

INSPECTION REPORT

WINCHELSEA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ruskington

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120496

Acting Headteacher: Mrs S Copsey

Lead inspector: Mr A J Dobell

Dates of inspection: 16th - 18th May 2005

Inspection number: 268274

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	200
School address:	4a Sleaford Road Ruskington Sleaford Lincolnshire
Postcode:	NG34 9BY
Telephone number:	(01526) 832 060
Fax number:	(01526) 833 710
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Wise
Date of previous inspection:	March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This average sized primary school draws its pupils from Ruskington and other local villages. It is one of two primary schools in the village, sharing a site with the local comprehensive school. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds but their levels of understanding and learning skills are below average overall when they enter the Nursery and a substantial number experience high levels of socio-economic disadvantage. Virtually all pupils come from white, western European backgrounds and only a very small number speak English as an additional language.

The school has 200 pupils on roll and, of these, 22 attend the Nursery part time. There are 50 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, and, at 25 per cent, this is above average. Eight pupils have statements of special educational needs, and, at four per cent, this proportion, too, is above average. The nature of special educational needs includes moderate and severe learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, speech and communication difficulties and autism. The proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school during the course of the year is well above average and there is clear evidence that this depresses standards. Over the last few years, the school has gained a School Achievement Award, two awards recognising its major commitment to initial teacher training and Investor in People status.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10373	Mr A J Dobell	Lead inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education
19374	Mrs W Sheehan	Lay inspector	Personal, social and health education and citizenship
16761	Mr M Hemmings	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology
21910	Mr G Longton	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language English Geography History Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal Education
1 - 4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637 833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 5
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	6 - 9
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	9 - 14
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	14 - 16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	17 - 29
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school giving very good value for money. Pupils achieve well because they are well taught. However, standards are depressed by an above average level of special educational needs, a high number of pupils joining and leaving the school during the year and high levels of social disadvantage for a significant minority of pupils. The acting headteacher, fully supported by all her colleagues and the governing body, is providing very good leadership and management.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching is good.
- Most pupils have very good attitudes to learning because relationships are very good overall and pupils are well cared for.
- The acting headteacher, with the full support of her colleagues, is providing very good leadership and management.
- The school's excellent commitment to equality of opportunity and inclusion, and its excellent provision for the continuing professional development of all staff create a very good environment for learning.
- There is good provision for children in the Foundation Stage and very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school provides a good curriculum with very good opportunities for enrichment activities out of class.
- There are very good links with the community and other schools and good links with parents.

The school has improved well since it was inspected previously. Standards have improved by the end of Year 2 but not at the end of Year 6 in 2004, for the reasons outlined above. Achievement is now good throughout the school. The quality of teaching has improved markedly as have pupils' attitudes to learning, the quality of the curriculum, and assessment. The school has dealt with the key issues from the previous inspection well. In particular, facilities for information and communication technology have improved well, but the school recognises that there is scope for using information and communication technology more systematically to support learning in other subjects.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement is good throughout the school. Children enter the Nursery with levels of understanding which cover a wide range but are below average overall. They achieve well and are on course to reach the standards expected nationally in the early learning goals designed for the Foundation Stage, and to exceed them in personal, social and emotional development, by the end of the Reception Year. Although results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004 were well below average overall, these pupils still achieved well in Years 3 to 6, as did pupils in Years 1 and 2. Evidence from the inspection is that standards are now above average in English and mathematics in Year 2, average in science, and below average in English, mathematics and science in Year 6. Standards match expectations in information and communication technology and religious

education. This is a good improvement in information and communication technology since the previous inspection.

Pupils' personal qualities are good. They behave well overall in lessons and at play and have very good attitudes to learning. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is average overall, but a small number of families have a high level of absences. Three pupils were excluded for fixed periods on six occasions during the school year 2003-04.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides an education of good quality. Teaching and learning are good with about three lessons in ten being very good or excellent. Teachers give pupils very good encouragement so that most of them work productively in lessons. Pupils' learning is now managed more effectively than at the time of the previous inspection.

The curriculum is well planned to enable pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding, and visits and visitors support learning well. There are very good opportunities for enrichment activities out of class. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and good provision for the very few who speak English as an additional language so that these groups achieve well. Pupils are well cared for and valued for what they can offer. Very good relationships are a major reason for pupils' very good attitudes to learning. There are good links with parents and links with other schools and the community enhance pupils' learning in many practical ways.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The acting headteacher is providing very effective leadership and, together with the previous headteacher, has enabled the school to develop well since its previous inspection. There is a very clear vision for the future development of the school, which has the full support of all who contribute to it. The school has an excellent commitment to inclusion and to equality of access and opportunity for all its pupils. Subjects are managed well overall. There is excellent provision for the continuing professional development for all staff and for initial teacher training. Governors have a very good appreciation of the school's strengths and potential for development and ensure that it meets statutory requirements. Finances are managed very well and the principles of best value are practised very effectively.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' and pupils' views of the school are very positive overall. This is clear from the supportive comments at the meeting for parents held before the inspection and the pupils' and parents' questionnaires. A minority of parents were concerned about bullying and about the information that the school provides about their children's progress. Inspectors found information about progress to be of good quality and, in discussion, pupils felt that staff dealt with rare instances of bullying quickly and sensitively. Inspectors support the positive views held by parents and pupils.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

There are no major issues for the school to address, but governors will wish to address the following relative weaknesses in their action plan:

- Develop the use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects.
- Take steps to improve attendance levels for those pupils whose attendance is below average.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. Standards are average in Year 2 and below average, but improving, in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school because they are well taught.
- The school manages significant barriers to achievement very well.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs so that they achieve well.
- Children settle quickly into the school and achieve well in the Foundation Stage.
- Standards are improving because the school is managing learning more effectively.

Commentary

1. In the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004, standards were average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Teacher assessments judged standards in science to be above average. The same standards were attained when compared with schools that have a similar proportion of free school meals. Above average standards in writing reflect the school's recent emphasis on this area. The trend of improvement in the school's standards at the end of Year 2 has been above the national average over the last five years. Since pupils enter the school with learning skills and levels of understanding that are below average overall, these results represent good achievement in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2.
2. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004, standards in mathematics and science were well below average while standards in English were in the bottom five per cent of all schools in the country. Inspectors investigated the reasons for this in detail. An above average proportion of pupils had special educational needs and an above average proportion joining the school during Years 3 to 6 also had special educational needs. There is clear evidence that these factors, coupled with the high incidence of socio-economic problems, depressed standards. Indeed, when the progress of the different groups of pupils is analysed, all groups achieved well. This is illustrated by a comparison with schools that achieved similar results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2000. In comparison with these schools, standards in English and mathematics were average, while, in science, they were well above average. Further, above average achievement is demonstrated by the fact that, in 2000, the average points score for this year group was 5.2 points below the national average. By 2004, the difference had been reduced to 2.8 points.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.3 (15.5)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.3 (16.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.3 (15.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.4 (27.9)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	23.6 (27.9)	27.0 (26.8)
science	27.0 (29.6)	28.6 (28.6)

