

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST GEORGE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Stamford

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120607

Headteacher: Mrs J. E. Bowen

Reporting inspector: Mrs N. Moss

22685

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> May 2002

Inspection number: 195964

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Kesteven Road  
Stamford  
Lincolnshire

Postcode: PE9 1SX

Telephone number: 01780 763654

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs M. Gobbett

Date of previous inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22685	N. Moss	Registered inspector	English Equality of opportunity English as an additional language	Information about the school The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13786	S. Walsh	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17685	L. Spooner	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education	
8845	H. Sumner	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage Science Design and technology Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30745	P. Thorpe	Team inspector	Art and design Geography History Provision for pupils with special educational needs	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St. George's Church of England Primary School is similar in size to most other primary schools, with 203 pupils on roll, from the ages of 4 to 11. Thirty of these pupils are in the Reception class. The school has no nursery. The school is situated in Stamford in Lincolnshire, a small historic town, and has strong links with St. George's Church, though not occupying the same site. Pupils come to the school from two different wards and from a variety of housing types and backgrounds. Most pupils have pre-school experience. The range of attainment on entry is very wide, but average overall. A very small percentage of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Nineteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs, a figure below the national average, and a quarter of these pupils have learning difficulties of an emotional and behavioural nature. The percentage with statements of special education needs is very low and is below the national average. There are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language. The school is set in spacious and attractive grounds, which have recently been improved. The headteacher is new to the school since the previous inspection. The school received a School Achievement Award for raising standards in 2001 and again in 2002.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a school whose strengths outweigh its weaknesses. Teaching in the reception class and in Years 3 to 6 is good and this leads to good progress by the majority of pupils. Standards are at least average in most subjects by the time pupils reach the age of eleven, though they are not as high in Years 1 and 2 as in Years 3 to 6. Behaviour and attitudes towards work are satisfactory overall. The school provides its pupils with a good range of extra-curricular activities. The school's leadership and management are good overall. The school provides its pupils with an effective education and it gives satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching is good for pupils in the Reception class and children are well-prepared for their learning by the time they enter the main school in Year 1.
- The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught effectively.
- Pupils show enthusiasm for school and have good relationships with each other.
- The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The school clearly identifies its areas for development and has good priorities for improvement.

#### **What could be improved**

- The quality of writing in Years 1 and 2 and standards in information and communication technology (ICT) throughout the school.
- The use of assessment and marking to inform pupils how to improve their work in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils' multicultural experience and understanding.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the issues raised by the last inspection report of 1997. Many new initiatives have been planned and implemented in the last two years, which have not yet had time to show their full effectiveness, but which are helping to raise standards. There are now effective systems for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the school's work, particularly financial planning and the development of teaching skills in English, mathematics and science. The co-ordination and monitoring is now good in

these subjects and is beginning to be used usefully to raise standards in other subjects. This has been helped by the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the use of nationally recommended schemes of work in other subjects. The school has developed new assessment systems, carefully linked with planning. Opportunities have been created for the implementation of the National Curriculum programmes for study in ICT, together with the purchase of new equipment and staff training in the subject. The school has, however, been unfortunate in the installation and integration of the locally linked ICT systems, and these are not yet fully operational. The school is in a good position to make further improvements.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	B	B	C
mathematics	B	B	B	C
science	A	A	B	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Children begin the Reception class with average standards overall. Learning is good and many are ready to start the National Curriculum early, having achieved the early learning goals in all required areas before they begin Year 1.

Standards are in line with the national average for pupils in the current Year 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science, and are an improvement on those attained in the national tests in 2001, having risen steadily in the last two years. Test results in 2001 at the end of Year 2 showed standards to be below average in reading and mathematics and average in writing, though all three areas were well below the average when compared with schools in a similar category, measured by the number of free school meals. Teachers' assessments in science indicated above average standards. Standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with what is expected of the age group in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. Pupils progress satisfactorily in all these subjects. Standards are below expectation in ICT.

Standards for the current Year 6 are average in English and above average in mathematics and science. Pupils make good progress through Years 3 to 6. In the 2001 national tests, results showed standards to be above average in all three subjects, though average when compared with schools of a similar free school meals' entitlement. The trend over the last four years has been broadly in line with the national trend, with generally rising standards, though all subjects fell a little in 2001, because of the nature and level of attainment of that particular year group. The school met its challenging targets in English in 2001, but did not quite meet them in mathematics. This year's targets are equally challenging. Inspectors found that standards by the end of Year 6 are above expectation in design and technology, in line with it in art and design, geography, history, music and physical education and below it in ICT, though rising rapidly. Achievement by pupils with special educational needs and for gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory throughout the school.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Most pupils are enthusiastic about school, keen to learn and involved in school activities, but a minority of pupils show restless attitudes in class.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. The majority of pupils behave well in class and around the school, but a minority can be disruptive in class. There were no exclusions last year.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Relationships between pupils and adults are generally good. Pupils do not always show initiative in their work and a sense of personal responsibility.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance is well above the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Good

