

INSPECTION REPORT

Metheringham County Primary School

Metheringham

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique Reference Number: 120382

Headteacher: Mr. J. Lowrey

Inspection No: 188244

Reporting inspector: Mrs M. Hulme

OIN: 3609

Dates of inspection: 27th - 30th September 1999

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

Type of control: County

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Prince's Street
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. J. Duggins

Date of previous inspection: June 1996

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Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs Margaret Hulme, RgI	English	Characteristics of the school
	Religious education	Attainment and progress
		The efficiency of the school
Mr. Stuart Vincent, Lay Inspector	None	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
		Attendance
		Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
		Partnership with parents and the community
Mr. John Taylor	Mathematics	Curriculum and assessment
	Geography	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
	History	
	Physical education	
Mr. David Brown	Information technology	Teaching
	Design and technology	Leadership and management
	Art	
Mrs Judith Whitehead	Music	
	Areas of learning for children under five	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
	Science	
	Special educational needs	
	Equal Opportunities	

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and this is having a positive effect on standards;
- standards in mathematics have improved considerably, particularly at Key Stage 2;
- reading and writing are well taught and seven year old children often read and write better than might be expected;
- art is well taught, resulting in work of high quality - this is a strength of the school;
- history is a strength of the school and pupils have very good research skills;
- parents are valued by the school and many contribute well to their children's education;
- the effective provision results in very good personal development;
- staff and governors work well as a team;
- pupils are well cared for and valued as individuals;
- relationships between staff and children are very good which makes pupils want to work hard.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. although there is support for children with special educational needs, the management of this aspect is unsatisfactory and time is required for more rigorous monitoring
- II. subject co-ordinators need to extend the monitoring of their subjects by observing the teaching and learning at first hand
- III. the deputy lacks sufficient time to carry out the management responsibilities required by the post
- IV. the organisation of the curriculum for children under five lacks appropriate, trained, teacher support
- V. in some classes the reports for parents fail to indicate children's weaknesses and how these can be improved although most give a good indication of strengths.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has overcome most of the weaknesses pointed out in the last inspection and is much better than it was. Standards have improved in mathematics at Key Stage 2 and the most recent results in the National Curriculum tests show that more pupils are attaining higher levels than in 1998.

More practical guidance on the teaching of skills for specific subjects has been provided and planning for progression is now very good. Assessment procedures that will inform curricular planning are in place and are very good. They are used well at Key Stage 1 and very well at Key Stage 2 to help teachers understand what children know, understand and can do and what they need to learn next.

The plans for developing the management role of the curriculum co-ordinators have been implemented and some progress has been made but more needs to be done. Co-ordinators do not yet monitor the teaching and learning regularly at first hand. They need to build on the good work that has already taken place in monitoring the subjects. This would complete the monitoring strategy identified as an issue in the previous inspection.

Since the last inspection the governors have appointed a new headteacher and deputy who work well together in providing clear direction for the work of the school. Although much has been achieved in the last two years, staff are not complacent and realise that there is further work to do. The school is well placed to make further improvements and meet all targets.

Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key	
English	B	D	<i>well above average</i>	A
Mathematics	E	E	<i>above average</i>	B
Science	C	E	<i>average</i>	C
			<i>below average</i>	D
			<i>well below average</i>	E

The school is working hard to achieve high standards and the National Curriculum test results for 1999 are an improvement on those shown here with more pupils gaining the higher levels. In English there are good standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Younger pupils do particularly well in learning to read and the writing of older pupils has improved. In mathematics, younger children are good at understanding the place value of numbers and older pupils are skilled at multiplying and dividing decimals mentally by ten or 100. More pupils are now gaining the higher levels in science. Younger children are using their observational skills better and some of the oldest children are able to extend their investigations by adding additional variables to a given task. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with what is expected by the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus and good progress is made by older children as they extend their knowledge and understanding of world faiths. Satisfactory progress is made in information technology, with younger children learning to word-process on the computer and older pupils now able to use more sophisticated software programs as they master the personal computers. Some outstanding work is produced in art, particularly observational drawing. Pupils continue to make good progress in history and have a well developed sense of chronology and particularly good investigative and interpretative skills.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Satisfactory	Good	Very good
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Good	Very good
Science		Insufficient evidence	Very good
Information technology		Good	Good
Religious education		Good	Very good
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Good	Very good

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. There is 32 per cent of teaching that is very good and at times excellent, and this high quality of teaching is mainly in Years 4, 5 and 6. There was no unsatisfactory teaching during the period of the current inspection. These figures are a marked improvement over the previous inspection, when teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall in 83 per cent of lessons, and unsatisfactory in seven per cent of cases. It was possible to see only one lesson in science at Key Stage 1 and therefore no judgement can be made about the teaching.

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that strengths outweigh any weaknesses

· **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Overall good. A few pupils at Year 1 challenge the authority of the teachers.
Attendance	Good – above the national average
Ethos*	Very purposeful. Relationships are very good, most children are eager to learn and have good attitudes to their work. Often very good at upper Key Stage 2.
Leadership and management	Good leadership from headteacher and mainly good management but some shortcomings in the management of special educational needs
Curriculum	Satisfactory for under-fives and good overall for other classes. Very good provision for equal opportunity and in planning for progression and continuity but unsatisfactory for special educational needs.
Pupils with special educational needs	Despite some appropriate good support provided by additional adults, there is insufficient attention to the management of this aspect, which results in unsatisfactory provision overall. Pupils' progress is mainly satisfactory.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good provision for every aspect of children's personal development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory overall. Very good use of accommodation, good quality learning resources. Insufficient support staff for some areas.
Value for money	The improving standards, good quality of education provided and high quality learning environment together with average or low costs results in good value for money.

**Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

· **The parents' views of the school**

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
VI. their children enjoy coming to school VII. the school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children VIII. the school is approachable IX. children are enabled to achieve a good standard of work X. children achieve high standards of behaviour XI. parents are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school XII. children are encouraged to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	XIII. the information they receive from the

Inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents, although there is evidence to show that some children find it difficult to achieve high standards of good behaviour. Overall, evidence from the inspection does not confirm the concerns of some parents about the information they receive about their children's progress. There are formal parents' evenings, class teachers are available at the start and end of each day and parents were observed making use of this opportunity to talk informally about progress. Homework is provided and recording systems include progress in reading. In response to parents' requests the school now

issues a guide to the subjects and themes which will be studied by each class in the forthcoming term. However, there is a weakness in the reports. Although pupils' annual reports do provide information about children's strengths and many identify weaknesses, it is not the case for all classes. Often reports fail to say what needs to be done to improve. It is the school's intention to review these with a view to having a more consistent approach.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order that the quality of education can be further improved, the headteacher, staff and governors need to:

▪ Improve the management of special educational needs by:

- providing training for the special needs co-ordinator and other teachers in the requirements of the Code of Practice, including the staged process of assessment; (*paras: 74, 79, 84*)
- ensuring there is sufficient time for the co-ordination of special education needs; (*paras: 74, 84*)
- keeping an up-to-date register of children with special educational needs that has criteria for entering and removing children and that clearly identifies the progress made by individual children; (*paras: 44, 74*)
- improving the target setting in individual education plans to reflect realistic small steps that can be achieved and ensuring that these relate to the work undertaken in class; (*paras: 27, 44, 50, 74, 101, 111*)
- ensuring sufficient involvement of all parents who have children with special educational needs; (*paras: 66*)
- regular monitoring of all aspects of special educational needs; (*paras: 50, 61, 74, 78*)

▪ extending the monitoring of teaching and learning by:

- making time for co-ordinators to build on the good work already achieved by observing lessons in those subjects for which they are responsible. This would complete the monitoring strategy identified as an issue in the previous inspection report; (*paras: 70, 71, 127, 160*)

▪ reduce the heavy load on the deputy by:

- providing regular time for her to carry out her extensive range of responsibilities relating to the management of the school; (*paras: 68, 82*)

▪ providing better support for the teachers of children under five by:

- ensuring that there is appropriate, trained support for those essential activities relating to purposeful play that result in children attaining the necessary learning prior to the National Curriculum; (*paras: 35, 79, 83, 91*)

There is one minor issue:

- ensure consistency in the pupils' reports to reflect the good practice that exists. (*paras: 66*)

INTRODUCTION

§ Characteristics of the school

1. The school is situated in the village of Metheringham, which is about nine miles from the city of Lincoln. The present school was built in 1974 with two classes added in 1978. When school meals were abolished in 1981 the kitchen became a teaching area; further extensions in 1996 provided additional improvements and there are plans to extend it again and replace the temporary accommodation for one class. There are 268 pupils on roll taught by eleven teachers of whom one is the headteacher and one is part-time. At the time of inspection there were two classes taught by supply teachers. The size of the school is a little bigger than the national average. The majority of children come from the village and there are approximately 14 who are bussed from isolated dwellings on the heath and fen areas. A few children come from Scopwick village and occasionally there are a few from other villages nearby. Children live in owner occupied and local authority housing. More recently the building of housing association properties has extended the range of available homes.
2. The school roll includes two reception classes with 39 children under the age of five. The school follows the county guidance and children are admitted to the school in the September of the academic year they become five. Parents are not obliged to take up the availability of full-time education until statutory age, which is the term following the fifth birthday. Children are gradually integrated into the class they are joining and are usually attending full-time after a month. If applicants to enter the school exceed the places available, priority is given to those for whom Metheringham primary school is the most appropriate. Most children have attended playgroup prior to attending school and attainment on entry is broadly what might be expected for the majority of four year old pupils.
3. There are 34 pupils on the special educational needs register of whom six have statements of need. In addition the school provides support for a child of secondary school age. There are very few pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals but since there are no cooked school meals the school cannot know how accurate is this tiny percentage. This is one of the factors used to make comparisons of pupils' attainment with similar schools.
4. The school has appointed a new headteacher and deputy since the last inspection and they, the staff and governing body have determined the aims. The school aims to:
 - create a secure place to learn that encourages children to behave well and do their best;
 - promote caring attitudes that include tolerance to others and an appreciation of moral and spiritual values;
 - provide a wide ranging curriculum that meets legal requirements and enables the growth of pupils' personal development;
 - provide opportunities that help children prepare for adult life;
 - welcome parents and value them as partners in the education of their children;
 - develop policies that will make curriculum management and the administration of the school easier;
 - ensure that statutory requirements are met and that children benefit from them.
1. The school has worked hard to overcome the weaknesses identified in the last inspection and this has been effective in making it much better than it was. Standards have been improved, particularly in mathematics, the teaching has improved greatly, teachers are more involved in the management of the school and very clear direction is provided.