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

- Evidence from the inspection is that pupils are now achieving well throughout the school because they are well taught overall and very well taught in Years 5 and 6. Good teaching is supported by good systems for tracking pupils' progress and promoting their further progress. These systems are used most effectively in English and mathematics, and the school is aware of the need to extend them systematically to other subjects. Throughout the school, pupils' learning is now managed well and, as a result, they make good progress. The school predicts that standards in the national tests at the end of Year 2 will improve markedly in 2005, while, at the end of Year 6, they will improve to below average. Evidence from the inspection supports this. Standards in English and mathematics are now above average in Year 2. In Year 6, they are below average but improving well. Standards in science meet expectations in Year 2, but are below average in Year 6. Standards in information and communication technology are at the expected level in Years 2 and 6 which is a good improvement on the previous inspection. Higher attaining pupils are now achieving well. Boys and girls achieve equally well.
- The school is aware that it has three significant barriers to achievement to contend with. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and with statements of special educational needs is about twice the national average. Similarly, the proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school during the course of the year is above average. Further, the proportion of pupils from backgrounds experiencing significant socio-economic problems is well above average. For example, inspectors investigated one year group in detail, and found that 50 per cent of pupils in this year group were experiencing, or had recently experienced, major social difficulties likely to adversely affect their achievement.
- The school manages these barriers to achievement very effectively. It has a very strong commitment to inclusion so that all pupils are valued for what they can offer. Systems for settling new pupils into the school work well so that they soon feel part of the community, make new friends, and begin to achieve well because their learning is rigorously but sensitively managed. The school is very alert to pupils' social circumstances because teachers know their pupils well and are quick to offer support where this is found to be necessary. Good leadership from adults means that pupils learn to support each other effectively in and out of class. This helps them to develop confidence in themselves, and so to achieve well.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs, and, because of this, they achieve well and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Their progress is adversely affected by the numbers who leave and join the school during the course of the year. Their targets are short term so that pupils can see that they are making good progress towards them. When these targets have been achieved, new ones are set to enable pupils to make further progress. Because these pupils feel valued and that they are making progress, they have good attitudes to learning and so achieve well. Systems to support the very few pupils who speak English as an additional language are good. As a result, they make progress at the same rate as other pupils.
- Arrangements for children to settle into the Nursery and Reception classes are good. Adults working in the Foundation Stage have a good understanding of how young children learn and the careful management of their learning through very good teamwork enables children at different stages of learning to achieve well overall and very well in their personal, social and emotional development. By the end of the Reception Year, they will be in a good position to

begin work on the National Curriculum because they are likely to have achieved the levels expected nationally in the early learning goals designed for this age group, and to have exceeded these standards in personal, social and emotional development.

8. Standards are rising in the school because learning is being managed more effectively. The school now has very good information about pupils' learning and progress in English and mathematics and is able to promote their further learning systematically. It is aware of the need to extend these systems to other subjects and is in the process of doing so in science. Because its management of learning is now more thorough, the school is in a good position to raise standards further.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and behaviour is good as is their personal development. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Attendance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good, creating an enthusiastic climate for learning.
- Behaviour has improved well since the previous inspection, helping lessons to be taught at a good pace.
- The provision for pupils' personal development is good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Attendance is satisfactory with procedures being developed to improve it further.

Commentary

9. Pupils' very good attitudes to learning enable lessons to be taught at a good pace and help pupils to achieve well. Pupils settle very quickly in class, they listen very well and are keen to learn. Pupils support each other very effectively in paired and group work. For example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils worked effectively in pairs to complete the task on symmetry. Pupils who have special educational needs are given very good support. Because of this, they feel confident and so have equally very good attitudes in lessons. Pupils willingly take on roles of responsibility and participate enthusiastically in the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided in the school.
10. Pupils' behaviour is good throughout the school day and playtimes are generally friendly and sociable occasions. Some parents expressed concerns about behaviour and bullying. However, in discussion, pupils felt that bullying was rare and that staff dealt with any instances quickly and appropriately. They felt that often the upsets were related to friends 'falling out' rather than specific instances of bullying. Procedures to monitor and record any instances of bullying are fully in place. Many senior staff are trained as 'assertive discipline leaders' and all staff follow the same positive behaviour strategy, resulting in a consistent approach to behaviour throughout the school. In all classes, details of rules, rewards and sanctions are clearly displayed and pupils appreciate achieving rewards for their successes.
11. There have been several fixed exclusions during both last year and the current year. These are used when necessary, for example, where there is a potential threat to the welfare of staff and pupils. They often result from the high turnover of pupils which is above average.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
193	6	0

12. Pupils' social development is very good and they have many opportunities to work together in class, in a wide range of well-attended extra-curricular activities, in opportunities to compete against other schools, and in opportunities to work with the local community. The 'buddy system' provides very good opportunities to foster a caring atmosphere. A good example of this is when older pupils support younger children in activities when working one-to-one with children in the Nursery in the computer suite.
13. Children are likely to exceed the nationally expected standards in their personal, social and emotional development by the end of the Reception Year, which represents very good achievement in this area of learning. Pupils' spiritual development is supported well in lessons and this helps to raise their self-esteem and self-awareness. Assemblies meet requirements of the act of collective worship and spirituality is adequately developed through them. Pupils have a secure appreciation of their own and other cultural traditions through art and music and through carefully planned activities during their 'themed' weeks. Pupils have a concern for others and raise funds to help those less fortunate than themselves. Their moral development is promoted effectively with additional support from outside agencies. For example, during a well-planned personal, social and health education lesson, local police were invited to talk to pupils in Year 4 about the results of shoplifting. This led to pupils reflecting well on moral, emotional and social issues. Pupils have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong, and of the likely effect of their behaviour on others.
14. Attendance levels are just below the average for primary schools. The school is in the process of improving monitoring procedures and recognises that it now needs to introduce a method of contacting parents on the first day of absence to ensure that pupils' whereabouts are known at all times. Most pupils arrive on time and this results in a smooth start to the day. Procedures to monitor late arrivals are currently under review.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.7	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.

15. Behaviour and attitudes to learning have improved well since the school was inspected previously. This has had a positive effect on pupils' standards and progress. Pupils feel secure and valued in the school and this helps them to achieve well.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides an education of good quality. Pupils achieve well throughout the school because they are taught well and feel valued for what they can offer. There is a good curriculum with very good opportunities for enrichment in activities out of class. Pupils are well cared for and relationships are very good overall. There are good links with parents and very good links with the community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are of good quality as are systems for assessing pupils' progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is very inclusive so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have full access to learning.
- Good teaching, with a substantial proportion of very good and excellent teaching, enables all pupils to learn effectively.
- Teaching assistants support learning very effectively.