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

Teaching is good overall. In the Reception class, teaching is good. There is a strong focus on developing the skills for all children in all areas of learning and this enables them to make a good start to their education. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall, with some good features. The best lessons enable pupils of different abilities to make equally good progress through good management of pupils, which helps them to concentrate and learn well. However, at times, teachers do not always manage pupils' behaviour well or foster their independence, which prevents them from making better progress in their learning. Teaching is generally good in Years 3 to 6, where teachers' strengths in knowledge and understanding of their subjects, the teaching of basic skills and effective planning which matches the needs of all pupils, help pupils to make good progress and attain well. Throughout the school, English and mathematics are generally taught well, and the new national strategies have been effectively implemented. The teaching of numeracy and literacy good overall and is integrated satisfactorily into the teaching of other curriculum subjects, although some opportunities for extended writing are missed in subjects such as history and geography. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2, but their learning needs are not always adequately met by the provision of sufficient support assistants in Years 3 to 6.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum meets legal requirements and provides pupils with a broad range of learning activities. However, the efficient use of teaching time is an area for development.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory overall. Provision is good in Reception class and in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Those pupils on the school's register of special educational needs generally receive good support and make appropriate progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. The provision made for pupils' spiritual and social development is satisfactory. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Pupils' multicultural development, however, remains a weakness.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good standards of care for all pupils, who are able to work in a safe and secure environment. Assessment and marking are used insufficiently in Years 1 and 2 to help pupils improve, though they are generally satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Procedures for monitoring behaviour and tracking pupils' progress are satisfactory.
How well does the school work in partnership with parents	The school's links with parents are satisfactory. Most parents have positive views of the school and many are involved in its work. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher provides a strong sense of direction, which is making it possible for the school to raise standards. She is well supported by senior staff. Subject co-ordinators are keen to carry out their responsibilities as fully as possible. The school enjoys a good level of staffing, though there are insufficient learning support assistants in Years 3 to 6.
How well the governors fulfill their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors fulfill their legal duties well and play an increasing part in shaping the direction of the school. They are becoming more aware of its strengths and weaknesses and of the demands of the curriculum.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school monitors and evaluates the quality of teaching well. It has clear priorities for development and many new initiatives have been put in place.
The strategic use of resources	Good overall. The school uses its accommodation to good advantage. Accommodation is pleasant and provides well for the teaching of the curriculum. Learning resources are generally adequate. Resources are used well in all subjects. Care is taken to ensure that spending decisions are fully evaluated and that best value for money is obtained wherever possible.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The standards attained by their children and the progress they make.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• The school has high expectations of their children.</li> <li>• Out of school activities are good.</li> <li>• Levels of homework set are appropriate.</li> <li>• Children are helped to become mature and responsible adults.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school does not work sufficiently closely with them.</li> <li>• The school is not well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school is not easy to approach with questions or problems.</li> <li>• The quality of information on their children's progress.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with most of the positive views of parents and judge that the school has a satisfactory partnership with parents. Although the school has done much of late to make more opportunities for parents to talk to teachers, it is still the perception of some parents that it is difficult to access teachers on a daily basis. The school works hard to engage parents in the work of the school and is aware that the provision of more opportunities for parents to learn something of the curriculum is an area for development. The quality of information provided is satisfactory overall, but the quality of the annual reports to parents on their children's progress is variable, not always detailed and they do not always give targets for improvement. Inspectors evaluated that the school is well led and managed.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Children begin the Foundation Stage with broadly average standards, covering a wide range of ability. The education provided for the children at this stage in their learning equips them with a good foundation for their further progress as they move on into the main school. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress in all areas of the curriculum, and especially in literacy and numeracy. The essential skills of speaking, listening, reading and counting are well taught and reinforced, so that most children are likely to start the National Curriculum having achieved their goals by the end of the reception year.

2. Standards at the end of Year 2 in the 2001 national tests and teacher assessments were below average in reading and mathematics, average in writing and above average in science. Based on a comparison with schools where pupils receive a similar proportion of free school meals, last year's results for Year 2 were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils achieved standards below or well below average at the higher than expected Level 3. Overall, current standards at the end of Year 2 are average and similar to those found at the time of the last inspection, though there have been variations during that time. In 1999, results fell significantly, but have risen again in the last two years, particularly in mathematics. The introduction of new national strategies for the teaching of English and mathematics and new schemes of work account for this rise in standards and the progress made. The majority of pupils achieve at a satisfactory level.

3. Inspection findings show that standards by the end of Year 6 are average overall. The national test results in 2001 showed standards to be above average in English, mathematics and science. Measured against schools with similar small numbers of pupils entitled to free meals, the standards in those three subjects were average in the 2001 national tests. Current Year 6 pupils are reaching similar standards in mathematics and science and average standards in English. These achievements show pupils making good progress overall within the school. The school's results have been rising since the previous inspection at a broadly similar rate to the national trend, but fell slightly in 2001 in all three subjects, as a result of a year group with a higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils at the school perform at above the national picture at the higher levels in all three subjects. There is some variation in achievement between boys and girls, with boys generally outperforming girls, but not significantly. Over time, based on prior attainment at the age of seven, pupils in the 2001 group made good progress. The school has recently introduced a new policy for its gifted and talented pupils, enabling them to learn at a rate matching their needs.

4. The school has received a School Achievement Award in 2001 and in 2002 for raising standards. Inspection findings show that currently, pupils in Year 2 are exceeding the standards reached in 2001, except in writing, where standards are average. Pupils in Year 6 are reaching similar standards to those attained in 2001 in mathematics and science, and average standards in English, as a result of a weakness in writing which the school is taking measures to address. Standards remain at least average in the majority of subjects, with above average standards in design and technology by the end of Year 6. Standards in ICT are below average in Year 2 and in Year 6, though they are improving rapidly. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily by the end of Year 2 and well by the end of Year 6.

5. Standards in English are satisfactory overall. They are good in speaking and listening and in reading and satisfactory in writing. While writing levels are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, strategies for improving technical skills and for encouraging pupils to write at length are not always implemented sufficiently rigorously. As a result, achievement is satisfactory. The school has recognised that strict adherence to the National Literacy Strategy limits the time available for sustained periods of writing and this is the current area of focus. Pupils achieve well throughout the school in speaking and listening and reading. There are good opportunities provided in all classrooms for these skills to develop well. These include the effective use of guided reading with individual pupils and the presentation of findings across a wide range of subjects for older pupils. Writing is less well developed, with pupils not always writing at sufficient length or for sustained periods of time.

