacher. The teachers' planning indicates that the full range of National Curriculum are taught, well supplemented by a good range of clubs and inter-school competitions. In a good games lesson in Year 3, there was a strong emphasis on improving the skills being learned. The pupils made good progress as a result and their attainment was in line with what is expected of pupils of this age. An excellent dance lesson in Year 4, taught by an Advanced Skills Teacher from the local secondary school, drew an excellent response from the pupils. They achieved very well, following the teacher's guidance carefully and interpreting the theme sensitively. Standards were above those usually found. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 attend regular swimming lesson and the school reports that the vast majority are able to swim beyond the expected 25 metres.

## **Music**

Provision in music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Music has a high profile in the school and the pupils use their skills well in the local community
- The pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress, but this is not consistent across the school
- The pupils benefit from visiting musicians

## **Commentary**

75. There is a strong musical tradition within the school and the pupils have good opportunities to perform. They sing and play a range of instruments to local acclaim at concerts and public venues, such as the town square and churches. Visiting musicians contribute to the subject's high profile. The pupils thoroughly enjoy singing to the guitar accompaniment of the headteacher during assemblies and other times. They are motivated to learn to play instruments and benefit from the skill and expertise of visiting teachers. Throughout the school, the pupils have good opportunities to listen to music from other cultures and traditions.

76. Standards are above what is expected by the end of Year 2 and in line with the expectations of pupils at the end of Year 6. The pupils in Year 2 enjoy taking part in rich and exciting musical activities, expertly planned to ensure high levels of achievement. In a very good session, pupils of all abilities sang confidently in two-part rounds. They kept good time and showed an understanding of pitch and dynamics. The teacher's expertise and knowledge led to the pupils' clear understanding of a graphic score. The pupils used tuned and untuned instruments to play most effectively in an ensemble, following symbols representing the seashore. They reached a high standard and their achievement was very good.

77. By the end of Year 6, all pupils sing a range of songs and hymns tunefully with clear diction, good timing, and enjoyment. They have opportunities to work together in groups to experiment with sounds and develop their own compositions. When they listen to calypso music and music from the sixties, they develop an understanding of rhythm. Those pupils who take advantage of the available instrumental tuition make

good progress in the skills and techniques of playing the guitar, cello, violin, recorders and flute. They gain a good knowledge and understanding of notation and musical terms during small groups with peripatetic teachers. Whilst achievement for these pupils is good, overall it is satisfactory for the majority of pupils. The teaching is good overall. The headteacher and other members of staff have considerable experience and expertise, although not all pupils benefit from this.

78. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and expertise but has too few opportunities to share this with others. The school has evaluated its provision and recognises the need for a new scheme of work to support the non-specialist teachers. This has only been in place for just over a term and has not yet had an impact on standards throughout the school. There is provision for assessment within the commercial scheme but its recent introduction has not provided sufficient time for the pupils to build on their prior knowledge and skills in music. Those with special educational needs participate fully in lessons, with good levels of support from teachers and teaching assistants and consequently, they make good progress.

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

### **Personal, social and health education**

79. Although it is not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of the provision, the evidence of the lesson seen, teachers' planning and discussions with the pupils indicates that the subject has a high priority and the pupils are prepared well to become good citizens in their community. Healthy eating is encouraged through daily interactions and through the addition of fruit for snack times. Through assemblies and circle times, the pupils are encouraged to consider how their actions impact on others and to think about the contributions they can make to the well-being of others. The involvement of community members, such as the nurse and church representatives, supports the delivery of sex and drugs education and the pupils' spiritual development.
80. The teaching of sex education and raising pupils' awareness of the misuse of drugs are effective and this is linked well to the science curriculum. Subjects such as RE, geography and history support pupils' knowledge and understanding of the lives of others. The staff provide good role models and promote good manners and values. The pupils understand the importance of rules and actions to make life in the community safe and healthy. The school successfully encourages pupils to make choices and take advantage of new opportunities to extend their learning and contribute positively to their community. The school council makes a good contribution to this provision.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>Inspection judgement</i>  | <i>Grade</i> |
|--|--------------|
| <b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>                       | <b>4</b>     |
| How inclusive the school is  | 3            |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 3            |
| Value for money provided by the school                               | 4            |
| <b>Overall standards achieved</b>                                    | <b>4</b>     |
| Pupils' achievement  | 4            |
| <b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>        | <b>3</b>     |
| Attendance   | 3            |
| Attitudes  | 2            |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions                        | 3            |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development            | 3            |
| <b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>               | <b>3</b>     |
| The quality of teaching  | 3            |
| How well pupils learn  | 3            |
| The quality of assessment  | 4            |
| 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                             | 2            |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils                              | 3            |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views                  | 3            |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents                 | 3            |
| The quality of the school's links with the community                 | 3            |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges                   | 3            |
| <b>The leadership and management of the school</b>                   | <b>3</b>     |
| 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).*