- Good teaching in the Foundation Stage helps children to settle quickly and to make good progress.
- Very good assessment systems have been developed, but their use in different subjects is inconsistent.
- There is scope for information and communication technology to be used more effectively to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (5%)	9 (24%)	21 (55%)	6 (16%)	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. The quality of teaching has improved well since the school was inspected previously. Unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated and the proportion of very good and excellent teaching has increased markedly. A major reason for this is that the school is very inclusive and great care is taken to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, have full access to learning. Because of this, pupils, including those who join the school during the course of the year, feel valued for what they can offer. This creates a positive self-image for most pupils so that they have good attitudes to learning and put in considerable effort, particularly when lessons are interesting and engage their attention. This effort results in secure learning because good teaching is effective.
17. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school with particular strengths in English and mathematics, and in Years 5 and 6. In very good and excellent lessons, teaching has good pace, groups of pupils at different stages of learning are all challenged effectively, and searching but sensitive questioning tests and extends pupils' understanding. For example, in an excellent mathematics lesson in Year 5, enthusiastic and stimulating teaching resulted in highly effective learning. Excellent relationships meant that all pupils worked with sustained interest and concentration and so made excellent progress. Pupils were given very good opportunities to contribute and responded eagerly so that learning was very secure. Work was graded carefully so that pupils at different stages of learning, including those with special educational needs, were able to build successfully on their existing knowledge. In contrast, in satisfactory lessons, the pace is often less brisk with pupils less effectively challenged. However, it should be noted that three teachers in training were teaching in the school during the inspection, and, with the school's support, were making sound starts to their teaching careers.
18. The school is very aware that the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the school is about twice the national average. Good care is taken to ensure that these pupils are fully included in learning and their progress is monitored thoroughly in line with the targets in their individual education plans. The needs of these pupils are identified early in the Nursery and Reception class so that they are given support as quickly as possible. If they join the school during the course of the year, their needs are quickly established so that the special educational needs co-ordinator and class teacher can prepare an individual education plan which matches their needs. Each plan contains targets which enable pupils to make progress in short steps. As a result, they are encouraged to increase their efforts because they can see that they are making progress. Pupils with special educational needs are given very effective support by teaching assistants who are regarded as full members of the teaching team. They work not only with pupils with special educational needs, but also show impressive initiative in supporting pupils throughout the class when need arises.

19. Children settle quickly in the Nursery and Reception classes because they are well taught. Teachers, nursery nurses and other teaching assistants work effectively as a team to develop the children's knowledge, skills and understanding. Because they have a very clear understanding of how young children learn, children quickly gain confidence, participate readily in a wide range of activities, and so achieve well.
20. Very good assessment systems have been introduced since the school was inspected previously and are a significant improvement. They enable the school to track the progress of individual pupils regularly and systematically. Because of this, pupils who need extra support in English and mathematics are identified and targeted groups are set up. End-of-year targets are set for pupils in English and mathematics. These systems are most fully developed in English and mathematics and the school recognises the need to extend them systematically to other subjects.
21. Teaching and learning in information and communication technology have improved well since the previous inspection and standards now match expectations throughout the school. However, computers in classrooms are older models so that pupils have few opportunities to practise the skills that they have learned in the computer suite and to use them in their learning in other subjects. There are examples of information and communication technology being used to support learning in other subjects, but the school accepts that these need to be extended so that information and communication technology is seen as a tool for learning in the same way as books.
22. Teaching and learning have improved well since the school was inspected previously. Because of this, all groups of pupils achieve well while they are in the school. Parents are pleased with the progress that their children make. The school is in a good position to develop teaching and learning further and so to raise standards.

The curriculum

The curriculum is of good quality and there are very good opportunities for pupils to take part in enrichment activities out of the classroom. Accommodation and resources for learning are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- An extensive programme of visits and visitors significantly enhances pupils' learning.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- There is very good provision for pupils' personal development.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support work in other subjects.
- Pupils are prepared very well for the next stages of their education.

Commentary

23. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets all statutory requirements. In the Nursery and Reception classes, there is strong emphasis on giving children practical activities which are stimulating and often more meaningful for them because they are linked to their own experiences. Because of this, learning is made fun and children make good progress and achieve well overall across all areas of learning. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are provided with a well-planned curriculum, which enables them to achieve well in English, mathematics and science. All other subjects are suitably covered and pupils in Year 5 learn French, and, in Year 6, they learn German.
24. There has been good improvement in the curriculum since the previous inspection. The provision for information and communication technology has been much improved by the creation of a computer suite, which allows whole class teaching of skills in the subject. Training to improve teachers' knowledge and understanding has improved the quality of

teaching. All pupils are timetabled to use the suite each week to develop their computer skills. As a result, pupils are now making good progress and achieving well in this subject. However, when back in the classroom, there are insufficient opportunities for them to practise these skills and to use them to support their learning in other subjects. Curriculum planning has been improved to ensure that pupils develop their skills, understanding and knowledge progressively in all subjects. It is now being further developed to help pupils to make better use of skills learned in one subject to support their learning in others. 'Themed weeks' are used well to add diversity and further stimulation to the curriculum. Good use is also made of national and local initiatives, such as the Healthy Schools Initiative, to enrich the curriculum.

25. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their creative talents. They are able to take part in a range of rich experiences in art, drama and music. Working with visitors, such as artists, musicians and theatre groups, they improve their skills through a broad range of activities. Pupils are also able to participate in a wide variety of educational visits and extra-curricular activities. These add further significant opportunities for pupils to broaden their learning and apply it to their own lives.
26. There is very good provision for personal, social and health education within a fully inclusive curriculum. This includes a strong emphasis on appropriate sex education and consideration of relationships and drugs awareness. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported. They have full access to all aspects of the curriculum and work in class for most of their time. There is very good provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs and the curriculum is sensitively adapted where necessary to meet the targets in their individual education plans. The school ensures that pupils are very well prepared for the next stages of their education and they move smoothly into their secondary schools and settle quickly.
27. The match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum is good overall and means that all pupils' needs are catered for well. Accommodation and resources are of good quality and help pupils to achieve well. Classrooms are of a good size and the addition of a computer suite and a refurbished library has improved the provision well since the school was inspected previously. Outdoor areas are spacious and well maintained. The self-contained Nursery unit is of good quality and provides children with a well-structured introduction to the school. There is good access for those with physical disabilities.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes sound provision for pupils to work in a safe and secure environment. Good levels of support and guidance help pupils to develop maturity and independence. The school involves all pupils well by seeking and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school monitors pupils' welfare well and very good relationships ensure that they feel safe and secure in their learning.
- Good procedures for induction help children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in other year groups to settle in well.
- Pupils' views and opinions are listened to sensitively and guidance on how they should improve their work is good overall.

Commentary

28. All staff in the school show considerable concern for pupils' welfare and know them very well. Very good relationships are a key factor in pupils' good achievement. Adults are very good role models for pupils to emulate and, by Year 6, most pupils have a good level of maturity, independence and concern for others. All parents who replied to the questionnaire agreed that the school encourages the development of maturity and independence. The school ensures that regular health and safety checks are carried out and the governing body is effectively

involved in supporting these arrangements. Although thorough procedures, including risk assessments, are firmly in place to promote a safe learning environment, during the inspection, several concerns were brought to the attention of the acting headteacher and the governing body. The caretaker ensures that pupils enjoy a clean and safe environment on a day-to-day basis. There are good opportunities to ensure that pupils learn how to keep safe and healthy, for example, through drug education workshops. There is regular whole school training on child protection, and staff are fully alert to the welfare of all pupils and carefully monitor any concerns.