6. **Key indicators**

Attainment at Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	20	8	28

6. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	18	21	18
	Girls	8	8	6
	Total	26	29	24
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	90	100	83
	National	80	81	84

6. Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	21	20	21
	Girls	8	7	8
	Total	29	27	29
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	100	93	100
	National	81	85	86

Attainment at Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	13	22	35

6. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	8	4	6
	Girls	20	11	17
	Total	28	15	23
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	82	44	68
	National	65	59	69

6. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	8	8	9
	Girls	14	16	18
	Total	22	24	27
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	65	71	79
	National	65	65	72

6. Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:

		%
Authorised Absence	School	4.8
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.02
	National comparative data	0.5

6. Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

6. Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	32
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

6. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

6. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

6. Attainment and progress

1. The school is working hard to achieve high standards and this begins when children start school at the age of four years. Children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is wide ranging but generally what might be expected for their age. When reception pupils enter school they are assessed by teachers so that appropriate activities can be provided that are at a suitable stage for their learning. However, the children under five had only just begun attending school full-time during the inspection and assessments had not been completed. Children were just beginning to settle in and there was little evidence in all the areas of learning to make a judgement about their particular attainment. However, there was sufficient evidence from the work of children in the previous reception year (currently Year 1 pupils) to judge that, by the time they are five, children's attainment in the linguistic and mathematical areas of learning was broadly satisfactory. In lessons, there was clear evidence that several of the younger Year 1 children, who are still in the reception classes, lack established routines and concentration is limited. Although they are five they are still working towards achieving the goals they need to acquire before commencing National Curriculum work. Their behavioural problems can be a distraction to the new reception children who are acquiring literacy and numeracy skills.
2. The National Curriculum tests for 1998 show that at Key Stage 1, children's attainment was above average for reading and mathematics and well above average for writing. At Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment was above average for English, average for science and below average for mathematics. Too few pupils reached the higher levels of attainment in both English and science compared with the national average and none at all in mathematics. The 1999 National Curriculum tests show an improvement in results at Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics, and results show an increased percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels in all three subjects. However, there are no national figures at present with which to make a comparison. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
3. The National Curriculum test results for Metheringham have been compared with similar schools which is based on those with eight per cent or fewer pupils entitled to free school meals. This leaves the Metheringham test results comparing less favourably with similar schools. As Lincolnshire Education Authority provides no school meals and the only provision for those eligible for free meals is for sandwiches, which most parents reject, there is no way the school can be certain as to the percentage of children who are really eligible.
4. Evidence from the inspection shows that standards in speaking and listening are mainly good. By the age of seven children listen carefully, speak clearly and coherently and enjoy taking part in discussions. By eleven years, pupils are very confident, develop ideas and take account of other views. They engage in discussion about a range of authors, giving reasons for their preferences. There are good readers in all classes. At the age of seven, children are confident readers, successfully applying the skills they have learned to read unknown words. By eleven, pupils are often very fluent and use expression very effectively to hold the attention of the listener. Many pupils are avid readers and use their reading skills of skimming and scanning particularly well as they research information. Standards in writing are good. Younger children write stories and factual accounts using interesting and appropriate vocabulary. Their writing is well organised, clear and often imaginative. Older pupils have well established writing skills and express themselves with increasing sophistication. They write in a variety of styles for a range of audiences and purposes. Handwriting is well presented in a neat, cursive style.

5. In mathematics, by the age of seven almost all children are attaining the average Level 2. Approximately 30 per cent are attaining a higher level. This is in line with the 1998 National Curriculum test results, when standards were judged as well above the national average. Children are confident in counting, reading, writing and ordering whole numbers to at least 100 and many pupils use numbers to 1,000. At the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils attain Level 4, which is what they are expected to achieve for their age. There are approximately 15 per cent doing better and attaining a higher level. This is a significant improvement on the National Curriculum test results of 1998, when attainment was below the national average, with only 44 per cent attaining an acceptable level and no child reaching the higher level. Now there are many pupils who use strategies such as partitioning, rounding up and down, doubling and halving to solve number problems quickly and accurately.
6. In science, by the age of seven almost all children are attaining an acceptable level. Although only one lesson was seen at Key Stage 1, the evidence is clearly supported by teachers' assessments, the scrutiny of written work and discussions with children. They show how an electrical circuit works, name the different parts of a plant and understand the conditions needed for growth. They extend their knowledge and understanding through simple experiments – for example, they explain what makes a fabric waterproof. The attainment of pupils at Key Stage 2 has improved, resulting in more children gaining higher levels in 1999 than in 1998. This was confirmed in lessons. They use prior knowledge when investigating the properties of liquids and set up fair tests to extend their understanding of how and why liquids evaporate. They predict outcomes and give reasons for their predictions. A significant minority have the skill to extend their investigations adding additional variables to a given task.
7. At both key stages pupils' attainment in information technology is in line with what is expected for their age. By the age of seven, children are familiar with the computer keyboard and mouse. They use these to control programs or to enter information. By the time they leave school, pupils are well able to use tables, graphs and text to communicate data and information.
8. Attainment in religious education is in line with the criteria identified in the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus for each year group. The school is working closely to the syllabus and children attain appropriately for their age at Key Stage 1 and do better at Key Stage 2, particularly in Years 5 and 6. They know that the religious traditions of Great Britain are mainly Christian and are extending their understanding of other world faiths. By the time they leave school they have acquired a range of knowledge about other religions, their practices, beliefs, customs and festivals.
9. Children's progress overall is good. They systematically build on skills term by term. The progress for children under five is mainly satisfactory. Although the overall progress for Key Stage 1 is generally satisfactory in over a third of lessons it was good. At Key Stage 2, progress is mainly good, and in almost 20 per cent of lessons it was very good.
10. Progress in English is at least satisfactory and for the vast majority of children it is good. Younger children are making good progress in acquiring reading skills. The older pupils have improved their drafting skills in writing. This is an improvement since the last inspection and pupils have a clear understanding about the ways in which they can check their writing and make it more interesting as well as accurate.
11. Progress in mathematics is good throughout the school. Younger children progress quickly from counting and matching skills to understanding the place value of numbers. Children use correct mathematical vocabulary. For example, they explain what each digit in three-figure numbers represents. By the time they leave school this understanding has been extended to place value of decimal notation for tenths and hundredths. Pupils use this knowledge well when multiplying or dividing decimal numbers mentally by ten and 100.

12. Progress in science is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. A significant minority is making very good progress. Younger pupils are learning about the uses of materials and developing their observational skills through first-hand experience. Older children have well-developed investigational skills and are now confident in the use of precise, scientific language. Already some pupils are introducing additional factors to an experiment. For example, they added surface area comparison to an experiment on evaporation and were able to extend the experiment and findings.
13. Progress in information technology is satisfactory at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, children are learning to develop better control of the mouse pointer and are acquiring the skills of word-processing. Accelerated progress is being made by pupils at Key Stage 2 as they become more familiar with the new personal computer systems and the sophisticated word-processing programs.
14. Pupils' progress in religious education is at least satisfactory and is good in over half the lessons. At Key Stage 1, although progress is mainly satisfactory, some pupils make better progress when interest levels are raised and they have first-hand experiences - for example, when Year 1 children visited a local church and watched the celebration of infant baptism. The use of techniques used in literacy sessions is often instrumental in children's better progress, as in a Year 2 class. Overall progress at Key Stage 2 is good and is better when pupils have opportunities to use prior learning in their lessons, such as using their mathematical skills in handling a protractor and compasses when making a calendar and plotting religious festivals on it or when using design and technology skills to make a sukkah.
15. The high quality of children's artwork is a strength of the school. At both key stages children make very good progress in developing skills and techniques, using a wide range of media. There is particularly outstanding work in observational drawing. Pupils also make very good progress in their knowledge of the different styles of artists, producing their own work in similar styles.
16. In design and technology, pupils' progress is satisfactory at both key stages. They are developing skills and techniques by using a variety of materials. The work in this subject is used well to support that of other subjects.
17. In geography, all pupils make at least satisfactory progress. Progress is good in some aspects of the subject. For example, mapping skills are successfully developed. Children are encouraged to draw plans and maps at an early age and gradually they build on these skills so that, by the time they leave school, pupils are able to interpret scale, direction, symbols and keys when reading maps. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have made good progress in contrasting the geography of Metheringham with other places such as Llandudno and Chembokilli in India. Through this study, pupils have developed a good understanding of how the physical features of climate, landscape and location affect human activities. Their understanding of the use of land is particularly well developed.
18. Pupils make good progress in history. Pupils are particularly skilled at finding and using clues from a wide range of sources and interpreting them in historical contexts. Younger children are developing their understanding of what is meant by the present time and the near and distant past. Through visits to interesting places such as Belton House and by studying historical artefacts they are extending their understanding about the way of life in Britain beyond living memory. Older pupils have developed a good understanding of chronology and can place events, people and changes in the period they have studied. Year 6 pupils make good use of their chronological knowledge in other subjects – for example, when discussing Charles Dickens or William Shakespeare in English lessons.
19. Satisfactory progress is made in music. Younger children are learning to use percussion instruments correctly. They strike them with care and some have acquired the skill of maintaining the beat. At Key

Stage 2, pupils clap out different rhythms and have learnt to include dynamics to improve their performances. The older children have developed a good musical ear and sing in two or three parts.

20. In physical education, pupils at both key stages, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Progress is particularly sound in gymnastics in the performance of the basic actions of travelling using hands and feet and in rolling and balancing. Progress in swimming is good. Almost all pupils swim unaided, competently and safely by the time they leave school.
21. The progress of children with special educational needs is mainly satisfactory. In lessons the children are well supported by additional adults who are very patient and keep them interested in their work. Although they have individual education plans, these are often too broad for judging how much progress is being made. They make better progress in some classes where teachers have a good understanding of their difficulties and provide tasks that are measurable and well matched to their stage of learning. Insufficient detail in the special educational needs register makes it additionally difficult to track progress since there is no indication of whether pupils move from stage to stage or come off the register. Without the details of the outcomes of reviews it is impossible to have full records of progress.

27. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

22. The personal development area of learning for children under five is satisfactory. They are settling well into the school routines and often their personal and social development is good for such an early stage in the term. They behave appropriately and confidently as they follow instructions and are not easily distracted despite the poor behaviour of a few Year 1 children working alongside them. The teachers' good relationships help them to relate well to one another as they take part in activities. They are coping well with their personal needs such as dressing themselves after physical activity and confidently take part in whole school activities such as assembly and worship.
23. At Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils show positive attitudes to learning and are enthusiastic about their work. However, attitudes to learning for several Year 1 pupils are unsatisfactory. By the time they reach Key Stage 2, most children are able to concentrate and listen very well. They speak out in class with confidence and are prepared to have their work evaluated by others. They get on with their work and persevere to complete the tasks they are given. The school operates a merit scheme for achievement and pupils show enjoyment when they are awarded points for themselves and their house.
24. Behaviour is good and there have been no exclusions of any kind during the last school year. Pupils co-operate and work well together in pairs and small groups. On some occasions they work away from the main classroom on the computers and they do so with minimum supervision. When discussing their work in class they listen to each other's point of view and are courteous to their peers and adults alike.
25. Relationships are very good at all levels and, as a result, the school is a friendly, comfortable and productive place to learn. Pupils show their pleasure at their own success, but also that of the friends and classmates. They show concern for others and some of the pupils are involved in the "Write Away" project where they write to disabled children in other schools.
26. Pupils enjoy working out their own solutions and are developing skills as independent learners. They undertake many duties in the classroom and around the school with willingness and this helps the school run smoothly. By the time they leave the school, they are suitably prepared for the next stage of their education.

32. **Attendance**

27. Attendance presents no problems at this school. Levels of attendance continue to be good and well above the national average. There is very little unauthorised absence, pupils are punctual and lessons start on time.

33.