6. Standards in mathematics are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Progress is enhanced through good use of mental strategies at the start of lessons. This encourages pupils to try harder. When working on numeracy exercises, pupils progress well overall. There is equally good achievement by pupils in all areas of mathematics, especially in number, although there is insufficient use made of number skills to investigate and solve practical mathematical problems. Pupils gain good knowledge of data handling and graphs in Years 3 to 6.

7. Standards in science are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils are given good opportunities to carry out investigations and to record their findings accurately. This is largely due to good teaching and planning, which ensures that prior knowledge and understanding are built on well. Teachers have high expectations and use scientific knowledge and method well to support other subjects, such as design and technology. Pupils achieve satisfactorily level in Years 1 and 2 and well by the end of Year 6.

8. In ICT, pupils do not reach the expected level throughout the school and there is underachievement in skills development. However, the skills development strategy put in place by the school is having a satisfactory effect on standards. Planning is carefully organised to ensure the steady acquisition of skills, although pupils, especially those in Years 3 to 6, are not yet reaching the appropriate standards. Unreliable hardware makes it more difficult for teachers to ensure effective coverage of programmes of study, although teachers are now competent in teaching skills to pupils.

9. There are above average standards by the end of Year 6 in design and technology and at least average standards by the end of Year 2. Teachers make this subject particularly interesting for pupils, with plenty of independent research work, investigations and problem solving. This strategy is very successful in motivating pupils. Learning is greatly enhanced by pupils' ability to apply their scientific knowledge to their work in design and technology. They have good understanding of design processes and of the importance of evaluating their designs and constructions. As a result, they make good progress.

10. Standards are average in art and design, history, geography and music for eleven-year-olds. Skills are built up gradually throughout the school so that pupils cover a broad range of work. In art and design, they create paintings and other creative work in a variety of media, while learning to recognise the styles of famous artists. In geography, pupils advance their mapping skills well and gain a great deal from their study of the local environment. In history, pupils gain a sense of the past and can see the consequences of past events, especially through their studies of their historic town. In music, pupils learn basic skills of singing, performance and composition and gain much cultural benefit from the subject. Pupils' achievement in these subjects is satisfactory.

11. In physical education, where teachers use opportunities for pupils to assess and evaluate their own performances, progress is better and standards of attainment are higher. The success of lessons often depends on teachers' management in ensuring that all pupils are able to participate without distraction or disruption. Progress is satisfactory.

12. Achievement by pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The school has lower than average numbers on its register of special educational needs. Procedures for identifying these pupils early is good and staff have sufficiently clear advice or guidance to ensure early identification. Provision to support these pupils within classes is good in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, and the resultant progress is satisfactory overall. Older pupils in need of special help are generally less generously supported and make slower progress. In sessions where pupils are withdrawn from main lessons, the support they receive throughout the school is good. There is a sharp focus on improving literacy and numeracy skills, with successful strategies in operation.

13. The school has recently identified a small number of gifted and talented pupils whose achievement so far is satisfactory. A new policy is now being shared among the staff who are starting to make effective provision for these and for higher attaining pupils, so that they are making satisfactory progress. Overall, pupils of average attainment make satisfactory progress by the end of Year 2 and good progress by the end of Year 6. This is the result of better teaching and work better tailored to the needs of pupils in Years 3 to 6. Lower attaining pupils make satisfactory progress across the school, though progress in Years 1 and 2 is often good when pupils are supported during lessons.

14. Targets set by the school and published in the governors' annual report were exceeded in the tests at the end of Year 6 in English, but not in mathematics, last year. Targets agreed with the local education authority for this year provide realistic challenges. The school has developed its target setting for pupils in Year 6 precisely and well, linked with the use it makes of the information gleaned from assessment procedures.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

15. Most pupils are happy to come to school and their enthusiasm for school is good. They arrive on time and are sensible when they put their lunch boxes in the hall. They play on the playground or sit and chat until they are allowed into the school. Pupils are keen to join in activities. The Good News Club, which is run by St. George's church, is extremely popular and pupils enjoy the opportunity it affords to play games or paint.

16. Pupils' attitudes to their school work, however, are satisfactory. Pupils in the Reception class are confident and attentive. They respond well to the good opportunities given to them to talk and contribute ideas. Most play together cooperatively. In Year 1, however, many of the boys are restless. For example, in a Year 1 English lesson, pupils took a long time to settle and noise and excitability lessened their achievement. Small groups of boys respond inappropriately at times. Pupils in Year 2 are keen and confident. For example, in an ICT lesson they responded well to good encouragement from their teacher. They are capable of working well independently.

17. Older pupils usually work well but there is sometimes an underlying current of restlessness. For example, in a Year 4 history lesson, pupils entered the room noisily and were slow to settle to their work. However, there are many difficult pupils in Year 4 and the teacher works hard to improve their behaviour. Pupils in both Years 4 and 5 sometimes work at a leisurely rate. Pupils respond well to enthusiastic teaching. In a Year 6 science lesson, all pupils were attentive and keen to make a contribution. They were able to discuss food webs sensibly in small groups. The teacher gained the pupils' cooperation by valuing pupils'

contributions. Pupils behave better when they are taught in the classroom. When they are in less familiar situations, such as on the field or in the hall during physical education lessons, some can be excitable and silly.

18. Behaviour is satisfactory. Most pupils behave well around school. Pupils behave well when going into assembly, but are sometimes restless or chatter during the assembly. Behaviour in the playground is acceptable and most pupils play well together. There is a pleasant social atmosphere in the dining room when pupils are eating their lunch. Pupils are polite and welcoming and some enjoy talking to adults.

19. There were no exclusions last year but this year there have been three fixed term exclusions. This reflects the school's clear policy of intolerance towards bullying.