29. Good induction procedures, including home visits, enable children to enjoy a smooth transition into the Nursery. Pupils joining the school in other year groups say that they settle in quickly and are helped to feel welcome by other pupils. Those pupils include a few who speak English as an additional language. They are supported well and their progress is carefully monitored so that they achieve well. Good support ensures that they learn in a stress free atmosphere. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well and there are good relationships with external agencies which are used to support pupils with specific needs.
30. Pupils' views are carefully listened to, for example, through the school council, which has been effectively involved in discussions to improve the school environment and facilities for playtimes. School council members are particularly proud of their role in buying and organising the use of new playground equipment. In lessons, pupils' ideas are valued and teachers often encourage feedback from pupils about lessons. Through very careful monitoring, the school quickly identifies pupils who require extra support and many strategies are in place to help them to learn effectively and to monitor their progress. The school has developed effective methods to help pupils to understand how to improve their work. For example, in English, individual targets are set which help pupils to understand clearly what areas of their work they should be trying to improve. In discussion, pupils say that these have been useful and have helped them to understand what they need to do to get to the next level. Day-to-day marking is generally good and helpful in guiding pupils' learning. When required, personal development targets are set and are carefully monitored.
31. The school's good provision for pupils' care, guidance and support has been maintained since its previous inspection.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents is good. Links with other schools and the community are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents' views of the school are favourable and they are provided with a good range of information.
- Links with the local community promote effective learning in practical ways.
- Links with the main feeder secondary schools and local primary schools are very good.

Commentary

32. Parental views collected through the parents' meeting held before the inspection and parents' questionnaires show they are pleased with most aspects of the school. Some parents felt that there were concerns regarding behaviour and bullying. The school has a considerable number of pupils with special educational needs relating to behaviour. However, these pupils are managed very well, with very good support from experienced teaching assistants and other adults, and do not adversely affect the learning of others. There are close links with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents are always invited to reviews of their children's progress and an increasing number accept. This helps parents to develop their role as partners in their children's learning.

33. The school provides parents with information of good quality. The well-written prospectus and governors' annual report provide clear and helpful information. Newsletters are sent out frequently and provide useful information on events and activities as well as the curriculum. As part of the school improvement planning process, the school uses its own questionnaires for parents and pupils, and parents are made fully aware of the results of these. Pupils' annual reports fully meet reporting requirements. The 'Friends of the School Association' actively supports the school's work not least by raising funds, for example, to improve the outdoor play provision for pupils. The school works hard to promote a partnership in learning with parents through curriculum evenings, which have included drugs awareness and paired reading. Many parents have been involved in the Family Learning Programme, promoting a closer working partnership between the school and parents.
34. The school has developed very good links with the community. For example, through the Sleaford Education and Business Partnership, pupils have had the opportunity to work with local businesses. A chemistry day helped pupils to understand about chemistry in the working environment, for example, in hairdressing. A ceramic workshop took place at 'The Hub', a local arts and crafts centre, to broaden pupils' learning, and a partnership with RAF Cranwell has helped to raise the profile of mathematics for pupils identified as having a need for this.
35. Very good links exist with the main secondary schools to which pupils proceed, especially those with specialist status. Secondary pupils visit the school each week to run extra-curricular clubs, including a cheerleading club, as part of the Junior Sports Leadership Award. Expertise in secondary schools in art and design, information and communication technology and physical education has been used effectively to provide resources and support for learning. The school competes against other primary schools in a range of sports activities and is currently developing a joint arts project with the neighbouring primary and secondary schools.
36. Links with the community and communication with parents have improved well since the school was inspected previously.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The acting headteacher, with the full support of all her colleagues, is providing very effective leadership. Governance is very good and the school is managed very well. Other staff provide good leadership. The school manages major areas of difficulty, which could be barriers to learning, very effectively.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has emerged strongly from recent changes in leadership.
- The acting headteacher is providing very effective leadership.
- Subjects are led and managed well.
- The school's inclusiveness is a major strength and professional development for all staff together with an excellent commitment to the training of new teachers are major factors in pupils' achievement.
- Governors are very effective.
- Finances are managed very well and the principles of best value are applied very well.

Commentary

37. Since the school was inspected previously, a new headteacher was appointed and led the school for some four years. She has just moved on to a further headship. The school has emerged strongly from these changes in leadership. Among the previous headteacher's initiatives was a major commitment to the continued professional development of all staff and to teacher training, a culture of inclusivity so that all pupils seeking to join the school are

accepted and valued and all staff are given opportunities to contribute to the school's development, and the development of assessment. The school continues to benefit from these initiatives.

38. The acting headteacher continues to build on these initiatives and is providing very good leadership. She has a clear vision for the school which, essentially, is to enable all pupils to reach their potential both in their personal development and in their academic progress, within a secure and stimulating learning environment. She has the support of all her colleagues in seeking to develop this vision. In doing so, she appreciates that the school operates in circumstances which could have an adverse effect on attainment and progress. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and statements of special educational needs is almost double the national average; the proportion of pupils leaving or joining the school during the course of the year is above average, as is the proportion of pupils experiencing major socio-economic problems. The school manages these significant difficulties very well so that there is clear evidence that all groups of pupils achieve well while they are in the school.
39. Subjects are led and managed well overall, and the leadership and management of English is excellent. Special educational needs is led and managed well. The special educational needs co-ordinator has a good overview of the provision for these pupils, reviews their individual education plans regularly and monitors their progress so that targets for further progress can be set. There is good provision for the few pupils who speak English as an additional language and the effective support available to them enables them to achieve well.
40. The school has an excellent commitment to inclusion. It accepts all pupils who seek to come to the school, values them for what they can offer, builds up their self-esteem, and offers them every encouragement to achieve well. The school's strong ethos of inclusion enables many pupils to succeed who have experienced difficulties elsewhere. The acting headteacher appreciates that many of these pupils will only succeed if their families are supported and family learning programmes and family support are integral to the school's provision. The continual professional development of all staff also has a very high priority. This enables all staff to support learning and progress effectively. The school has a major commitment to the training of new teachers, and this, too, has a positive effect on pupils' achievement because extra adults in classes ensure that pupils have a good level of individual attention. All staff are encouraged to contribute to the school's development, and their willingness to do so makes the school a vibrant and forward looking community. The school's commitment to inclusion is a major strength.
41. Governors are also a valued part of the team. They have a very good appreciation of the school's strengths and potential for development and challenge and support the headteacher very effectively. Many are frequently in the school and have a liaison role with particular subjects, increasing their understanding of the school's provision. Governors appreciate that the school is innovative and forward looking. They ensure that it meets statutory requirements.
42. The governing body plays an appropriate role in managing the school's finances. Governors are clear that best value is providing the best education for all pupils and, together with staff, are determined to achieve this by prudent financial management. Finances are managed very well to provide new resources for learning where possible. The school's accounts were last audited in November 2001 and the report was supportive of the school's procedures. It made a number of recommendations for adjustments to the school's procedures to comply with best practice, and these have all been adopted. The school had a high carry-forward figure at the end of the financial year 2003-04. This has been used sensibly to maintain staffing, and to provide more facilities for learning, for example, computer-driven whiteboards in some classrooms. This is very effective application of the principles of best value.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	Balances (£)
----------------------------	--------------

Total income	493,390
Total expenditure	478,802
Expenditure per pupil	2,487

Balance from previous year	59,630
Balance carried forward to the next year	74,218

43. Given pupils' good achievement, their good personal development, good teaching and learning, very good leadership and management, and below average costs per pupil, the school is giving very good value for money and has good potential to improve further.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection, with children's achievement, teaching and learning and leadership and management all improved. To develop the provision further, plans are in place for all children in the separate Nursery and Reception classes to be based in the purpose built Nursery accommodation from September 2005. The attainment of most children on entry to the Nursery is below average. By the time they enter Year 1, most of them will have reached the nationally expected standards in the early learning goals in most areas of learning. This represents good achievement, with very good achievement in personal, social and emotional development. Children with special educational needs are identified early and given very good support so that they are able to build on their current levels of understanding and achieve well.