EDUCATION PROVIDED

QUALITY OF

33. **Teaching**

28. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. There is 32 per cent of teaching that is very good and at times excellent, and this high quality of teaching is mainly in Years 4, 5 and 6: there was no unsatisfactory teaching during the period of the current inspection. These figures are a marked improvement over the previous inspection, when teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall in 83 per cent of lessons, and unsatisfactory in seven per cent of cases.
29. At the time of this inspection, the teaching of children under five was provided by a teacher new to the profession and by a supply teacher covering for a sick member of the permanent staff. The inspection took place early in the term, and a gradual introduction to school for the young children was still underway. Teachers concentrated on helping the children settle into school life, but also responded to the national initiatives in literacy and numeracy. The teaching of children under five is satisfactory overall and sometimes it is good. Planned activities and effective use of resources hold the imagination of the children. However, although the planning is based on children working towards what they need to know, understand and do in preparation for the National Curriculum, there is insufficient time for purposeful play which they need at this early stage. Teachers are well aware of this but have little trained additional adult support to help them remedy the situation.
30. In Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers generally have very good knowledge in the subjects they teach, and use it to provide activities that are sufficiently difficult and which provide interest for the pupils. In literacy lessons, the work matches the abilities of the pupils and meets the requirements of the national literacy strategy. Preparation of the lessons and comments made during the direct teaching sessions exemplifies this secure knowledge. Numeracy lessons are thoroughly planned, and at Key Stage 2 the lessons often capture pupils' imagination. In these lessons, teachers insist that pupils use the correct mathematical vocabulary. The co-ordinator for information technology provides weekly 'workshops' for teachers, and this helps them have sufficient knowledge and confidence to teach the skills needed by the pupils to use the new personal computers.
31. In the majority of lessons, suitable learning objectives are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons, and in the best lessons these are used as the basis for a review of progress made in the lesson. In the very best lessons, pupils are asked what improvements they could have made in their work to progress further in their learning. Targets in the individual education plans are often less precise for pupils with special educational needs, and so progress is not so readily measured.
32. Good links are made in lessons to previous learning and to work in other subjects. For example, artwork of a high quality is used to record what pupils have seen on educational visits such as sketches of the pulpit in the village church. Pupils' writing skills are used very effectively in many subjects such as religious education, science, geography and history. Mathematics and information technology skills are used to present data in tables and graphs.

33. Teachers hold high expectations about the standard of work produced by the pupils. In the reception and lower Key Stage 1 classes, children take part in ring songs and games, and are expected to take turns with instruments, so learning to share. Sharing in physical education activities is also expected of the young children, and in Key Stage 1, pupils are asked “How can we improve what we have just done?” There is a good pace to the majority of lessons, although putting out and clearing away equipment was a little too slow in one lesson. In physical education lessons at Key Stage 2, there is very effective use of equipment, and demonstrations by pupils are used to improve the performance of others. Teachers are explicit in their expectations of the standards of performance of the pupils.
34. In mathematics at Key Stage 1, the degree of difficulty of the work, the amount of work to be completed, and the standards in behaviour show the high expectations of the teachers. At Key Stage 2, the better mathematics lessons are characterised by brisk oral mental work, and direct teaching of topics where the fast pace is maintained. The high expectations result in good progress being made by the pupils. Teachers expect all pupils to be involved in the question and answer sessions where the questions are sufficiently difficult to make pupils think deeply about their work.
35. Lesson planning is very good, and is characterised by clear, precise learning targets. The development of the lesson through the various stages is clear, with notes being included on the activities to be undertaken by the groups of pupils of different abilities. In the better lessons, activities are provided that carefully match the abilities of three ability groups, although in some lessons insufficient attention is paid to the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs because the targets in their individual education plans are too broad. Planning often includes detail of how pupils are to be asked to review the learning objectives to see if they have been achieved during the lesson. In the best planning, references are made to how assessments of learning are to be carried out, and which pupils work is to be assessed. In most lesson planning, reference is made to homework, and how it is to be used to extend the value of the lessons to the pupils.
36. Teachers use a very suitable range of methods to match the stages of development of the pupils and the learning objectives. In literacy and numeracy lessons, planning and the methods employed show a good understanding of the requirements of the national initiatives. Teachers use large print or individual copies of texts so that all pupils have full access. There is a good balance between work sheets produced by teachers and pupils’ own writing. In numeracy lessons, the brisk pace that is maintained in mental arithmetic sessions helps pupils make good progress.
37. In information technology lessons, good use is made of demonstration to introduce the correct ways of using the new personal computers. Very effective use is made of more experienced pupils to support the learning of less confident pupils by arranging for pairs of children to work together at the keyboard. In these lessons, teachers use questions of different levels of difficulty to help pupils make further progress. Teachers build upon what is already known in music lessons so that improvements are achieved in the performance of pupils. Many music lessons include work from all the elements of music, thus ensuring that pupils’ musical ability is “rounded”. Very effective questioning in religious education lessons emphasises earlier learning in literacy lessons.
38. Teaching is made more efficient by grouping together pupils of similar ability, and providing work that is difficult enough to help the pupils make progress. However, the school’s provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. Although some teachers are very conversant with the needs of those on the special educational needs register and plan work relating closely to the targets identified in their individual education plans, it is not the same throughout the school. Some teachers are unsure whether pupils are on the register and some individual education plans have targets that are too broad and imprecise to help teachers make appropriate plan. Some teachers are unfamiliar with the Code of Practice and staged systems of assessment that it recommends, as is the co-ordinator. There is an

urgent need for training.

39. All staff have very good relationships with the pupils, and the adults know the children very well. This knowledge is used by the teachers to manage the pupils effectively. Teachers show a pleasing sense of humour in many lessons, and this helps to further motivate the pupils to try hard and to make progress. Some pupils in lower Key Stage 2 are immature and are able to concentrate for only short periods. The teacher has to work hard to motivate them and to keep their interest on the work. A small number of pupils need to be reminded about suitable and unsuitable behaviour; the teachers are quick to correct this behaviour so that learning is not disrupted and progress is maintained.
40. No time is lost during the school day. Lessons begin promptly, and a generally good pace is maintained in most, although it is better at upper Key Stage 2. In the vast majority of lessons the teacher's introductions are clear, and pupils understand what is to be done. Feedback is supportive, so further motivating the pupils. Resources for teaching and learning, including those made by the teachers, are used very effectively. For example in art lessons, high quality prints of the work of different artists are used to promote good quality responses from the pupils. An information technology suite is being developed to enable more effective teaching of the skills and techniques required to use computers successfully. Resources for the literacy and numeracy initiatives are effectively used to implement the requirements of the strategies and to help the pupils make progress.
41. Good use is made of information from on-going assessments to modify lessons, or to help prepare new work that closely matches the abilities of the pupils. In many lessons there is a reference to the homework pupils are expected to have completed, or the homework that is to be tackled before the next lesson in a particular subject.

47. **The curriculum and assessment**

42. The curriculum is broad and balanced and fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus for religious education. There is equal access to the curriculum for all pupils regardless of gender, ability or race. Provision for personal development, which includes sex education and awareness of the misuse of drugs, is very good. Pupils are well prepared for each phase of education within the school and the secondary stage beyond it.
43. The curriculum policy and planning for the children under five are broadly based on the desirable areas of learning. Although these children have only just begun full time education, considerable time is being used for literacy and numeracy sessions, leaving little opportunity for them to be engaged in purposeful play as recommended by the Department for Education and Employment. Although it is important for reception children to have literacy and numeracy sessions included as part of their curriculum and for them to acquire these essential skills, the lack of time for purposeful play is detrimental if children are to acquire the skills they need to begin National Curriculum work in all subjects by the time they are five.
44. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. In some classes the individual education plans to support access to the curriculum have objectives which are too broad and imprecise. The progress made by these pupils towards their targets is not regularly reviewed in all classes and there is too little guidance to ensure that review is undertaken consistently throughout the school.
45. The daily literacy hour has been successfully implemented at both key stages and is providing continuity and progression across the age range. The literacy hour planning includes work in subjects across the curriculum; for example, in history, pupils study life in Victorian times using descriptions in the books by Charles Dickens and through work based upon the school's old log books. The numeracy hour is now in place and the use of its key learning objectives has provided teachers with clearer targets in their

planning. Measuring the weight of gasses in science, drawing angles accurately to represent different faiths on a circular diagram in religious education and place value activities in physical education indicate that numeracy is being well promoted across the curriculum.

46. The curriculum in all other subjects is good. It ensures that all the National Curriculum Programmes of Study are covered. The termly planning is based upon key learning objectives which make sure that teaching is closely linked to what pupils know and can do. The sharing of these objectives with pupils at the beginning of lessons is a regular feature and provides a focus for their learning.
47. In line with the last inspection report the school continues to make very good use of educational visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum. Recently these have included visits to Llandudno, Eyam, Belton House near Grantham, and Gainsborough Old Hall. The range of extra-curricular activities has been considerably improved since the last inspection. There are currently eight clubs during the year, organised by four teachers and involving more than two hundred pupils. Five of these clubs involve pupils in sporting activities.
48. The school has responded very effectively to the key issue in the last report which stated that the school needed to develop a systematic assessment procedure to inform curricular planning and help teachers consistently plan appropriately challenging work for the pupils. The overall quality of assessment is now good and all statutory requirements are met.
49. The school makes good use of statutory and optional National Curriculum tests, reading and spelling tests. By using the analysis of these results teachers identify strengths and weaknesses which are then used to inform their planning. Performance indicators are used as a baseline assessment at the end of the reception year and the progress of pupils is monitored by applying these tests again at the end of Year 2 and Year 4.
50. Other assessment, linked to the learning objectives identified in the planning, is accurate and consistent. The weekly evaluation of lessons is used very effectively to plan future lessons and to identify the progress of pupils. Its use in a number of classes in planning levels of work, particularly for the faster learners, is a very good feature. Pupils are involved in self-assessment by being made aware of learning objectives at the beginning of lessons. Older pupils are regularly involved in ascertaining if these have been achieved.

56. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

51. The school has maintained the high standard of provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development recognised in the last report. It continues to be very good. All elements are effectively promoted through the curriculum, collective worship and the very good relationships between pupils and the adults. It is enriched by links with parents, involvement in the local community, visits and visitors to the school. The school provides a safe and happy place in which all pupils are valued as individuals and where caring and kindness are very important aspects of school life.
52. The school's project of sending boxes of food to less fortunate children in Romania was used in assembly as a part of the harvest theme. It placed great emphasis on the quality of giving and, through prayer and reflection, enabled pupils to focus on aspects of their own lives through the awareness of the difficulties others face. The school supports many other charities, including Children in Need, Meals on Wheels and the local church and chapel, which helps pupils to think about the life of others in a way which develops spiritual awareness. Particularly effective in this respect is the 'Write Away' club,

through which pupils become pen pals of handicapped children. Spiritual awareness is promoted through the curriculum - for example, in the writing about feelings when listening to music such as Rachmaninov's piano concerto and the awe and wonder at the remarkable changes when studying landscapes of Lincoln Cathedral painted from the same position in 1858 and 1998. In religious education, through studies of festivals and ceremonies associated with Christianity and other religions, pupils learn about the different values and beliefs people have and how these events have special meaning and influence the spirituality of life.