20. Most pupils understand the impact of their actions on others. Reception pupils disapproved of one small boy who had rather too enthusiastically thrown himself into the role of a burglar and had broken the plastic window of a 'police station.' Teachers talk to pupils about the impact of their behaviour. The deputy head spends a considerable amount of time talking to pupils who misbehave and helping them to understand why their behaviour is not acceptable. There is limited opportunity to empathise with the feelings of others during occasions such as circle time.

21. Pupils have plenty of opportunity to take responsibility outside the classroom, for example, organising music for assemblies or music lessons or taking part in the school council. Opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning are more limited.

22. There are good relationships between teachers and pupils. Teachers are supportive and try to boost pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. Relationships between pupils are usually good.

23. Attendance rates are well above the national average. Parents are very conscientious about sending their children to school and very few pupils have any significant amounts of time away from school. Unauthorised absence is rare.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

24. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is generally good. In Years 1 and 2 it is generally satisfactory and it is good overall in Years 3 to 6. There is a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in Years 1 and 2. Most of the very good and good teaching takes place in Years 3 to 6. This is similar to the time of the previous inspection, but shows an improvement in teaching in Years 3 to 6.

25. Teaching in the Reception class is at least satisfactory and usually good. Staff show a good understanding of how young children learn and have good child management skills. Expectations of the children in terms of their personal development and their progress in literacy and numeracy skills are good. Staff constantly talk to the children and ask them relevant questions to enlarge their vocabulary and encourage their independence. They balance independent activities well with those that need adult support. Teaching is frequently tightly structured, with planned whole-class introductory sessions and follow-up tasks for individuals and groups.

26. Teaching and learning overall for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are generally satisfactory, though there are examples of good practice. Where teaching was successful, teachers built successfully on the skills acquired in the Foundation Stage. They defined very clearly what they expected pupils to learn and how they would go about learning it and the management of

behaviour was firm. Aims for the lessons were clear, precise and achievable. In the best lessons in this part of the school, teachers use time effectively. In numeracy in Year 1, for example, mental sessions proceed with enjoyment and pace. When teachers' management of pupils is good, pupils concentrate and work with effort and interest. Occasionally, however, the pace of work is slowed by the disruptive behaviour of a minority of pupils. The teaching does not always give pupils the opportunities to work independently and to investigate for themselves. Teaching methods are not always varied enough to keep pupils' interest. Teachers' marking is not always constructive in showing pupils how they could improve their work. As a result, pupils do not make consistent progress throughout these years.

27. Overall, for pupils in Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning are good or better. The strengths in teaching and learning are:

- teachers' good knowledge and understanding;
- the teaching of basic skills, especially in literacy and numeracy;
- high expectations which challenge and stimulate the pupils;
- good teaching methods that allow pupils the freedom under the teacher's direction to learn independently;
- good assessment of pupils' ongoing work and the use of the findings from assessment to aid the planning of appropriate tasks for pupils' different needs.

28. In English, the quality of teaching in the lessons observed was generally satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, where the literacy hour is being effectively implemented. Teachers use lesson time appropriately to ensure that the different aspects of literacy are taught, especially reading, which is given extra emphasis. Writing, however, is not always promoted to ensure that pupils write at length. Throughout the school, teachers understand and use the literacy strategy well enough to be able to adapt it sensibly to the needs of their particular pupils. They ensure that pupils are challenged in the range of writing undertaken, but not always in the amount of writing expected of them. Teachers demonstrate satisfactory subject knowledge and methods, which allows pupils to learn successfully. In Years 3 to 6, pupils, including boys and girls and pupils of different abilities, are motivated by the tasks prepared for them. The best lessons proceed briskly. Work is generally well-matched to pupils' abilities, so that most make at least satisfactory progress. Teachers' knowledge is good, their planning for the teaching of basic skills has very clear objectives and planning is good. However, teachers' management of a minority of disruptive pupils is not always secure, though it is generally better in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2.

29. The quality of teaching in mathematics is generally good overall, with a small percentage of unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers' knowledge is secure and they explain tasks carefully to their pupils. As a result, pupils are keen to be involved and learning is good. Lessons are structured well, on the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy, and mental mathematics is given priority. Where teaching is less satisfactory, it is because they fail to absorb pupils for more than short periods of time. Teachers use questions well to ensure that all pupils understand the work in hand. Marking of pupils' written work, however, is not always constructive and targeted at helping pupils to improve.

30. In science, teaching is at least satisfactory and it is good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers understand the subject well and ensure that pupils are given clear learning objectives and know how to use scientific enquiry. Teachers attach importance to an effective emphasis on experimental work and plan for it clearly and efficiently. They help pupils to challenge themselves to think and to solve problems. Teachers ensure that pupils enjoy and are interested in science lessons. Questions are often used well to judge pupils' progress. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, where a minority of disruptive pupils sometimes hinder the work of others. It is good in Years 3 and 4, where classroom management is firm.

31. In ICT, teaching is good and developing well in both key stages to help pupils apply their skills effectively. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are confident in teaching pupils new skills. Pupils are therefore becoming aware of the relevant uses of the subject. Activities are usually interesting and have clear objectives.

32. It was not possible to observe enough lessons in art and design or design and technology to make overall judgements on the teaching.

33. It was not possible to observe enough lessons in geography to make an overall judgement on teaching. In history, teaching could only be seen in Years 3 to 6, where teachers showed good subject knowledge and effective questioning to assess and check pupils' understanding. Opportunities were missed, however, to extend literacy, particularly writing.

34. In the lessons observed in music, teaching was at least satisfactory, though its quality depended greatly on the level of concentration shown by the pupils. Teachers work closely to a scheme of work which enables them to teach the subject systematically and they do so with enthusiasm.