Teaching and learning are good, with very effective teamwork between all adults. Leadership and management are good and the Foundation Stage leader's teaching serves as a very good role model for her colleagues. The curriculum is of good quality, and emphasises learning through interesting, practical activities. Assessment procedures are very thorough, so that children's progress can be carefully tracked. Good induction procedures help children to quickly settle into the everyday routines of the Nursery. Links with parents are very good and they are always welcome to talk to staff about how their children are progressing. The school is keen to develop the outside areas further to improve the provision for outdoor learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children feel confident and secure and so are happy to come to school.
- There are very good relationships between adults and children.
- The 'buddy system' with pupils in Year 5 has a positive effect on children's social development.

Commentary

44. As a result of the very good teaching that they receive, most children achieve very well and are on target to exceed the goals expected nationally by the end of the Reception Year. As most children enter the Nursery with below average social skills, there is emphasis on encouraging them to work together in pairs and small groups. Adults work very well together as a team and provide very good role models. They successfully build up children's confidence and develop their self-esteem. Of particular note is the 'buddy system', by which children in the Nursery work alongside pupils from Year 5. Each week, children go to the main building to work with their 'buddies' in the computer suite and in the courtyard. The 'buddies' also come to the Nursery to play games with the children. Such activities effectively develop their social skills, for example, in taking turns and sharing resources. Discussion activities are well planned to encourage children to express opinions and to talk about their feelings. Children have very good attitudes to their learning. They respond very positively to the care that they are shown, being very well behaved and clearly enjoying their learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's achievement is good.
- Basic skills in reading and writing are taught well.
- There are some missed opportunities to develop children's skills in speaking.

Commentary

45. Good teaching means that children achieve well and most will reach the expected learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. Adults use questions well to involve children in discussions and to encourage them to communicate their ideas and views. There are some missed opportunities, as children grow older, to develop their skills in speaking by letting them talk at greater length about their experiences and by asking them questions that require more than one word answers. Children's reading skills are successfully developed by listening to a variety of stories and taking part in shared and guided reading sessions of good quality. For example, children in the Nursery showed much enjoyment in listening to and joining in the reading of Jack and the Beanstalk. The session acted as an effective stimulus for a range of well-planned activities across the areas of learning. In a lesson in the Reception class, activities enabled children to make good progress in their understanding of the main features of a non-fiction book, and how it differs from a fiction book. Reading corners are not well organised as inviting areas to foster an enjoyment of books.
46. There are good opportunities for children to write for different purposes, including initiating their own independent writing activities in the writing area in the Nursery. In the Reception class, this area is not as well organised to allow children to do this. Children enjoy using a variety of implements for drawing, marking, scribbling and writing. There are high expectations of children's effort and behaviour, and they respond well by presenting their work carefully and neatly.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good emphasis on children learning through practical activities.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Some activities need more structure to enable children to make better progress.

Commentary

47. Most children achieve well and will reach the expected levels in the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. There is good teamwork between adults so that children have a high degree of direct teaching. This enables the needs of individual children to be met effectively. Because relationships are very good, children have the confidence to 'have a go' at answering questions, even when not sure if they are correct or not. They know that adults will value their contributions. Carefully planned lessons help to develop children's basic skills and to encourage the use of correct mathematical vocabulary. Resources are used well to provide practical activities to help pupils to solve number problems and to identify patterns. For example, this was achieved when higher attaining children in the Nursery were using a 'spotty dice' to count the spots and identify the correct numeral to represent them. Sometimes, activities are not sufficiently structured to enable all children to progress well. This was evident in an activity in the Reception class on developing vocabulary related to weight. The activity

confused some children and hindered their progress in understanding this mathematical concept. Rhymes and songs are used well to help children to sequence and remember numbers. Children show much enjoyment in their activities, which makes a positive contribution to the progress that they make.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are planned thoughtfully to be practical and interesting.
- Children make good progress because teaching and learning are good.
- Classroom computers do not develop children's information and communication technology skills sufficiently.

Commentary

48. Most children achieve well and will reach the early learning goals by the time they leave the Reception Year. In their scientific investigations, they are encouraged to use their close observational skills to make sensible predictions. This was apparent in a lesson for pupils in the Reception class in which they were looking closely at how a range of 'mini-beasts' moved. Good resources and accurate teaching helped children to make good progress in their understanding of some features of 'mini-beasts'. Many activities are linked well to the children's own experiences, to add interest to and to make their learning more relevant. The local area is used well to develop children's historical and geographical skills and they are also effectively taught about the wider world, away from home and school. There are weekly sessions in the computer suite to develop computer skills. During these, most children control the mouse and keyboard well and follow basic on-screen prompts. Computers in classrooms are inadequate for refining these skills further throughout the week. A wide range of visits and visitors provides further good quality learning opportunities to enhance the curriculum. Plans are in place to improve the outside area to promote learning more effectively.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good so that children achieve well.
- Children respond well to the interesting activities provided for them.

Commentary

49. Most children are on target to reach the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year, which represents good achievement. Physical education lessons are used effectively to develop children's skills in control and co-ordination. Adults work very well together to help children to gain a sense of space and an awareness of how to use the hall floor area safely with others. This was evident in a lesson for children in the Reception class, in which they also made good progress in their throwing and aiming skills. The curriculum is planned carefully to promote children's skills in manipulating scissors and writing and painting tools, along with handling a range of equipment when making models. Resources are good and enable children to take part in a range of practical and enjoyable activities, to which they respond well. The outside area is used well to develop children's learning through outdoor play.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress because teaching and learning are good.
- Some resources are not readily accessible for children to use.

Commentary

50. Most children are on course to reach the expected goals by the time they leave the Reception class, which represents good achievement. There are good opportunities for children to use a range of resources to develop their skills in handling and using different media. As a result, they develop a broad range of skills in using creative materials and tools. This was seen, for example, when children in the Nursery were making three-dimensional representations of the houses of the Three Little Pigs. They confidently used boxes, glue, straw, sticks and other resources, which they selected themselves. Some materials, such as painting resources, are not readily available to enable children to decide for themselves the materials that they need. There is good use of the role-play areas, set out as a 'castle' in the Nursery and a 'discovery zone' in the Reception class, to develop children's imaginations. Adults join in these activities effectively to promote children's creative talents and their speaking and listening skills.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are excellent.
- Good assessment systems enable pupils' progress to be managed effectively.
- The curriculum and resources have been improved since the previous inspection.
- Pupils read well and have good library skills.
- Achievement in speaking and listening, reading and writing is good throughout the school.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

Commentary

51. Standards seen in lessons and an analysis of completed work show that attainment in Year 2 is above average. In Year 6, a significant number of pupils have special educational needs and the proportion of pupils joining the school in Years 3 to 6 is high. Although, overall their attainment has not yet quite reached the national average, those pupils who started their education in the Nursery or the Reception class at this school have made good progress and achieved well.