53. Moral and social development is rigorously promoted both in and out of the classroom. The school's policy for personal and social development provides frequent opportunities for pupils to share experiences with each other and develop mutual respect. The importance of sensible rules and acceptable behaviour, as a contribution towards the well being of the whole school community, are emphasised in the school rules. Pupils clearly distinguish right from wrong and accept that rules are as important a part of life as in playing games fairly. The meaning and consequences of right and wrong were successfully developed during the lesson about the Jewish Day of Atonement. Opportunities for the development of social skills are provided through the many opportunities pupils are given to work together and share their ideas and interests. The school places great importance upon respect for one another. The weekly celebration assembly shows that while pupils are pleased with their own success they are quick to show appreciation of the efforts of others.
54. An understanding of pupils' own culture is fostered through links with the local community - for example, the Christingle service at the church, the carol concert at the chapel and participation in the annual Metheringham festival. Many visits are organised to places of cultural interest like the museum of Lincolnshire Life, Belton House, the village of Eyam and Gainsborough Old Hall. Pupils study events in history which have influenced our culture, including the invasions by Romans, Normans and Vikings. Cultural awareness is broadened by their introduction to the work of famous people such as the authors Dickens and Dahl, artists Lowry and Rousseau and composers Beethoven and Mozart. An appreciation of other cultures and the multicultural nature of our own society is provided in religious education through learning about faiths such as Judaism and Islam and in other subjects such as geography when comparing the differences in children's life in Metheringham and India, and in art work through the painting of aboriginal shields.

60. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

55. The school has a pastoral care policy which teachers use to ensure that pupils' guidance and welfare are caring and thorough. There are full records of academic progress, updated by teachers as pupils complete individual lessons, or units of work and key checkpoints. Class teachers additionally maintain their own notes of social development and any concerns. The family and personal circumstances of all pupils are well documented and this helps staff give good support. Parents are involved promptly whenever pupils have problems and the school has good working relationships with other professionals to offer specialist help. However, the monitoring of the progress of pupils with special educational needs is not thorough enough to show that all necessary support has been given and best progress made.
56. There is an effective discipline policy and staff work hard to discourage all forms of unacceptable behaviour. Parents present at the pre-inspection meeting, as well as those returning questionnaires, confirmed their belief that behaviour was good. Pupils particularly enjoy the rewards as individuals and for their house. The midday supervisors play their part fully in the consistent application of the policy. All staff promote a caring attitude among pupils and as a result relationships are very good at all levels. The school's procedures for monitoring attendance and following up absences are thorough.

57. The child protection procedures are well established and are based on agreed local guidelines. Members of staff are fully aware of what steps are to be taken should they have concerns about any pupil. The school has a suitable curriculum of personal and social education which gives pupils the opportunity to explore their feelings and emotions and understand the family and community in which they live. This includes an appropriate syllabus to explore their feelings and emotions as they develop physically.
58. Procedures are in place to ensure that all the related matters of health and safety, medicines and first aid, midday lunch supervision, fire drills and precautions are dealt with to high standards. All staff are aware of the openness of the school site and are extremely vigilant.

64. **Partnership with parents and the community**

59. The school encourages parents to become involved fully in their children's education and this has been expressed in the recently introduced home-school agreement. Many parents speak positively about the school and say they feel welcome to visit at any time. A small number make a regular contribution by working as classroom helpers, undertaking a variety of tasks and making a valued contribution to what pupils achieve. All parents are encouraged to read and work with their children at home and there is good support for the homework policy. The Friends of School is a very effective organisation, providing both social and fund-raising events. All are well attended and, as a result, there is a valued contribution to the school's resources that directly benefit the pupils. Parents have a positive impact on school life and the standards which their children achieve.
60. The school provides a good range of information to parents. Much useful information is provided to the parents of new starters; the annual report of the Governing Body is comprehensive; the regular newsletters inform parents about activities and future events. In response to parents' requests the school now issues a guide to the subjects and themes which will be studied by each class in the forthcoming term. There are parent consultations three times each year and parents confirm their satisfaction with the arrangements. The pupils' annual reports are generally constructive, but for some classes strengths could be more precisely expressed and there needs to be more emphasis placed on where improvements can be made. A more consistent approach to reflect the good practice that exists would be beneficial. There is insufficient involvement of some parents of children with special educational needs. They lack information on the progress they are making towards the targets in children's individual education plans and when they are reviewed.
61. There are good links with the local community and the importance of this is reflected in the school development plan. The playing fields are shared with local sports teams and the buildings are used for adult education classes. Local clergy lead school assemblies and the pupils go out to the churches in the village. There are close links with the playgroup and with teachers from secondary schools, to prepare for the next stage of education. There are many visitors to the school, including the emergency services and student teachers. The residents of the village attend many of the school events and the staff and pupils are involved in village activities. Staff try hard to ensure that teaching and learning go on in many venues outside the formality of the classroom.

67. **AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

THE MANAGEMENT

67. **Leadership and management**

62. The school has good leadership and management. The headteacher has been in post two years, having previously served as deputy head. He has a clear understanding of the developmental needs of the school. In the short time he has been headteacher, many improvements have been made. Standards in mathematics have risen and the assessment of pupils' work is no longer unsatisfactory. The headteacher and deputy head form a generally effective management partnership, although there is no time in the school day for joint management meetings. The deputy head has an onerous list of responsibilities, and too little time away from her class. With the support of the senior management team the headteacher provides a clear educational direction for the work of the school.
63. Under the chairmanship of a long-serving governor who works closely with the headteacher, the governing body is very supportive of the school. Governors are working hard to improve the contribution they make to the life of the school. To this end, the period of time between meetings has been halved so that the governors are more up to date with school matters.
64. To ensure the successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, careful monitoring has followed training. The headteacher has led observations of teaching and learning, and the subject co-ordinator has been provided with time to complement this monitoring. Teachers feel comfortable with this process, as professional discussions follow the observations in order that their practice may improve. The teachers involved in monitoring the lessons gain an insight into the teaching throughout the school, and this helps to inform future development planning. A similar process is planned following the recent introduction of the National Numeracy Project, and it is expected that monitoring will occur immediately following this inspection.
65. In light of the success of the monitoring of literacy lessons, it is opportune that all subject co-ordinators become more involved in monitoring their subjects throughout the school. This was an issue from the previous inspection, and proper procedures are not yet in place for monitoring to occur on a sufficiently frequent basis. However, because of the very thorough subject documentation written by the co-ordinator for art, and through the excellent displays of work around the school, learning in art is already monitored on a regular basis and it now remains to include the monitoring of teaching.
66. Members of the governing body regularly visit the school to monitor different aspects of schoolwork, and written reports are provided for the meetings of the full governing body. These reports and the reports of the headteacher provide the governors with information upon which future decisions may be made. The governor with specific responsibility for literacy was involved in helping to monitor the introduction of the literacy hour, and it is planned that the governor with responsibility for numeracy should contribute in a similar way. Other governors have responsibility for information technology and special educational needs. At present there are no governors with specific responsibility for overseeing other subjects or aspects of the work of the school.
67. To raise standards in information technology, the school is upgrading the computer systems and creating a computer suite so that teaching might be more effective. With the introduction of personal computer systems, lessons are being given in correct procedures for loading and closing down the computers. Training for the teachers is being provided by the co-ordinator for information technology, who has a clear vision of what needs to be done to improve provision. This vision should be used to create a subject development plan that might be used as a model by other co-ordinators as they gain a clearer picture of the school's work in their subjects.
68. The present arrangements for the management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs are unsatisfactory. The part-time special educational needs co-ordinator has received no specific training in the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with Special Educational Needs (1994), and the administrative procedures are unsatisfactory. For example, the register of pupils with special educational needs is a hand-written notebook with insufficient detail about which stage each child is

working, there is little recorded evidence of reviews carried out, and the targets on individual education plans are often too broad. There is little recorded evidence of the success achieved by each child in taking the small steps needed to achieve their targets. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has too little time to fulfil her management and administrative duties.

69. The school has a clear set of values about being a caring community that reaches out to others. Harvest boxes have been sent abroad in previous years to help communities in difficulty. A group of pupils communicates with children with severe personal disabilities in other parts of the country. The school building is used as a valued resource by many organisations of the local community. Written policies to guide aspects of the school are compiled as the result of wide consultations before being considered and approved by the governing body. These policies are reflected in the work of the school, and ensure equality of access for all.
70. A long-term vision for the school is created by the school development plan, formulated by the senior management team following staff meetings and consultations with the governing body. The plan helps the school respond to national and local initiatives, and to better manage its budget. For example, a rolling programme of internal redecoration is in place. The plan is a working document and the senior management team monitors and evaluates the progress made towards the specific targets, and reports this to the governing body.
71. The school is a friendly place in which children feel secure and are encouraged to work hard and to achieve well. The classrooms are made very effective places in which the children may learn by the hard work of the adults. Displays of past work are of a very high standard, and these show that children's work is valued. Relationships between children and adults are very good, and these relationships form the basis of the life of the school. Staff work hard for the pupils, and in response the pupils are well motivated to make progress.
72. In almost every area of management the school meets statutory requirements. However, the Governors Annual Report to Parents lacks sufficient detail on special educational needs. The report refers to this aspect but lacks detail of the progress made by the use of the governors' special educational needs policy and how the school uses the finance provided by the local education authority for statemented pupils. Governors are aware of this omission and are taking steps to remedy it.

78. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

73. There is a satisfactory level of teaching staff who are suitably qualified to teach the curriculum for children under five, the National Curriculum and religious education. Overall, the number and experience of support staff are satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are supported and there are additional staff for statemented pupils. The administrator is very skilled and gives excellent support to staff, releasing time for them to focus on teaching rather than administration. Although the number of support staff is satisfactory on the whole, there is a weakness in that for only five hours per week there is a trained person to give support to children under five. The reception classes would benefit from the support of suitably qualified adults to work with the youngest pupils. Teacher appraisal is in place and used in staff development. There is good support for newly qualified teachers, who are mentored by experienced colleagues within the school. The developing role of the co-ordinator is being extended to include monitoring of teaching and learning. However, the present special educational needs co-ordinator has received no training for this demanding role which is clearly defined in the Code of Practice. This is unsatisfactory.
74. The school building is well maintained and cleaned to a high standard. The school environment is

greatly enhanced by the very good use of displays that celebrate pupils' achievements and provide a stimulating and interesting place to work. All classrooms are of a suitable size for the number and age of the pupils. The school makes very good use of all available space and has developed a well-used attractive library area. There are extensive play areas and plans are in hand to create a safe play area for children under five. Facilities include a swimming pool and playing fields that are shared with the local community as well as a room that is used by groups from the community.

75. Overall, the learning resources are good and in some areas they are excellent. Art has particularly good resources which give excellent support to pupils' learning. There is a programme of hardware replacement in information technology. The number of personal computers has risen over the past 12 months. There are plans and finance in place to develop a computer suite. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has enabled the school to extend its range of both fiction and non-fiction books. These are well supplemented by the loan scheme of the county library. The school makes very good use of resources beyond the school. These include the Museum of Lincolnshire Life, library project packs, visitors to the school and visits to places of interest. Good use is also made of visitors to the school including parents with archaeological skills working closely with pupils.