35. The teaching seen in physical education was generally satisfactory, with some unsatisfactory teaching observed. In the good lessons, pupils are given the opportunity to practise a good range of skills and teachers have high expectations of them. Planning provides a programme which effectively develops pupils' skills as they move through the school. Teachers use feedback well to show pupils how to improve their skills. Poor behaviour by a minority of pupils sometimes lessens the impact of lessons and the amount of learning achieved.

36. The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs is good in the Reception class and generally satisfactory across the remainder of the school. where the management and organisation of pupils and relationships in the classroom are satisfactory in nearly all classes. Pupils make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils' targets are generally reflected well in teachers' planning and appropriate support is provided Teachers ensure that learning resources support the activities well and, where possible, provide the additional support of a learning assistant. There is, however, a significant minority of pupils who display very challenging behaviour in lessons, which can result in unsatisfactory learning for the majority of the class. Pupils with statements of special educational need receive good support from classroom assistants. Gifted and talented pupils are now beginning to achieve their full potential.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?**

37. The overall quality and range of the curriculum is good in the Reception class and satisfactory within the main school. There is good provision for literacy, numeracy, science, design and technology and art and design. Aspects of physical education are also good. The curriculum for ICT has improved significantly recently and the learning opportunities it provides are now at least satisfactory, whilst still developing. The geography curriculum is the least well developed. Subjects with two year rolling programmes initially formulated for the mixed age classes which no longer exist, have yet to be reviewed, to ensure the smoothest possible progression in learning.

38. The school's curriculum fulfils statutory requirements in all respects. However, the current teaching time allocations for each subject shows an imbalance. The lengthy time

made available for English, for example, is justified by the particular needs of the pupils. Other allocations arise because of the decisions made by class teachers, for example, the time actually allocated design and technology and art and design. An undue amount of teaching time is allocated to personal, social and health education and other unspecified activities. There are also questions about the efficient use of time within each day, where ineffective use of very short periods of time can add up to hours of lost opportunity across the academic year. Currently, the use of teaching time is inadequately monitored.

39. Effective strategies for the teaching of both literacy and numeracy are now firmly in place, with the school moving gradually towards adjustments in the daily patterns of provision, depending on the particular needs of its pupils. Additional learning support is provided for pupils who are likely to benefit from extra provision. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. It is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, because there is less provision of learning support assistants in these classes. The school is also giving thought to ways in which the attainment of gifted and talented pupils can be enhanced. One or two initiatives, such as challenging homework, are in place in some subject areas, but the school is linking up with other local schools to co-ordinate the possibilities available to these pupils. Such developments are likely to enhance the school's currently satisfactory provision for equality of access and opportunities for learning.

40. A well-planned curriculum to support pupils' personal, social and emotional development has been completed recently, following extensive consultation with parents, governors, teachers and advisors. It follows from the governors agreed policy on sex education and also deals with drugs education. Following the recent national guidelines, it also includes citizenship education. Pupils have already visited the local Magistrate's Court and debated an environmental issue.

41. The school enriches its curriculum well. Recent visitors to the school have included a bird man who gave illustrated talks to both older and younger pupils, a visit by a helicopter crew, church representatives who contribute to assemblies, and artists who enriched the learning of Year 5 pupils. Older pupils also heard a talk on the lives of travellers. Pupils make visits to places of educational interest such as the local fire station and a butterfly farm in the case of Reception children. Pupils with artistic skills have contributed work to a 'Younger Visions' exhibition organised by the local Arts Centre. Year 6 pupils have visited a concrete manufacturing plant and are currently planning a residential visit to Northumbria.

42. Extra-curricular opportunities are also good, with at least one club available on every day of the week. There are sports clubs for football, netball and tennis, a French club, a choir and opportunities for pupils to learn to play the recorder, violin, guitar and brass instruments. There is also a weekly club linked to the church and a YMCA breakfast and after school club for children who require it.

43. The school benefits from good contributions from the local community. Parents provide help in classrooms and there is a Friends Association which provides a significant level of financial help for the school. The school has also benefited from contributions by two local businesses. The school has satisfactory and developing links with the several playgroups and nurseries from which its youngest entrants are received. There are links with the secondary sector, but the diversity of school to which the Year 6 pupils move makes systematic arrangements difficult to organise. However, the school participates in inter-school sports events with local primary schools, two secondary schools and Stamford College.

44. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. This does not reflect the judgement at the time of the previous inspection when the overall provision was good.

45. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Daily assemblies meet statutory requirements and give pupils time for their own thoughts and ideas. Pupils are provided with opportunities to visit Christian places of worship such as Lincoln Cathedral. Work on display around the school indicates that opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on their feelings. For example, pupils in Year 6 draw 'Value Shields' and write about important things they are prepared to support. Teachers have taken part in training to consider how aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development might be included in subjects of the curriculum. As a result, some curriculum policies contain references to the promotion of these areas. During the inspection, however, there was limited evidence that lessons were planned to promote an appreciation of the more spiritual aspects of life or for pupils to feel a sense of awe and wonder in what they see or experience.

46. The provision for moral development is good. The school's commitment to Christian values and beliefs are very strong and as at the time of the previous inspection, provide a secure basis for pupils to learn the difference between right and wrong. The school provides a clear code for behaviour through its 'Golden Rules' and in displays in classrooms and other areas of the school. Good behaviour and positive attitudes are rewarded through praise, awards and certificates. These are important to many of the pupils. For example, during a discussion with some Year 4 pupils, one said that he was determined to achieve a gold medal. Adults in school provide good role models and take many opportunities to promote ideas of fairness, honesty and respect. Opportunities for pupils to explore a wide range of rights and responsibilities are carefully planned in the school's programme for personal, social and health education. A 'Bus Stop Area' and quiet area have recently been set up in the playground to promote the pupil's awareness of the needs of others.