52. In 2004, standards in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in reading were average and in writing they were above average. In 2004, the test results in Year 6 were very low. This was due to pupils' poor attainment on entry to the school, the very high proportion of pupils in the year group with special educational needs and the number of pupils who joined the school with low attainment part way through their primary education. During the inspection, standards seen in lessons and an analysis of completed work showed that attainment in Year 2 is now above average. In Year 6, although there are still similar problems, pupils have worked hard and achieved well, but have not yet reached average standards.

53. Standards in speaking and listening are average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and they enjoy and benefit from these opportunities. For example, during lessons, pupils are often given a short time to

discuss issues with a partner before offering an opinion or answering a question. They converse with adults confidently and read aloud with good expression. Overall, pupils' listening skills are very good, especially in situations such as school assemblies. However, there are a few boys in some classes who lose concentration easily, although they are well supported by their teachers and support staff, and so do not adversely affect the learning of others.

54. Pupils make good progress in reading. The intervention strategies introduced by the school are having a very good impact on raising standards. The library areas are attractive and well organised. Teachers provide an interesting range of books to widen pupils' knowledge of authors and to encourage pupils to try out new types of books. Good attention has been given to providing books of interest for boys and girls. Through their guided reading sessions, pupils learn to develop their comprehension skills effectively. They examine different styles of writing and are introduced to research skills. Many pupils in Year 6 read the 'Harry Potter' books and discuss characters and plots with good insight. Standards in reading are average in Year 2, but the effect of the high number of pupils leaving and joining the school and the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs means that standards in Year 6 are below average overall.
55. Writing skills are above average in Year 2, illustrating the success of the focused programmes to improve attainment in this area. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 write at length when recording work in other subjects, using a non-fictional style to match the subject matter. There is especially good progress in the standard of handwriting and presentation because there is a strong focus on this and regular practice is arranged for all pupils. However, standards of writing are below average overall in Year 6 for the reasons given above.
56. A major strength in the teaching of English is the effective assessment of pupils' learning and the careful tracking of their progress. This enables teachers to identify precisely where a pupil is having difficulty and problems are quickly rectified. It also leads to the setting of very challenging targets, which underpin pupils' good achievement. Pupils know how they are progressing and understand clearly what they have to do to improve. Much evaluation of work is completed orally as teachers intervene skilfully in the writing process, prompting pupils to edit or reconsider parts of their work. Pupils' work in class is consistently marked to a high standard. There is good praise for success and effort and clear pointers to show pupils how they can improve. Pupils now evaluate their own work increasingly and corrections are routinely completed. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.
57. Excellent subject leadership and management have underpinned improvements in teaching and learning. The subject leader has improved resources significantly in all areas of the school and especially in providing a well-stocked library, which is now used well for research. The subject leader, who is a leading teacher of English, has led several training sessions for staff and is always available to support colleagues. She has monitored teaching and learning throughout the school and her evaluations have helped to achieve consistency of provision. The school has been very innovative in its approach, for example, becoming involved in projects to develop boys' reading and writing. However, the rapid turnover of pupils means that achievement is good overall. The subject leader is well aware of the major contribution made by support staff in areas such as guided reading and of specialist staff who support pupils with special educational needs. This enables these pupils to make good progress and achieve well.
58. Very effective planning at all levels has meant that the quality of teaching and learning has improved markedly since the previous inspection. This has resulted in improved achievement and the school is in a strong position to improve standards further.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. In this school, speaking and listening, reading and writing are not confined to English lessons but are used well in many other subjects such as science, history, geography and religious

education. This is a significant factor underpinning the good progress that pupils make since they have many opportunities to consolidate and extend their skills. There is scope for information and communication technology to be used more systematically to support learning in English.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching enables pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and work productively in lessons.
- Inspection evidence shows that standards have improved since the previous inspection.
- Assessment is used well to support pupils' achievement.
- There is insufficient use of information and communication technology to support learning in mathematics.

Commentary

60. In 2004, pupils at the end of Year 2 reached average standards in the national tests. These pupils had achieved well and made good progress in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. Standards in the national tests at the end of Year 6 were well below average. However, a careful analysis of the progress of this year group shows that there was good achievement in Years 3 to 6. Standards for this year group at the end of Year 2 in 2000 were very low. This was because over one third of the year group had special educational needs with a number having statements of special educational needs. Further, the number of pupils leaving and joining the year group during Years 3 to 6 was above average, and many of those joining the school were starting from a low base.
61. Evidence from the inspection is that pupils achieve well throughout the school. Standards are now above average in Year 2. This is because pupils are well taught. The quality of teaching ranges from good to excellent with particular strengths in Years 5 and 6. In the very good and excellent lessons, very high levels of challenge are provided for pupils at different stages of learning so that all can make very good progress from their existing levels of understanding. Work is carefully graded to enable all pupils to build up their knowledge and skills systematically. Learning activities are interesting so that pupils work with sustained levels of interest and concentration. Excellent relationships, supported by effective use of praise and humour, mean that lessons proceed with very good pace and that no time is lost. In these lessons, achievement is very good. In lessons where the quality of teaching is good, many of these features are present, but the lessons lack a degree of spark and urgency so that achievement is good as opposed to very good. Standards in Year 6 remain below average because of the high level of pupils' movement and of pupils with special educational needs.
62. Pupils have good attitudes to learning in mathematics because their attention is engaged by interesting learning activities. In most classes, very good relationships mean that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, concentrate well. Even in classes where a high proportion of pupils have special educational needs, effective support means that they generally work with interest so that all pupils achieve well. Teaching assistants are generally very effective with these pupils so that they are able to take a full part in lessons and achieve at the same rate as other pupils.
63. Evidence from the inspection supports the school's predictions that standards in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2005 will improve well. At the end of Year 6, standards in the national tests are likely to improve well on those attained in 2004 even if they do not quite reach average standards. This is because pupils have difficulty in understanding questions expressed in words. However, standards have improved since the school was inspected

previously and there is clear evidence that all groups of pupils achieve well while they are in the school and make good progress.

64. A major reason for this is that assessment systems have been improved markedly since the previous inspection. Pupils' progress is tracked regularly so that any weaknesses can be addressed and additional support provided if necessary. Pupils' learning in mathematics is now managed very effectively. The results of the national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 and the optional tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5 are analysed so that any areas of relative weakness can be identified and strategies put in place to deal with them. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily because the subject leader currently teaches in the Foundation Stage, which means that it is difficult for her to maintain an overview of standards and achievement across the school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. There are examples of subjects being used well to support learning in mathematics. The use of graphs in science, of time lines in history and religious education, and measuring in design and technology all help to develop pupils' numeracy skills. However, the school recognises that there is scope to use information and communication technology more effectively to support learning in mathematics. In classrooms with computer-driven whiteboards, these are used well to reinforce pupils' understanding.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because teaching and learning are good.
- Leadership and management are good.
- There is not enough use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work.