81. **The efficiency of the school**

76. The school's financial planning is good. Educational developments are supported through careful financial planning. Discussions with both staff and governors have resulted in a detailed school development plan. Each section has clearly defined objectives for the coming year, that relate to the budget, and it is planned to monitor and formally review it during the autumn term to enable governors and staff to keep the children's needs to the fore. The development plan sets out where the school is now and the direction in which it needs to go. Governors have been keen to see that there is always a contingency amount for whatever needs may be identified during the year. Governors are becoming more aware of the need to focus on improving educational outcomes if the process of development planning is to be really effective. The appointment of a new headteacher and deputy have been instrumental in providing clear direction for the work of the school and already resulted in many improvements. However, the deputy has an extensive range of responsibilities together with a full-time commitment to a class of younger children, which restricts the time available for her management tasks. This needs attention if she is to maintain the high level of work currently being produced.
77. The use of teaching and support staff is mainly good but some aspects need improvement. At the time of inspection a newly qualified teacher had very recently joined the staff and two classes were being taught by supply teachers owing to the illness of permanent staff. This was satisfactory, with all staff being appropriately qualified and generally well experienced with the age group for which they were responsible. However, in the reception classes teachers worked with particular difficulties. The age group of the youngest children, who were working a full day for the first time during the inspection, the inappropriate behaviour of some of the older Year 1 children, and the limited experience of the teachers combined to make this teaching task particularly difficult without appropriate, trained, additional support. Although limited support was available and some parents provided skilled help at times, there was clear evidence that teachers were restricted in their organisation and range of curriculum on offer. Spending on support staff is very low.
78. The deployment of additional teaching and support staff for children with special educational needs is problematic. Although the school has a special educational needs co-ordinator, the time allocated for these responsibilities is only six hours per week. For the rest of the week this teacher is working as a support assistant. The co-ordinator is untrained in the requirements of the Code of Practice and several staff have only limited knowledge of its requirements. This is unsatisfactory. The funds provided for children who have statements of special educational need are used appropriately, mainly to provide additional adults to support children in classes and occasionally by withdrawing them for specific work.

The staff working with them are well deployed and their patience and skills are used effectively in helping them make satisfactory progress.

79. The use of learning resources and accommodation is very good. Learning resources are of good quality and although costs are not high there are more than sufficient for the teaching of all subjects. In addition, some teachers make their own resources, which are of very good quality. Nothing is wasted and teachers use them very effectively. Staff and children use every part of the accommodation. The attractive library provides a good range of books and children work there in groups or independently. Corridors have attractive displays of children's work and there is good use of artefacts and interesting objects to arouse interest. Teachers take considerable time to make the school an attractive place for children to learn.
80. The efficiency of financial control and school administration is very good. The most recent audit gave no causes for concern and governors confirm that any recommendations are acted on immediately. Financial administration presents no problems and uses the minimum of management time. The information is readily available to governors and the headteacher. The key to this good system lies in the very efficient administration, which is unobtrusive and results in very good day-to-day organisation. The administrator is well able to respond to whatever occurs and she enables teachers to focus on their work with pupils.
81. Since the last inspection, the school has concentrated on improving standards and the quality of education it provides. Significant factors are the improvement in standards at Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics, and the teaching, which is much better than it was, with an increase in that judged to be very good and excellent and none which is unsatisfactory. Costs are mainly average or low. Therefore the school is providing good value for money.

87.
CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

PART B:

87.
LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

AREAS OF

82. The school admits four year olds at the start of the school year. Children are introduced gradually to full-time schooling over a period of four weeks. At the time of the inspection the children under five were just starting school full-time, completing their introduction during the inspection week. These children share a unit consisting of two mixed age classes of reception and Year 1 children. The school has recruited a newly qualified teacher with early years training. One class was taught by a supply teacher during the week of the inspection. Assessments of children's attainment on entry shows that usually the majority of children have a broadly satisfactory awareness of literacy and number. In the early weeks of term the teachers' assessment of what children know, understand and can do are undertaken. Children are assessed again in their final term. The current reception pupils have had insufficient time for judgements to be based on prior learning. However, there is clear evidence from the work scrutinised from the previous year that attainment by the time they are five is satisfactory and that they make satisfactory progress.
83. At the time of the previous inspection no judgement was made about attainment in the areas of learning since this was not a requirement. Since that time a national initiative, emphasising what children need to know, understand and do before they reach compulsory education in the term following their fifth birthday has been put in place.
84. Any judgements relating to progress in the areas of learning refer to these first few weeks in school and the sessions observed. Overall, children's social and personal development is satisfactory for this early stage in the term. Children play co-operatively and share toys. They demonstrate a good level of appropriate behaviour, confidently following class routines. The good relationships that exist between teachers and pupils makes the children feel confident and already they are learning to relate well to one another. Children develop independence as they use the opportunities for selecting activities. They move confidently into groups and involve themselves in purposeful play or the activities extending from literacy and numeracy sessions. All pupils are able to cope with personal hygiene and the majority of children can dress themselves after physical activity. They are making good progress in following class and school routines for registration, group organisation, assembly and physical activities. They are beginning to understand the need for simple rules and are learning to share and take turns.
85. There is a focus on the language and literacy area of learning and the majority of children are likely to achieve the desired learning outcomes for this area of learning by the time they are five. Planning for the development of language and communication skills is focused on the National Literacy Strategy and at the time of inspection all the work was related directly to introducing the commercial reading scheme. The majority of children know how to handle books and are interested in stories. They know that print conveys meaning. They speak confidently and can express their needs and wants. They try to write their names without help and some attempt to copy the teacher's writing. When given the opportunity, some children share books, talk enthusiastically about the pictures, relate the story and give reasons for characters' actions. There is a range of activities for developing language. However, the adult interaction required to utilise these opportunities is limited as there are few support staff for children at this early stage of learning. This results in some missed opportunities for supporting and developing the youngest children's language skills, despite the good planning by teachers. Children listen attentively and respond confidently to questions such as those from the school nurse concerning personal hygiene. Many use language confidently and express simple ideas. They make satisfactory progress at this early stage in the school term

86. In mathematics, children's attainment is satisfactory. The majority are likely to reach the desired outcomes by the time they are five. Planning for mathematics focuses on the National Numeracy Strategy for reception children. Pupils use a variety of objects when counting to ten and a significant number do so accurately. The majority can recognise and name numerals. A significant number of the children recognise numbers to 10 and link them correctly to sets. They compare eye colour, finding which colour is the most dominant in the group. The range of mathematics activities was mainly limited to counting and writing numbers. Overall, pupils' progress in these activities is satisfactory.
87. The area known as knowledge and understanding of the world provides a foundation for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning. Children's attainment at five is likely to be in line with what is expected for their age. Children use their senses to explore and experiment. They confidently predict the contents of a variety of 'smelling pots'. They use the 'feely' bag to explore their sense of touch and explore features of objects and use appropriate vocabulary such as 'hard' 'soft' 'prickly'. They talk about themselves and their families during discussion on personal hygiene with the school nurse. They explore their environment and are aware of special places within the school. Children enjoyed exploring the school environment as they searched for clues to help them find the 'lost' teddy. They can talk about the purpose of the school library, the office and the hall. Children use card and paper to learn the skills of shaping and joining as they produce models of houses. Children are making satisfactory progress.
88. The quality of teaching for children under five is mainly satisfactory and there is some good teaching. Teachers have planned an effective introduction into school for children and there is good teaching of direct skills in numeracy and literacy. Teachers have good relationships with the children and show understanding and respect for children's concerns, responding well to individual children's needs. Teachers make effective use of resources; for example, puppets are used to make children watch carefully and they learn to spot the 'deliberate mistake', explaining why it is so. Children are encouraged to learn by direct experience when a resource such as the 'feely' bag is used which also engages children's interest. Teachers plan carefully basing their plans on their understanding of what children need to know, understand and do. They use their time appropriately when working with small groups and provide effective support for children's learning, particularly in reading and number work. The curriculum planning is based on the desirable learning outcomes for children under five but at this early stage in the term, with children only just beginning full-time education, too much time is spent on the literacy and numeracy sessions, as teachers try to do the same as in other classes. Teachers are rightly concerned about children acquiring the essential English and mathematics skills but, at present, the organisation needs to focus more on learning these skills through purposeful play with adult involvement and interaction. This will enable good progress in literacy and numeracy skills which can then be extended for longer periods as the year progresses.

94.

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

ENGLISH,

94. **English**

89. In English, the results of the National Curriculum tests and assessments for seven-year-olds were above average in reading and well above average in writing. Since the inspection occurred early in the school year and pupils had been in school for only four weeks there was limited evidence of written work. However, work which had been done over the previous year showed children's attainment to be in line with the National Curriculum test results. The findings of the inspection show that the majority of Year 2 children are already working well at the acceptable Level 2 and approximately a third are doing better.

90. At Key Stage 2, the picture is a little different. In the 1998 National Curriculum tests for English the percentage of pupils attaining the acceptable Level 4 or above was 82 per cent – well above the national average of 65 per cent. However, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was below the national average. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests results improved, with 21 per cent reaching the higher level compared with nine per cent the previous year. At present there are no national figures with which to make a comparison. Inspection findings show that pupils at Year 6 have already made a good start to their work and the majority are working hard and doing well in this subject. They are already doing better than might be expected for their age.
91. Evidence from the inspection shows that standards in speaking and listening are mainly good. By the age of seven, children are well able to take part in class discussions when they show an understanding of the main points; their comments and questions show they have listened carefully. They are aware of the need to use some of the features of standard English vocabulary and grammar. Many are articulate and adapt what they say to the needs of the listener. Their speech is clear and coherent and they enjoy explaining their work to others during a plenary session. By the age of eleven, most pupils are able to talk and listen with great confidence. As they take part in literacy sessions, they make contributions and ask questions that are responsive to the ideas of others. They develop ideas and take account of other views. They engage in discussion about the merits of such authors as Charles Kingsley, Charles Dickens and Shakespeare, giving reasons for their preferences and sometimes being able to use the text to support their argument.
92. There are good readers in all classes. By the age of seven, children are confident readers who successfully apply the skills they have learned to help them read unfamiliar words. They read fluently, accurately and with expression. They notice the difference when reading speech and use changes of voice to make their reading more interesting. They respond to such punctuation as exclamation marks and question marks. They are already showing an understanding of ideas, events and characters in their books. They understand the difference between fact and fiction and use the terms appropriately. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils read from a wide range of literature very well. Many are extremely fluent and use expression very effectively to maintain the attention of the listener. These good reading skills help pupils to carry out independent research.
93. Standards in writing are good. At Key Stage 1, children write stories and factual accounts, using interesting and appropriate vocabulary. Children's writing is well organised, clear and often imaginative. The sentences extend their ideas and they choose words that they find more interesting. Punctuation to mark sentences – full stops, capital letters and question marks - are used, usually accurately. They produce, generally, correctly spelt pieces of work which are neatly presented. By Year 6 writing skills are well established. They express themselves with increasing sophistication in their personal writing. They write in a variety of styles for a range of audiences and purposes – for example, writing a short play script, changing the tense and language from Victorian to modern, extending a story with an ending of their own or making a précis. Handwriting is usually in a neat cursive script or word-processed on the computer.
94. Pupils' progress in this subject is generally satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. There are some children who make better progress at both key stages in some aspects of the subject. Currently children are making better progress in reading at Year 2 and progress in writing has improved at Key Stage 2. In the previous inspection report progress in writing was judged to be less good than it might be, as pupils lacked the skills to draft and improve their writing. This is not the case now. Pupils explain the stages they use to improve their writing and the better writers use proof-reading, check spellings and punctuation and their use of paragraphs.
95. Children with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress in lessons, particularly when supported by additional adults who are patient and keep them working. However, although they have

individual education programmes, some of these are too broad and lack the small steps needed to ensure the best possible progress takes place. In a few lessons there was good progress of children with special educational needs when targets were more precise and the adult support deployed well.