47. The provision for pupils' social development is satisfactory. This represents a decline since the previous inspection. The school has key values and principles on which school life is based, fostering a sense of the school as a community. This does not extend enough into the wider world community to provide pupils with opportunities to learn about the diversity of beliefs and values. The majority of the pupils are willing to follow the school's code of conduct. This is satisfactorily promoted during the day-to-day life of the school. However, teachers do not consistently apply the system and in some classes the behaviour of a significant minority of pupils is inappropriate. For the small number of pupils who consistently find great difficulty in fitting in with the social expectations of the school, discrete opportunities are provided for them to talk about and reflect on their behaviour. Satisfactory opportunities are in place for pupils to work collaboratively in lessons. The school provides good opportunities for older pupils to take part in after school clubs and pupils in Year 6 are able to take part in an annual residential visit to Northumberland. A School's Council has recently been established with representatives from each class and a small budget to fund initiatives. This is in its early stages and is currently led by the headteacher.

48. At the time of the previous inspection, the school's promotion of cultural awareness was judged to be satisfactory. The school has maintained provision for pupils to understand the influences that have shaped their own cultural heritage, for example, through visits as part of their work in history and geography. Representatives of the church come to school regularly to talk to the children in assemblies. The provision of opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures was identified as a weakness at the time of the previous inspection. This remains a weakness and provision in this area is unsatisfactory. The policy for spiritual, moral social and cultural development includes an aim to prepare children for life in a rapidly

changing world. A small amount of work from other cultures was observed in art and design and music. Overall, however, the school does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to learn about and appreciate cultural diversity and other people's values and beliefs. As a result, it does not prepare them well for life in the wider world. However, recent decisions have been taken by the governors to review provision for this aspect of the pupils' personal development.

49. Pupils with special needs have full access to the curriculum and all pupils with statements of need have the appropriate support. They are given extra support by teachers and learning support assistants so that they make satisfactory progress in line with their classmates. There is a helpful policy which makes positive statements and clear definitions about provision and procedures, roles and responsibilities. This is in the process of being updated to comply with the recently introduced code of practice. The co-ordinator for special educational needs works well with colleagues within school and with external agencies to identify pupils' needs. Together they prepare appropriate individual learning plans for pupils which help them to progress and enjoy their learning. Individual education plans are of good quality and include realistic targets. These are regularly monitored and checked. Behaviour management strategies have been implemented. Their effectiveness is currently being assessed. The school now has clear procedures, to identify the more able and very able children and efforts are made to extend their learning.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

50. The school has satisfactory procedures for ensuring that children are safe. The governors are closely involved in monitoring health and safety and, at present, are developing a new health and safety policy. There are now annual risk assessments and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Procedures for dealing with accidents and pupils who are feeling ill are good; the system for recording accidents is very thorough. The school follows locally agreed procedures for child protection. The named person has had recent training and pupils thought to be at risk are carefully monitored.

51. The school continues to monitor attendance carefully. Most parents telephone the school on the first morning of absence. The school contacts parents on the first day of absence, after registration, if the school has not been contacted. Registers are generally neat and well kept, but there are a minority of registers where alterations have been made and records of attendance are difficult to interpret.

52. The arrangements for monitoring and improving behaviour are satisfactory. The school has an adequate behaviour policy, but it continues to be applied inconsistently. The school produces very good guidance for teachers on the general management of behaviour and dealing with children, but again this is not followed consistently. The school is aware that there are a number of pupils with difficult behaviour in Year 4. They have sought advice and applied various methods with the aim of improving behaviour. The Educational Psychologist has worked with pupils.

53. Assessment procedures in the early years are good. The school evaluates what children can do when they start school and tests them again at the end of the Reception year in order to measure the progress they have made. Assessment and marking are not used to help pupils improve sufficiently well in Years 1 and 2. Assessment of pupil's attainment in English, mathematics and science occurs in both Years 1 and 2, but is not always used to help plan their future work. Records of progress in English are more detailed in Year 2 and this is reflected in annual reports to parents. Assessment is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Teachers keep good records, but these are not always associated with national curriculum

levels. There are class targets, but marking throughout the school does not always provide pupils with sufficient information about how to improve.

54. The school receives good information from the local education authority about how well pupils are achieving and this helps the school to monitor academic progress. The school's individual pupil record card has no space for recording National Curriculum levels. The school has recently introduced optional National Curriculum tests and is developing the monitoring of academic progress in Years 3 to 6. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection.

55. The school is beginning to make use of its assessment information to help lesson planning. For example, Year 5 optional National Curriculum results, together with the results of practice National Curriculum tests in Year 6, are used to identify pupils who would benefit from extra classes. The results of National Curriculum Year 2 tests have been used to focus on spelling, writing, handwriting and mathematics. Targets for Year 2 are agreed by all staff and the headteacher.

56. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Teachers know the pupils well. Teachers make notes on pupil record cards, but annual reports are the main way of recording pupils' personal development.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

57. The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents. Sixty one parents responded to the parents' questionnaire of these, most were satisfied with the standard of education provided by the school. They feel teaching is good and that teachers have high expectations of their children. Most parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems, but a significant number of parents who responded to the questionnaire do not find the school easy to approach. A similar number of parents are also concerned that the school does not work closely enough with parents and some feel that the school is not well-managed.

58. Traditionally, parents have waited at the school gate and pupils are brought out to them. The geography and space of the school make it very difficult for a large number of parents to wait inside the school. However, a new waiting area has been built for parents as part of the School Travel Plan, but this is situated some physical distance from the school. Its design has not taken into consideration the needs of parents with perambulators and buggies or small toddlers. If parents or staff wish to talk at greater length at the end of the school day they do so in the school building.