Commentary

66. Results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004 were well below average. This resulted from a high turnover of pupils and a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. A similar pattern is evident for pupils in the current Year 6. Most pupils reach standards that are below those expected for their age. However, this still represents good achievement. Most pupils in Year 2 achieve well and reach the standards expected for their age.
67. Pupils are taught well throughout the school. Teachers plan their lessons carefully so that activities build systematically on previous work. This enables pupils to use their existing scientific knowledge and understanding to support their learning. This was evident, for example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 6 on devising an experiment to see if the mass of an object affects the amount of friction that acts upon it. Their prior understanding of the way that different forces acted helped pupils to make a sensible hypothesis and then to test this out. Questioning is used well to find out what pupils know and can do and to promote their scientific vocabulary. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support those pupils with special educational needs so they are fully involved in activities and so make good progress. Because of this quality of teaching, most pupils in Year 6 show secure skills in planning and carrying out a 'fair test' with little help from the teacher. They are not as capable at considering what their findings have told them. As a result, the conclusions to their experiments tend to be a description of what they have done rather than an evaluation of what they have discovered. Marking is used well to suggest ways in which pupils might improve their work. There is

insufficient use of information and communication technology to support and enhance learning in science.

68. Pupils enjoy their scientific activities. They are particularly enthusiastic about their practical investigations, showing curiosity and good co-operation skills. In all lessons, pupils are very well behaved and very interested in what they were doing. This has a positive effect on the quality of their work and the standards that they achieve.
69. The work of the subject leader over the last year has led to a greater emphasis on developing pupils' investigational skills through the school. As a result, pupils are now provided with better opportunities to devise, carry out and record a wider range of experiments. There is a good curriculum, with many opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively. This makes a positive contribution to their personal and social development. There are good opportunities for pupils to practise their numeracy skills. A good example of this is when pupils in Year 6 made accurate measurements to see what happens to the length of shadows the further an object is from a light source. Assessment procedures are effective in enabling the school to track the progress of individual pupils, but this information is not yet used to set targets to improve their performance. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The computer suite is used well to develop ICT skills.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support work in other subjects.
- Assessment systems are not effective.

Commentary

70. Most pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach the standards expected for their age. This shows that they achieve well and make good progress during their time in school. This is because they are soundly taught throughout the school.
71. The school has dealt successfully with the key issue from the previous inspection, and has improved provision and raised standards in ICT. At the heart of this improvement has been the creation and effective use of a computer suite. All pupils are timetabled to use the suite on a weekly basis to develop specific ICT skills. Training has been provided to improve the knowledge and understanding of staff in teaching the subject. Because of these developments, pupils' progress has quickened and they now reach appropriate standards.
72. Because teachers have secure subject knowledge, they are able to demonstrate new ideas and techniques confidently in the ICT suite. They use the computer-driven whiteboard in the suite well, during the introductions and conclusions to lessons. This provides pupils with a clear visual focus and a good understanding of what they are to do. For example, this was evident in a lesson for pupils in Year 6 on researching information on the Internet. The teacher's expertise enabled pupils to make good progress in their ability to find and extract the necessary information from a web site. There is good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants so that all pupils have a high proportion of direct teaching. As a result, pupils have a high work rate and are productive when using computers. Pupils with special educational needs are given extra support, which enables them to have full access to all activities. However, when back in the classroom, there are insufficient opportunities to practise the skills learned in the suite to support learning in other subjects.
73. Pupils have very positive attitudes to ICT and show a lot of interest and enjoyment when working on computers. They are well behaved and work co-operatively in pairs. This is a significant factor in the progress that they make.
74. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The acting headteacher has maintained an effective overview of the subject during the subject leader's absence. Assessment arrangements are not precise enough to enable the school to track the progress of individual pupils effectively and to set targets for improvement. Accommodation and resources have been greatly improved and are now good. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

Information communication technology across the curriculum

75. There are limited opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills to support and enhance learning in other subjects. Pupils use their word processing skills to help add interest to their writing in English. In a history lesson for pupils in Year 6, there was good use of a multi-media presentation to show the features of life on the home front during the Second World War. In Year 2, pupils have used the 'line and flood' tool to create pictures in the style of Piet Mondrian as part of their work in art. The school is keen to extend the use of ICT to support other subjects.

HUMANITIES

History and religious education were inspected in full and geography was sampled because of the way the school's timetable is structured.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy studying the past and achieve well.
- Good use is made of visits and visitors to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding.

- Good links with literacy, mathematics and art and design promote learning well.
- Leadership and management are good overall, but assessment systems have not yet been applied effectively to this subject.

Commentary

76. Pupils achieve well throughout the school and reach the expected standards. Pupils in Year 2 have learned about seaside holidays long ago. They have examined a selection of souvenirs and decided how old they are. They have also learned about the lives of famous people such as Tutankhamen and about significant events such as the Great Fire of London. As a result of this learning, they have a good understanding of the passage of time and its effects on people's everyday lives.
77. There is a very good curriculum for pupils in Years 3 to 6. By teaching the subject in blocks of time, teachers are able to provide pupils with opportunities to study each topic in depth and to include practical experiences linked to other subjects. This adds considerably to pupils' interest and satisfaction. For example, in Year 4, as part of their study of Henry VIII, pupils wrote a report of an interview with Anne Boleyn. They looked at a portrait of Henry VIII and were challenged to write "What does it tell us about him?" As part of their study of The Victorians, Year 5 pupils wrote letters to Charles Dickens about his book Nicholas Nickleby. Pupils are beginning to make good use of their developing skills in information and communication technology for research using the Internet and for presenting their work. For example, Year 6 pupils were proud of their multimedia presentations about life in Britain during the Second World War. However, the school recognises that there is scope for these opportunities to be increased.
78. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers make history very interesting and set work that offers a good level of challenge to pupils at different stages of learning, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils. As a result, pupils achieve well. Good opportunities for speaking and listening and for practising different kinds of writing develop pupils' literacy skills well. The use of tables and graphs, together with mapping work develop their numeracy skills effectively.
79. There is good leadership and management in history. Teachers' planning and pupils' completed work are checked regularly to ensure that the curriculum is covered thoroughly. Visits and visitors to the school add special interest and enrichment to the subject. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 had enjoyed dressing in Tudor costume for their visit to Walsingham where they had spent the day experiencing what it was like to live in Tudor times, and a visiting actor has led a day based on the Egyptian style of life. These experiences have enhanced learning effectively by 'bringing history to life'. Resources have been improved and are now good. The school is aware of the need to devise a new system of assessment in history.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well throughout the school.
- Planning covers all elements of the subject and includes a good emphasis on world religions.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and supports pupils' personal development very effectively.
- Assessment does not enable teachers to track pupils' progress systematically.