96. Overall, pupils' response to the subject is good and in over half the lessons at Key Stage 2 it was very good. Children have good attitudes to their English work. They show interest, listen carefully and persevere with tasks even when the teacher is busy. In most lessons there is sustained work and pupils are familiar with the variety of strategies they can use to help themselves make progress. They show appreciation for the efforts of others, particularly those made by children experiencing difficulties. They are confident when evaluating their work at the end of the lesson and sharing it with others. In one lesson there were exemplary levels of attentiveness, concentration and perseverance and pupils were enthusiastic. They showed a high degree of responsibility when given tasks and demonstrated independent skills when organising their work.
97. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. This good teaching has a very positive effect on pupils' attainment in English. The effectiveness of the school's strategy for literacy is very good. At both key stages time is specifically dedicated to literacy. The time is used very effectively to develop reading skills, grammar, punctuation, comprehension and composition. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subject and their very good planning, methods and organisation are ensuring that pupils have a structured programme of learning that develops skills in a systematic way. There are clear objectives for lessons based on what children can do and what they need to do next. There are good links between reading, writing and spelling, which helps to reinforce knowledge about language and good opportunities for children to use literacy skills in subjects like geography, history, religious education and science. For example, older pupils used persuasive writing in geography with well-written descriptions to try to convince people to come to either the resort or a hotel. Younger pupils wrote factual accounts in their history work about castles and a visit to Belton House. In the best lessons teachers have very high expectations. There is a high proportion of excellent, direct teaching to the class and to groups. Lessons are well structured with well-chosen content that provides interest and motivation. Subject knowledge is used very effectively to widen the scope of the lesson and inspire pupils. Particularly good use is made of homework to consolidate and extend literacy, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
98. The co-ordinator keeps teachers up to date and offers advice and support to colleagues. There is some monitoring of the subject through teachers' planning and pupils' written work. Although teaching has been monitored during the early days of implementing the literacy hour, there is a need for it to continue in order that observations of teaching and learning can be made first hand and the best practice shared with all staff.

104. **Mathematics**

99. The results of the 1998 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show that 83 per cent of pupils attained Level 2 or above which was close to the national average. Of these pupils 31 per cent attained Level 3, which was well above the national average. These results were broadly in line with similar schools. The inspection evidence shows that almost all pupils are attaining in line with the nationally expected Level 2, with approximately a third attaining Level 3. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests in which more than 90 per cent attained Level 2 or above reflect this judgement.
100. The National Curriculum test results in 1998 at the end of Key Stage 2 were well below the national average and also well below average in comparison to similar schools, with 44 per cent attaining the expected Level 4 and no pupils attaining a higher level. The inspection evidence indicates a marked

improvement in attainment since those tests, with the majority of pupils now attaining Level 4 or above. This is confirmed by the results of the 1999 National Curriculum Tests in which approximately 65 per cent attained Level 4 with 15 per cent of these pupils attaining Level 5. While there are no 1999 national averages available at present with which to make comparisons, these results are significantly better.

101. The introduction of the numeracy hour has resulted in a rigorous approach to oral and mental mathematics that has given pupils more confidence when tackling problems. As they move through the school they develop a good understanding of number. In addition to the mental recall of tables and number bonds they learn how to add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers quickly and accurately, using strategies such as rounding up and down, halving, doubling, approximating and partitioning into hundreds, tens and units. From an early age they develop a good understanding of mathematical vocabulary by being asked to describe the methods used in finding answers.
102. Almost all seven-year-old pupils have a sound grasp of the place value of numbers up to a hundred and some up to a thousand. They use this knowledge to add and subtract two- and three-figure numbers accurately. They can estimate and use standard and non-standard units to measure and understand the meaning of simple fractions. They know the names and some of the properties of common two- and three-dimensional shapes, can sort objects into sets using differing criteria and understand right angle as a measure of turn. They gather information and record it in tables and on graphs and use correct mathematical vocabulary when explaining their findings. They use number successfully in other subjects, for example when measuring the height of the growth of beans and in performing movements related to shape or forming groups to represent hundreds, tens and units in physical education.
103. By the time they are eleven pupils have extended their understanding of place value to include negative numbers and decimal fractions. Most use this understanding confidently to multiply and divide by ten and a hundred mentally. They have knowledge of vulgar fractions and can relate them to percentages. They measure accurately using standard measures and degrees, collect data, represent and explain their findings on charts, tables and graphs that are regularly compiled using computers. The faster learners classify shapes by reference to their properties and are confident in applying their understanding of number when solving problems requiring more than one process. Most eleven-year-old pupils have good recall of number tables but there is some weakness in this area. Mathematics is used effectively across the curriculum when using time lines in history and finding the viscosity levels of liquids in science.
104. Progress is good in both key stages for most pupils. From counting and matching number younger pupils progress quickly to understanding the place value of numbers and basic mathematical vocabulary. This enables them to explain their methods and gives them a clearer insight into how the number system works. Older pupils make good progress in extending place value to decimal figures and use this knowledge accurately when multiplying and dividing mentally by ten and a hundred. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in areas such as counting and adding and subtracting two-figure numbers but their improvement is not carefully monitored in all classes.
105. Children with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress in lessons, particularly when supported by additional adults who are patient and keep them interested. However, although they have individual education plans, some of these are too broad and lack the small steps needed to ensure the best possible progress takes place. In a few lessons there was good progress of children with special educational needs when targets were more precise and the adult support deployed well.
106. The majority of pupils show enthusiasm for mathematics. They are keen to participate in oral work and willing to share their mental strategies and explain their methods and solutions to others. Almost all work conscientiously and show very good levels of concentration, although, in some classes, a small minority are not always so diligent. Behaviour, whether pupils are working alone or with others, is

good, they use resources sensibly and most try hard to record their work in a neat and tidy fashion. Older children respond well when they are encouraged to be responsible for organising their own approach to learning objectives.

107. The overall quality of teaching is good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons and approximately 40 per cent of lessons were very good, particularly at Key Stage 2. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and are becoming increasingly confident in using the numeracy initiative and recognising its value in the teaching of mathematics to primary pupils. Lesson plans identify what pupils are expected to learn, objectives are shared with pupils and content is carefully chosen to enable the objectives to be achieved. Good questioning techniques built on previous learning provide many opportunities for pupils to participate orally through explaining their answers and methods. There are high expectations of pupils in most classes in respect of the demand of work, the amount of work, concentration and behaviour. This was seen in a Key Stage 1 lesson when lengths were being compared and pupils settled quickly to their work and concentrated for long periods to achieve the learning objectives. In a Key Stage 2 lesson, similarly high expectations were evident when the whole class was fully involved in learning techniques for remembering the seven times table. Learning is well consolidated at the end of lessons and assessment through lesson evaluation used very effectively to plan future work. Good use is made of homework to consolidate classroom learning and improve mental recall of tables. In a few classes not enough guidance is given to the way pupils set out their work and presentation suffers. The improvement in the identification of learning objectives and in the development of very good assessment procedures has enabled teachers to successfully address the issues raised in the last inspection.

113. **Science**

108. The results of the 1998 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds show that attainment in science, in comparison with all schools, is close to the national average for their age group. In comparison with similar schools attainment for eleven-year-olds is well below average. However, the most recent National Curriculum tests results for 1999 show a significant increase in the number of pupils achieving above Level 4. Inspection evidence supports this improving performance. The teachers' assessments for seven-year-olds show that the percentage of pupils who attain the nationally expected level is high, although the proportion doing better is well below the national level. It was possible to see only one lesson of science in Key Stage 1. However, there is sufficient evidence to show that pupils have a sound understanding of electrical circuits, conditions for growth in plants and the use of materials for different purposes. At the time of the previous inspection pupils' attainment was judged to be satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and above average at Key Stage 2. These standards have been maintained.
109. By the age of seven, pupils draw simple diagrams to show how an electrical circuit works. They can name different parts of a plant and understand the conditions needed for growth. They are beginning to ask questions and make observations through simple experiments. They can describe what happens during an experiment on conditions for growth. They make simple investigations and describe what makes a fabric waterproof. They make simple comparisons through observations of themselves and class mates with baby photographs. They have a clear understanding of the topics they have covered. They are beginning to observe carefully.
110. Pupils at Key Stage 2 use their knowledge to investigate properties of liquids. By the age of eleven they confidently set up fair tests to extend their understanding of how and why different liquids evaporate. They use their knowledge of electrical circuits to find out how many light bulbs two batteries can power without the bulbs going dim. The majority of pupils can predict outcomes for their experiment and give reasons for their predictions. Throughout the key stage pupils talk about what they are doing and are confident in making predictions. They use a wide range of equipment and can select resources which support the test they are setting up. A significant minority of pupils extend their investigations by

adding additional variables to a given task.

111. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1. They make good progress at Key Stage 2 with a significant minority making very good progress. At Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in knowing about the uses of materials. They are developing observational skills through first-hand experience. For instance, they learn about the waterproof qualities of materials and their suitability for use as a raincoat. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress in investigation skills; for example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 use their understanding of criteria for fair tests to set up experiments comparing how different liquids such as oil, fizzy drink, and vinegar evaporate. They use knowledge about gasses and contents of liquids to help their predictions. They extend their vocabulary, confidently using and understanding the precise scientific language of prediction, results, criteria and conclusion. At this early stage in the school year some pupils extend their thinking by adding additional factors to an experiment. For instance a group of pupils introduced the additional factor of surface area comparison into an experiment on evaporation and were able to extend the experiment to include the additional factor.
112. Pupils enjoy investigative science enormously and tackle their tasks with interest. They work very well together. They work enthusiastically in small groups and tackle their tasks with enthusiasm. They collaborate effectively. Many pupils in Key Stage 2 are beginning to organise resources confidently and respond well to challenges set by the teacher. For example, when working out criteria and procedures for testing specific characteristics of different liquids they successfully planned and implemented fair tests. They behave very well, listen attentively and concentrate intently in lessons, interacting well with the teacher and one another. They are very willing to contribute in class discussions and make thoughtful, interested responses to questions posed.
113. It was possible to see only one lesson of science in Key Stage 1 and therefore no judgements can be made about the quality of teaching. Overall, the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is very good. Where the teaching is very good, it takes into account the differing needs of pupils and activities are planned to ensure progress for all pupils. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject. They use a variety of strategies to support and develop pupil' learning. They develop pupils' ideas well by purposeful questioning which, later in the lesson, helps them to work well in groups. They make very effective links with pupils' prior learning. They maintain a very good balance in lessons between teaching, demonstration, investigation and pupils' own investigation. The lessons have a good pace and pupils are challenged to achieve more. This very good teaching is having a significant impact on raising standards at this early stage in the school term.
114. The curriculum for science is well planned. Good use is being made of the new national guidelines for the subject which are being incorporated into the school's curriculum planning. Increasing use is made of day-to-day assessment and the school has recently introduced a tracking system to support daily assessment at both key stages. Effective leadership in Key Stage 2 has led to a careful analysis of this year's National Curriculum test results. This information has been used to identify specific areas of learning which are now being targeted in planning topics and individual lessons.