59. The majority of parents are very supportive of their children's education. They send their children to school on time and well-prepared for the school day. The Friends' Association contains many hard-working parents and members of the local community who have raised very substantial amounts of money for the school. A significant number of parents provide valuable help in the classroom or with swimming and school trips. There have been evenings to explain the literacy hour and numeracy strategy, an annual open evening for parents and an induction evening for new parents.

60. The quality of information for parents is satisfactory overall. There are good quality newsletters and the prospectus and the Governors' Report to Parents are of high quality, giving a good flavour of the work of the school. A significant number of parents who responded to the questionnaire were concerned about the quality of information about children's progress. This is understandable, as the quality of reports is very variable. Some reports are very similar for different children and others are very thin and contain little detail

about what children know, understand and can do. Years 2, 3 and 5 reports are of particularly good quality and indicate pupils' strengths and weaknesses clearly. Although some reports contain hints in the text about what children can do to improve, this is not universal across all year groups. There are no clear targets for improvement given.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

61. The leadership and management of the school are good overall.

62. The headteacher provides strong leadership. Since her appointment in 2000, she has worked hard to steer the school towards its goal of higher standards. She has successfully dealt with many of the key issues identified by the previous inspection. Working with the governing body, she has implemented a wide range of improvements that have had, and are having, a beneficial effect on the quality of education provided by the school and the environment in which pupils learn. The school has a good and supportive deputy headteacher who also has a heavy responsibility in other areas.

63. Subject co-ordinators are generally sufficiently responsible for the monitoring of planning and learning in their subject areas. Teachers receive efficient and appropriate support and guidance from them in helping them to raise standards and there are opportunities for improvement and the sharing of best practice. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching, recognised as essential by the headteacher, have now become regular and ongoing in English and mathematics and are significantly improving the quality of teaching in these subjects throughout the school, although this practice is not yet consistent across all subjects.

64. The school has recently been successful in using all available data in evaluating its own performance and is clear about its educational priorities and what needs to be done to improve standards further. The good use of data has contributed to recent initiatives in the provision of support groups and the targeting of specific classes in order to raise standards, for instance, in English and mathematics, particularly in Years 3 to 6. There is less formal, and therefore less effective, assessment in other subjects, particularly design and technology, art and design, geography, history and music.

65. The management of special educational needs is satisfactory. The co-ordinator for special needs has a good knowledge of his role and influences provision well. There could, however, be more rigour in the way in which pupils identified as having special educational needs, particularly those with behavioural difficulties, are managed and prevented from disrupting other pupils.

66. The chairman and her colleagues on the governing body are hardworking, supportive and dedicated and fulfill their statutory duties well. Their understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses is growing. They have sought to monitor the school's curriculum and they have initiated and supported appropriate action, particularly in the provision of computers.

67. The school's educational priorities are supported through good financial planning. The headteacher, governors and administrative staff have a clear understanding of school finance and work well together, bringing complementary skills to bear on the financial planning and management aspects of the school's work. The management plan contains criteria by which to judge the success of spending decisions. All budget decisions are analysed to ensure that they improve standards for the pupils

68. All funds received for specific purposes, such as funds to support pupils with special educational needs, are appropriately managed and used. Ongoing expenditure is carefully monitored and spending patterns are suitably explored. The school makes satisfactory and growing use of ICT in financial planning and management and in its general administration. The school ensures the best possible value when making purchases of supplies and equipment or employing services.

69. The school is staffed by a sufficient number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers, who are deployed satisfactorily to meet the demands of the curriculum and the needs of pupils. Learning support staff have not received specific training, but have attended school training courses and are used effectively to support individuals and groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils identified for extra literacy and numeracy support. Midday supervisors are effectively deployed to ensure the smooth running of the lunchtime sessions. There are satisfactory opportunities for staff development. Recent training in numeracy and ICT has resulted in an improvement in teachers' subject knowledge and confidence. Performance management is established well and provides good opportunities for teachers to develop their expertise. The school has satisfactory procedures in place for the induction of new staff.

70. The building and grounds provide good accommodation for the number of pupils and are very well maintained by the site manager. Teaching areas are used effectively to support pupils' learning. These include a computer suite, an art and design and design and technology area, a music room and a good-sized hall. The use of two further rooms enables pupils with special educational needs to be taught in smaller groups. Plans are in place to alter the accommodation to provide more flexible space in the Year 5 and 6 wing to include changing rooms and space for additional computers. The computer suite is not large enough to accommodate more than half of a class at any one time. The outdoor play area for children in the Reception class has been improved since the previous inspection and now provides a satisfactory space for learning and play. The extensive outdoor areas are well maintained and provide a good space for pupils to take part in a range of activities throughout the year. During the inspection, the grounds were used effectively to provide an orienteering course.

71. Resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. They are good in English, mathematics, music and physical education. Resources to support ICT have been improved in recent years, but are only barely adequate to provide pupils with opportunities to develop their skills and use them in other subjects. This is principally because the computer system is still unreliable. Computers in the classrooms are out-of-date and not compatible with those in the computer suite. This incompatibility currently prevents the school from making ICT resources more flexible through the introduction of a networking system. However, governors are aware of the problems and have allocated funds to improve provision during the coming year.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