Commentary

80. The curriculum fully meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. The quality of teaching and the provision of resources, including artefacts, have improved well since the previous inspection. Pupils' attainment matches expectations and the subject supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
81. Across the age groups, pupils have a sound understanding of Bible stories and older pupils understand that religious belief often influences people's ways of life. For example, pupils in Year 6 used the story of the Good Samaritan to investigate "Who is my neighbour?" They linked their work very effectively with their literacy and art and design lessons, producing a piece of extended writing and making a cartoon strip of the story. An analysis of work shows that pupils have a sound understanding of Judaism, Hinduism and Islam and of how people's faith influences their everyday lives. In conversations with pupils, it becomes apparent that they have a good respect for other people's beliefs.
82. The school makes good use of visits and visitors. In one lesson observed in Year 3, for example, pupils developed an understanding of Christianity as they discussed what they had seen on their visit to the local church. Further, an assembly, taken by a local pastor, helped pupils to understand how God answers our prayers. In an enjoyable assembly conducted by a group of people from another local church, pupils learned a new song from South America and a puppet play reinforced their attitude to doing good. Pupils also have the opportunity to visit Lincoln and Southwell cathedrals.
83. Teaching is good overall. Teaching is imaginative and carefully designed to engage pupils because they can relate their learning to their own lives. This enabled pupils in Year 3, for example, to develop a clear understanding of why churches and chapels in this country are arranged differently. Teaching assistants work very effectively with pupils with special educational needs so that they achieve well. There are good links with personal, health, social and citizenship education when pupils consider that we need rules to live by. For example, pupils in Year 2 wrote rules that they would add to the Torah. They had all made model Torahs as part of a series of lessons which helped them to appreciate the care that goes into making something beautiful. Pupils discussed their suggestions with their talking partners before writing and this helped to develop their speaking and listening skills.
84. The leadership and management of religious education are satisfactory and resources have been improved well since the previous inspection. The assessment of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding is in the early stages of development and does not yet produce a clear picture of their progress and of how achievement can be promoted further.

Geography

85. No overall judgement on provision for geography was possible. Only one full lesson was observed which did not cover sufficient aspects of the subject to provide a fair judgement for teaching. However, a good volume of work was seen on display and in pupils' books. Much of this was of a satisfactory standard, matching that expected for pupils in different age groups. There are good opportunities to use the local environment. For example, a Year 4 class have visited a local area, which needed renovation. They made sketches and notes on site to help them to discuss what improvements could be made on their return to school. There is good provision for comparing local geography with other places in the British Isles and in other parts of the world. Pupils are aware of environmental issues and appreciate the importance of conservation work. For example, pupils in Year 5 have debated, "Should Ruskington High Street be closed to traffic?" These lessons help to develop pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily and standards are reported through an annual audit. A clear action plan is in place to drive the subject forward. This includes further development of assessment and more use of information and communication technology.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were sampled.

Art and design

86. Within a broad and balanced curriculum, pupils are encouraged to use a wide range of media to develop their skills in different artistic techniques. The curriculum is enriched when pupils work with local artists and in an after-school art club. They also work with staff from the local secondary school and their learning is enhanced by links with a specialist arts school. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 4 have used spatulas to create imaginative underwater scenes. In a very good lesson observed in Year 2, pupils made very good progress in using joining techniques to embellish a fabric collage with sequins and beads. Good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' artistic ideas by studying the work of famous artists, such as Monet, Picasso and Van Gogh. There are some useful links with other subjects. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have made observational sketches of some of the features of Tudor buildings in Walsingham as part of their work in history. There is also limited use of information and communication technology to support learning. This is seen for example, in the work of pupils in Year 2, when they have used the line and flood tool to create pictures in the style of Piet Mondrian.

Design and technology

87. The curriculum is planned well to enable pupils to design, make and evaluate a wide range of products. They are given chances to practise finishing techniques to improve the quality of their product and are encouraged to experiment with different ways of joining materials. There are some useful links with other subjects, particularly science. This was seen to good effect when pupils in Year 5 were using their scientific knowledge and understanding of simple electrical circuits to design and make a battery powered buggy. In this session, they used a range of tools confidently and safely. They also showed a good understanding of how to strengthen the buggy frames by using triangular pieces of card at each corner of the frame. There are also opportunities to take part in food technology activities, such as designing and making healthy sandwiches. Pupils have access to a wide range of materials and equipment when carrying out their activities.

Music

88. Whole-school singing in assemblies is satisfactory. Most pupils join in the singing and, on occasions, sing with enthusiasm. The subject leader ensures that the National Curriculum is covered and that pupils have opportunities for music making out of class. For example, there are two recorder clubs, but no other opportunities for learning instruments apart from keyboard. There are opportunities for some singing in performance, for example, in assemblies and in the village. The subject is adequately resourced and there are some instruments from non-western cultures available to broaden pupils' experiences. Plans are in place to work with the other primary school in the village to enable pupils to work with musicians. At this stage, music does not have a high profile in the school.

Physical education

89. Pupils' experiences in physical education are enhanced because the school is part of the local School Sport Co-ordinator education and training programme. For example, the school is trialling materials for cheerleaders and is joining the adjacent secondary school in a dance festival. Pupils compete successfully against other schools in a range of sports which are largely open to boys and girls. Pupils benefit from some external coaching, for example, in soccer, tag rugby, and in a multi-skills club. The subject leader ensures that the National Curriculum is covered and is developing dance and outdoor and adventurous activities. Pupils have opportunities to swim from Year 2 onwards and standards in swimming match

expectations. The subject is well resourced and pupils benefit from good hard play areas and a good field.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social, health education and citizenship is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good understanding of environmental issues through geography and science, and through the work that they complete in the school grounds of which they are justly proud.
- Pupils learn effectively about a healthy lifestyle through science and physical education lessons.
- All staff support pupils' personal development very well through their own conduct and relationships.
- Whole class discussions provide a good opportunity for pupils to express their feelings and explore issues.

Commentary

90. The school makes very good provision for the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHEC). There is a policy and a scheme of work which brings together all aspects of the subject. There are good arrangements for pupils to work collaboratively and to share equipment.
91. Themes are taught in lessons and are well integrated into other subject areas such as science, geography and religious education. In food technology, pupils learn about and follow hygiene rules and know the importance of clean hands. As part of their religious education lessons, pupils study different religions and are encouraged to have respect for other people's beliefs. In geography, pupils learn about conservation and regeneration issues, whilst in science they gain a very good knowledge of caring for the environment as they develop and maintain their own school garden centre. All these activities support their learning in PSHEC very well.
92. There are also good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, for example, by being elected members of the school council, acting as monitors, and looking after younger children. Pupils recognise that rights carry responsibilities and consider the effects of their actions on other people carefully. Staff encourage pupils to reflect on their actions and to see situations from different points of view. This is a major strength, which underpins the behaviour management strategies in school very effectively.
93. There are planned occasions, such as whole class discussions and assemblies, where pupils discuss social and moral issues, and talk about feelings and consider dilemmas. There is very good emphasis on healthy eating initiatives. Pupils study diets and are encouraged to be physically active through physical education lessons and a good range of extra-curricular opportunities including competitive sport and their use of the outdoor adventure playground. Very good systems are in place to boost the confidence of those pupils who find learning difficult or who have low self-esteem. All these factors are having a positive impact on learning and on pupils' personal development.
94. The ethos of the school and the caring attitudes of adults are reflected in pupils' attitudes and promote mutual respect very effectively. This enables teachers to plan lessons to consider complex and difficult situations. For example, pupils in Year 6 discussed fear and how people overcome it. There is a strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural element to lessons with very good links to religious education themes. This reflects good teaching and very effective leadership and management.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

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

Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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