120.
OR COURSES

OTHER SUBJECTS

120.

Information technology

115. Attainment is broadly in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. By the age of seven years, pupils are competent in using the mouse pointer to drag and drop components of pictures,

placing them carefully in the desired position. Pupils use programs to learn more about spellings, and enter text into simple word-processing programs before printing out their writings. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils use computers to communicate information and data. Information about weather is shown on maps of the British Isles, using traditional symbols and printed in colour. Programs, which enable data to be shown in graphs, are used effectively by the pupils to present data about land usage as three-dimensional pie charts. Text is printed in different fonts and sizes.

116. Progress is satisfactory at both key stages. Pupils become more familiar with the position and function of keyboard keys while learning what programs will do and how to control them. Older computer systems are used in classrooms on a regular basis, and some programs support learning in lessons based upon the National Literacy Strategy. Spreadsheets and the graphical representation of data support work in other subjects, such as investigative science.
117. At the time of the inspection the school had doubled its number of personal computers, and much emphasis was being given to teaching pupils how to use the systems and new programs. Good progress was already observable, as pupils in Year 3 were learning how to switch on the systems, load programs and to use the correct sequence of commands to close them down. Older pupils at Key Stage 2 were competent at selecting the appropriate drop-down menu from the tool bar so that text could be manipulated to a new position. Pupils made good progress in giving appropriate commands to improve the appearance of text by changing fonts, sizes and style.
118. In all classes pupils enjoy using technology in support of their learning. During demonstration lessons, pupils concentrate well, listen intently, and are willing to help demonstrate a particular technique to their peers. When talking about the subject, pupils try hard to use the correct terminology. They are confident in bringing previously learnt skills to new situations to help them solve problems encountered. In the vast majority of lessons, behaviour is very good and pupils willingly collaborate in pairs. In only a small number of cases does this high level of response drop, when some boys in Years 3 and 4 find it difficult to concentrate for even short periods of time. They talk and squabble rather than collaborating on their work.
119. In the one lesson observed at Key Stage 1 teaching was good. The teacher was knowledgeable and clearly explained the techniques as she demonstrated a new program. A good pace was maintained, and a review session was very effective in ensuring that the pupils understood the work. At Key Stage 2 teaching varied between satisfactory and excellent, and was good overall. Teachers are generally secure in demonstrating techniques on the new personal computer systems because of the very valuable weekly workshops provided by the subject co-ordinator. Where teachers are less confident, they sensibly use the skills of pupils who have sophisticated systems at home and are familiar with the new programs.
120. All teachers use questioning to good effect, pitching questions at different levels to include pupils of all abilities in the discussions. In some lessons, teachers build on what pupils already know; for example, by drawing comparisons between known word-processing programs and the functions of the newer, more powerful software. In the outstanding lesson, the teacher used his excellent knowledge and skill to help pupils make the best possible progress, and had prepared follow-on work of a very high standard to challenge pupils of all abilities. Extra work had been prepared for all pupils to use their new skills in re-ordering lists of dates and events in the Victorian period being studied in history.
121. Although relatively new to the teaching profession, the subject co-ordinator is making a significant contribution to work in the subject. With the headteacher he is managing a rolling programme of improvement in provision, and it is planned for a computer suite to be completed shortly. This is part of a vision for the subject that now needs to be committed to paper as a subject development plan to guide and monitor progress being made towards this vision.

122. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the criteria of the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus for each year group. The school is working closely to the syllabus and children attain appropriately for their age at Key Stage 1 and do better at Key stage 2, particularly in Year 5 and 6. At the time of inspection, pupils were using the theme of celebrations and festivals to extend their knowledge and understanding of world faiths. They are acquiring a good knowledge that the religious traditions of Great Britain are mainly Christian and are extending their understanding of other world faiths, particularly the principal ones in this country. By the time they leave school they have acquired a range of knowledge about other religions, their practices, beliefs, customs and festivals.
123. Pupils' progress is at least satisfactory and is good in over half the lessons. At Key Stage 1, although progress is mainly satisfactory, some pupils make better progress when interest levels are raised and they have first-hand experiences, as when Year 1 children visited a local church and watched the celebration of infant baptism. The teacher's use of techniques used in literacy sessions is often instrumental in children's better progress, as in a Year 2 class where a brainstorming session produced eager responses and everyone took a full part in discussion and completed the written task. This included those children with special educational needs who found the session particularly stimulating. Overall progress at Key Stage 2 is good and this is better when pupils have opportunities to use prior learning in their lessons such as using their mathematical skills in handling a protractor and compasses when making a calendar and plotting religious festivals on it or when using design and technology skills to make a sukkah.
124. Overall, pupils' response to the subject is good and often it is very good, particularly at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, in lessons and on a visit, children were generally attentive, listened carefully and behaved well. At times they talked animatedly to each other about their work. Concentration was good and tasks completed. However, the Year 1 children in the reception area lost concentration if the teacher was not alongside them and clearly needed additional adult support. Despite the good efforts of the teacher, behaviour was not as good as might be expected and the work of others was disrupted. In most lessons at Key Stage 2, pupils were very attentive and showed interest by asking sensible questions. They were eager to respond to the teachers' questions and talked quietly about their tasks. The very good relationships resulted in well-motivated pupils who behaved well, knew what was expected of them and enjoyed sharing their efforts with others. Work was well sustained and pupils moved on quickly to the next task.
125. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and very good overall at Key Stage 2. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, when teaching was sound overall. Most teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and planning is very good, with clear objectives for learning. In some lessons, particularly at Key Stage 2, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and they are challenged to use previous learning from other subjects to improve their work. In the best lessons work was provided at the right level for pupils' stages of learning but in other classes this was not considered. In Year 2 and Years 5 and 6 there was better provision for pupils with special educational needs and in these classes good progress resulted but it was not the case elsewhere. Broad assessments are made of progress when reporting to parents and although there are some good examples of the identification of strengths there were few classes where teachers had indicated what children need to do to improve their religious education work. Worship sessions, though separate from religious education, are closely linked and used well by teachers to enhance the knowledge and understanding gained in lessons. For example, worship relating to harvest made reference to the Jewish Sukkot and included the building of a sukkah, which was particularly helpful to older pupils making a mini-sukkah as one of the activities in their religious education lessons.

126. During the period of the inspection it was possible to observe only two lessons at Key Stage 2, and none at Key Stage 1. However, scrutiny of the excellent displays of work in classrooms and other parts of the school, an inspection of collections of previous work and pupils sketch books give evidence of the high quality of work.
127. Pupils make at least good and sometimes very good progress in techniques and skills when using different media. From an early age pupils are taught the skills of colour mixing, so they are able to produce the shade or tint required for a particular piece of work. These skills are extended as the pupils learn more about the techniques used by different artists, so that the pupils' original work is truly in the style of other artists and not pure copies of another's work.
128. Very good progress is made in representations of what children see. They learn how to make best use of pencils of differing hardness to make observational drawings. By the age of eleven, pupils use the range of pencil grades to refine their shading, and give their drawings a feeling of three dimensions. Sketchbooks are used very effectively on educational visits to record details for later work, and for practising techniques needed to improve the quality of work to be undertaken. Pupils also develop the ability to paint directly from observation. Work produced is accurate and is sensitive to the shades observed.
129. Pupils make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the work of a whole range of artists. At the time of the inspection, pupils at Year 2 studied the work of Kandinsky, producing work in a similar style as part of a longer series of lessons planned to teach more about colour mixing. Pupils analysed their perceptions of his work, and recorded their observations in words. By the age of eleven years, pupils have learned about the style of many artists. In an outstanding lessons, pupils in upper Key Stage 2 compared the work of two artists who in 1858 painted views from the same position of Lincoln Cathedral seen across Brayford Pool. The class then compared these works with a painting produced in 1998 from the same position. Pupils' deductions and feelings had developed well, and they showed a mature appreciation of the works.
130. The responses of pupils in the two lessons were good at lower Key Stage 2, and very good in Years 5 and 6. The younger pupils had visited the local church and showed good concentration when preparing a design for a transparent picture of a stained glass window. Some were a little immature, and needed a lot of adult re-assurance, and a small number interfered with the work of others. Because of the excellent knowledge and enthusiasm of the teacher, the pupils in the upper Key Stage 2 lesson were entranced by the pictures, showing complete concentration. Pupils clearly try hard to produce attractive work in the range of media and materials available to them.
131. As no lessons were seen it is not possible to make a judgement about the teaching at Key Stage 1. With only two lessons seen at Key Stage 2 no overall judgement is made. In respect of those two lessons the teaching was satisfactory in one and excellent in the other. In the satisfactory lesson at lower Key Stage 2, the teacher understood the process and had planned and prepared thoroughly. The work was a little too difficult for some pupils, and the children needed adult support. However, good use was made of better examples of the work, and this helped other pupils improve their work. An excellent pace of work was maintained in the outstanding lesson at upper Key Stage 2, where pupils were helped to develop their appreciation of art. The questioning technique of the teacher was of an exceptional standard in refining the pupils' observational skills and drawing from them their feelings and perceptions. The methods used brought about further development of the children's knowledge of the history of art, and inspired them to quickly begin work on the next part of the lesson.

132. The co-ordinator has done much to improve the quality of work in the subject through very thorough documentation that support teaching and learning. She has prepared timetables for display boards around the school, and this resulted in the excellent displays. Children's work is displayed very carefully, and this inspires the pupils to continue to give of their best. The displays provide the co-ordinator with regular opportunities to monitor work produced as part of her management role. A very comprehensive bank of resources for teaching and learning has been built up, and these are very effectively used to help pupils gain a greater appreciation of the subject.

138.

Design and technology

133. It was possible to make only one short observation during the inspection, so secure judgements about teaching and pupils' responses are not possible.

134. The school has introduced the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) scheme of work, and this enables the steady development of skills and techniques as pupils make models from a range of suitable materials. Progress is satisfactory. The work frequently supports learning in other subjects.

135. In Year 1, pupils use card and paper to learn the skills of shaping and joining as they produce models of houses. Empty boxes are covered with white paper ready for painting, and detail such as windows and fabric curtains are applied. Different ways of making joints are learned as sloping roofs are joined to vertical walls, and cylindrical chimneys are joined to ridges. This work develops so that by Year 4, pupils add much detail such as guttering, opening doors, and overflow pipes. In the one observed lesson, pupils at Years 3 and 4 used a net to cut, fold and glue a cube. This followed a lesson in which pupils disassembled food packaging and other boxes to investigate the nets of differently shaped boxes.

136. Skills and techniques involved in designing and making vehicles with axles are developed as children make models of Roman chariots, and later produce bicycles with frames and disc wheels. Pupils learn how to create rigid corners and frameworks, and use these on model shadufs, so learning how simple water-lifting machines work. More complicated frameworks are made as pupils build towers to support suspension bridges.

137. The amount of time given to the subject has been greatly reduced as a result of the modification of the National Curriculum and the introduction of national initiatives in literacy and numeracy.

143.

Geography

138. Only two lesson were observed in geography but evidence shows that the subject is an integral part of the broad curriculum and is allocated a sufficient amount of teaching time to meet the current needs of the National Curriculum. Scrutiny of work, displays around the school and discussions with pupils show that there is a sound grasp of geographical skills and understanding. Planning for lessons is good and, by the use of clear learning objectives, provides continuity and progression across the age group. Whilst the role of the co-ordinator is currently underdeveloped, he has a clear vision of what needs to be done to improve progress.

139. Through studying the weather younger pupils understand the seasons and the changes these bring to the environment. They know that weather influences the clothes they wear, the food they eat and the activities which people pursue. They can draw simple maps of parts of the school and to illustrate stories such as 'The Three Bears' and explain how to use maps for finding direction. From maps and

photographs, stories and pictures used in the literacy hour they recognise features such as land, sea, mountains and rivers and some know the names of the countries which make up the United Kingdom.

140. Older pupils have good geographical skills. They understand and use direction, scale, symbols and keys when interpreting maps particularly those of the local area and places they have visited. They understand how physical features such as climate, landscape and location influence human activities. Some good work has been done in comparing the geography of Metheringham with places such as Chembokilli in India and Llandudno in Wales, particularly in studying land use. Many have a sound knowledge of the names of important countries, oceans, seas, mountains, rivers and cities although a significant number have difficulty in locating Metheringham on a map of England and cannot name the countries of the United Kingdom. The current work on addressing the problem of traffic in the High Street is presenting pupils with a clear insight into how geography influences the local environment.
141. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Progress in Key Stage 1 is particularly sound in map skills, especially those drawn of the school. In Key Stage 2 significant progress is made in studying the geography of places which contrast with Metheringham. Good progress has been made in the knowledge of instruments used to measure climate, how to record weather statistics and how readings of instruments can be adversely effected by locations near to buildings or trees.
142. In the lessons seen pupils showed a great deal of interest in geography, particularly when it was about Metheringham. They are keen to talk about what they know, journeys they have undertaken and places they have visited. The presentation of work by older pupils connected with visits is of a high standard.
143. There is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching. However, the lessons seen had very good structure, high expectations, a high proportion of direct teaching, clear learning objectives and tasks which were well matched to pupils ages and abilities. Teachers have addressed the issues raised in the last report through the introduction of key learning objectives, clearer assessment with the objectives in mind and more opportunities for pupils to develop their powers of investigation. This is particularly evident in the independent work done in the topic books by older pupils.

149.

History

144. Only one lesson in each key stage was observed in history. Evidence shows that the subject is an integral part of the broad curriculum and is allocated an appropriate amount of teaching time to meet the current requirements of the National Curriculum. By improving the curriculum planning, introducing more precise use of key learning objectives and assessing against these objectives to plan future work, the school has responded successfully to the issues raised in the last report. Scrutiny of work, the displays around the school, some of which are of excellent quality, and discussions with pupils show that they have a good grasp of historical skills, knowledge and understanding.
145. Pupils are taught how to use clues from a wide range of sources and interpret them in historical contexts. Importance is placed on first hand experiences through visits, the use of artefacts and photographs. Good use is made in literacy lessons of old documents such as the school logbooks and stories written by Charles Dickens, to generate interest and consolidate understanding. Numeracy is evident in work on chronology and historical eras.
146. Key Stage 1 pupils have a good grasp of the present and the near and distant past. They talk about their own lives and those of members of their family in these contexts. Through visits to places such as Gainsborough Old Hall they have learnt about aspects of life in Britain beyond living memory.

Through participation in aspects of life in Victorian times they can identify differences between life then and now and give some reasons for the changes.

147. Through lessons about ancient civilisations, the Celts, Vikings, Romans and Normans, Key Stage 2 pupils have learned about characteristics of particular historical periods and societies, including ideas, beliefs and attitudes and the experiences of people who lived during those times. Work about the Tudors, Victorians and the more recent pre- and post-war era has enabled them to identify reasons for historical events and learn about some of the important people in history such as Stephenson, Nightingale, Brunel, Churchill and Hitler. Visits to the Museum of Lincolnshire Life, the village of Eyam, York and Belton House have been used successfully to stimulate interest and promote progress. There are good resources in school, particularly old photographs and prints, which are used effectively in developing investigative and interpretative skills which were identified as insecure in the last report.
148. Pupils are very interested in history. Rapt attention resulted in an eagerness to answer questions. They settled quickly to their work and showed good levels of concentration. The quality of their written work shows that they take pride in presenting their work neatly and accurately. Some of the topic books done by older pupils are interesting and colourful and contain examples of good research work.
149. Good progress is made throughout the school in history, which is an improvement on the last report. Progress is particularly good in learning skills in finding and using clues from a wide range of sources and interpreting them in historical contexts. This has enabled younger pupils to progress to a good grasp of the present and the near and distant past. Visits to places of historical interest and the study of artefacts has promoted good progress in understanding aspects of life in Britain beyond living memory. Good progress has been made by older pupils in understanding chronology. Many of them can now place events, people and changes on a time line in the periods they have studied.
150. As only two lessons were seen it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. However, there is ample evidence in the displays around the school, the enthusiasm of pupils and the work done in books to show that history is well taught.

156.

Music

151. Progress is satisfactory in improving performance at both key stages. Very young children are taught to share instruments and are beginning to work together in a group, trying to keep the beat of their songs by playing percussion instruments. Their singing is in time with the pulse. Appreciation of rhythm increases at Year 2 as pupils strike different parts of their body in time with a rhyme, and different words are omitted as they sing action songs. By Years 5 and 6, pupils recognise the dynamics achieved by “playing” different parts of their body in response to simple notation provided by the teacher. Progress is such that by the end of this particular lesson, pupils had composed their own rhythm using their own symbols, and were beginning to practise and perform their compositions.
152. Pupils’ recognition of the pitch of notes begins early. At Year 2, pupils use three or four chime bars to play patterns of sound in response to instructions such as *low, low, high, middle*. By the age of eleven years, pupils have developed their musical “ear” so that they recognise when the strings on a guitar are correctly pitched. Singing develops well through lessons and hymn singing and by the age of eleven years, pupils can sing in two and three parts. They quickly learn new songs based on rhythms such as the calypso. Musical appreciation progresses as pupils listen and respond to pieces such as ‘Carnival of the Animals’.
153. Pupils enjoy music lessons, and try hard to perform well. They are keen to play instruments at the

correct speed to keep in time with the songs being sung. Interest and concentration are maintained during singing, even when a new song appears to be difficult to learn. Good progress is achieved because of this perseverance, and the pupils' repertoire is increased. Behaviour in the lessons is very good.

154. Teaching is good overall. Most teachers are confident in the subject, and some are very knowledgeable and confident. Good quality support is provided by colleagues for the less confident staff. The content of lessons is varied, and includes all necessary elements over time. The methods used are appropriate to the subject material and to the ages of the pupils, so progress is achieved. For example, in the Year 2 lesson, games and action songs made a significant contribution to the progress being made. All elements of the subject were included in this successful lesson. In these best lessons, good emphasis is given to the need to listen carefully so that pitch and timings are accurately maintained during the activity. It is planned that a teacher new to the profession and the school will take responsibility for the subject at a later date. Until that time, the headteacher is maintaining a monitoring role.

160.

Physical education

155. Lessons in dance, gymnastics and games were seen during the inspection. In gymnastics pupils show sound body control and co-ordination. They use apparatus sensibly and safely when climbing, swinging and making shapes. They have satisfactory skills in sending, receiving and travelling with a ball and in other elements of games play that include running, chasing, dodging, avoiding and using space. They understand common skills such as attack and defence and are aware that there have to be rules to ensure fair play. In dance they are able to control their movement to match tempo and rhythm and express feelings in response to music. Swimming continues to be a strength and very few children leave school without being able to swim.
156. Pupils in both key stages, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Younger pupils progress well in the performance of basic actions of travelling using hands and feet, rolling and balancing. This is built upon successfully in some of the older classes when importance is focused on more difficult movements such as climbing, swinging, changes of shape, speed and direction. Movement is refined and pupils are taught about good posture when starting and ending a performance. Almost all pupils swim twenty-five metres unaided, competently and safely by the time they leave school, which indicates good progress in this activity.
157. Pupils' attitudes towards physical education are good. They try hard to follow instructions and improve their performance. They work diligently whether alone or with others. They use resources carefully and safely and take turns in a sensible manner. They are very keen to demonstrate their performance and to help others.
158. The overall quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned with activities well matched to pupils' ages and abilities. Most include periods of vigorous activity and, in some, teachers make pupils aware of the value of this in developing cardiovascular health, strength and endurance. In most lessons there are high expectations in terms of the level of work, the effort to be made and behaviour. Teachers make effective use of pupils' performance to encourage the progress of others. Teachers in the very good lessons insist upon correct posture and encourage pupils to think about ways of improving their performance.
159. The curriculum is enriched by a wide variety of extra-curricular activities. These include gymnastics, cross-country, cricket, football and postball. The school is involved in the 'Top Sports' project, which aims to provide a wider range of activities and resources for playing games.

165.
INSPECTION DATA

PART C:

165.
INSPECTION EVIDENCE

SUMMARY OF

160. An inspection team of five inspectors, including a lay inspector, spent a combined total of 19 days in the school. Before the inspection a range of school documentation was analysed. The Registered Inspector met the headteacher, staff and some governors on a pre-inspection visit.
161. During the inspection, further documentation, schemes of work, teacher's planning, attendance registers, minutes of meetings and curriculum plans were examined. Pupils' records and reports were scrutinised. All work was scrutinised for the present term and some of the previous year. The work of pupils with special educational needs was scrutinised and their individual education programmes examined. Samples of homework were inspected.
162. Pupils were assessed for their literacy skills and their ability to work with numbers. Discussions were held with children as they worked in groups or individually. Pupils' use of literacy and numeracy in all areas of learning were assessed.
163. Meetings were held with the headteacher, class teachers, and some governors. Informal discussion took place with support staff, caretaker, parents and volunteers.
164. Before the inspection a parents' meeting was held which 10 parents attended. There were 42 questionnaires returned by parents and 12 parents wrote to the Registered Inspector supplying additional views to those covered at the parents' meeting. All views and information informed the judgements made by inspectors.

170.
INDICATORS

DATA AND

171. **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR - Y6	268	6	34	2

172. **Teachers and classes**

172. **Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	10.15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	26

172. **Education support staff (YR - Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	8
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	75

Average class size:	29
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173. **Financial data**

Financial year:	1999
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	£
Total Income	397856
Total Expenditure	391187
Expenditure per pupil	1548
Balance brought forward from previous year	11570
Balance carried forward to next year	18239

174. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	190
Number of questionnaires returned:	42

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	33	55	7	5	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	43	50	2	5	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	15	59	26	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	12	56	15	15	2
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	15	59	17	7	2
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	31	59	2	5	3
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	22	61	10	5	2
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	20	54	7	17	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	27	66	2	5	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	27	61	10	2	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	48	50	0	2	0