72. In order to build on the many positive aspects of the school and further improve the standards of work and quality of education provided, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Raise standards further in English, particularly in Years 1 and 2 by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of what average ability and higher attaining pupils can achieve in their writing through sharing the best practice seen in the school;
  - ensuring that a greater quantity of written work is accomplished in the allocated time in lessons;
  - increasing the amount of writing in other subjects.(Paragraphs: 2, 4, 5, 28, 88, 89, 93, 133, 142)
- (2) Continue to improve the standards of ICT throughout the school by;
  - ensuring the reliability and compatibility of computer hardware and software;
  - implementing the programme of study to ensure the teaching of all of the required skills.(Paragraphs: 8, 70, 71, 109, 145-147)
- (3) Continue to improve the use of assessment and marking, particularly in Years 1 and 2, by;
  - using assessment data better to raise standards;
  - ensuring that marking informs pupils on how they can improve their work.(Paragraphs: 26, 53, 54, 60, 64, 96, 106, 122, 127, 135, 143, 159)
- (4) Provide greater opportunities for pupils to learn about and appreciate cultural diversity and other people's values and beliefs.  
(Paragraphs: 44, 47, 48, 120)

In addition, the school and the governors should address the following issues:

- make more efficient use of curriculum time.  
(Paragraphs 38, 127)
- ensure that all pupils behave satisfactorily.  
(Paragraphs 16, 17, 20, 35, 52, 91)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	36
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	5	12	16	2	0	0
Percentage	3	14	33	44	6	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than three percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	203
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	38

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.8

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3

National comparative data	5.2
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	17	18	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	12	15
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	31	30	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (73)	86 (76)	94 (73)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	16	16
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	31	34	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (70)	97 (79)	97 (97)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Where the number of boys or girls are fewer than ten the individual results are not reported.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	11	19	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	9	11
	Girls	14	15	19
	Total	25	24	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (88)	80 (96)	100 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	10
	Girls	17	15	15
	Total	27	26	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (71)	87 (80)	83 (76)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.  
Where the number of boys or girls are fewer than ten the individual results are not reported.*

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	168
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	29

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	42

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	384 537
Total expenditure	381 007
Expenditure per pupil	1 859
Balance brought forward from previous year	5470
Balance carried forward to next year	9 000

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	203
Number of questionnaires returned	61

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	48	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	45	5	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	67	8	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	61	3	2	2
The teaching is good.	54	41	3	2	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	39	20	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	26	15	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	38	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	36	38	16	10	0
The school is well led and managed.	43	37	5	12	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	46	5	2	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	49	8	7	3

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

73. Provision for children in the Reception class is good, leading to good progress during the year before they enter the main school. By the end of their time in Reception, almost all achieve the required learning goals for the age group and a small minority are working towards targets from the initial stages of the National Curriculum. The school has no nursery, but receives written reports on the children who have attended local playgroups. It takes great care to ensure that the children's introduction to the Reception class is as easy as possible. Hours of attendance are gradually increased until, by the Autumn half term, all the children attend full-time. Over this first year, children are also introduced to aspects of the main school, attending assemblies, working in the computer suite and visiting the library, for example. Until last year, and at the time of the last inspection, these younger children were educated together with the older Year 1 pupils. This, together with the introduction of a new curriculum and learning targets for the age group, make comparisons with the effectiveness of the school's provision at the time of the last inspection unreliable.

74. At the start of the year, the teacher in charge carries out extended interviews with the parents/carers of all the children, establishing close links with them. These are reinforced by 'welcome booklets', daily opportunities for informal chats, encouragement to join out of school visits with the children and formal interview opportunities during the course of the year. Assessment for children in Reception is good. The initial assessment of each child's stage of development also takes place at this time. Analysis of results shows that the majority of children enter Reception with broadly average levels of prior achievement. The early identification of children who exceed or fall below the usual standards for their age enables the school to make appropriate provision for exceptionally high attainers and for children with special educational needs. Similar assessments are carried out at the end of the Reception year, so that the school has a clear measure of the effectiveness of its provision over the year and of any special provision needed during the next phase of the children's education.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

75. Children make good progress in this area of learning, almost all achieving the relevant learning goals and a few exceeding them. They benefit significantly from the very good relationships which are established, showing good attitudes towards each other, taking turns and cooperating well in role play. They have a developing understanding of right and wrong, showing clear disapproval of anti-social behaviour. When their teacher made a mistake, the children laughed amiably and helped her out. Their attitudes benefit from the kind consideration which the children receive and are reinforced by the partnership in the enjoyment of learning which staff convey through well chosen words of encouragement during whole class sessions and discussions with individual children. The children tend to adopt the same positive attitudes towards each other, spontaneously clapping others' success, for example. They take pride in their work and a continuing interest in the stimulating displays around their classroom. During the inspection, there were frequent visits to observe the tadpoles, with a few children referring to the attractive collage on them to which they had contributed. Whether directly supervised or not, the children concentrate well, whether engaged in intellectually demanding number work or responding to creative opportunities.

76. Most children show good levels of social confidence by the end of their time in Reception. They are encouraged by the informal, but authoritative manner of the staff. Children generally show no hesitation in contributing to whole class discussions, though a few remain inclined to interrupt others. Several children volunteered to sing solos in a music lesson. Some are able to initiate conversations with trusted visitors. Though satisfactory progress is made, the development of children's independence is less well advanced, because opportunities for children to choose their own learning activities are relatively limited. While arrangements allow all children to benefit from the range of free learning activities provided, the organisation of them involves 'managed choice' within each area. However, children exploit these opportunities well, showing sensitivity to the needs of other children in their group. They also show responsibility when helping with clearing up and carrying out small missions, such as returning the daily register to the office.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

77. Most children achieve well in this area, reaching, or in a few cases exceeding, the relevant learning targets. They generally listen carefully to the teachers' instructions and explanations. The majority speak with confidence during class discussions, contributing comments about the reading of shared stories. The children easily learn and enjoy reciting nursery rhymes, the majority recognising and enjoying the rhythms and rhyming elements. Their varied learning experiences contribute to an appropriately developing vocabulary which supports their ability to communicate, though a small minority of children find it difficult to express themselves with reasonable ease.

78. Children's reading skills also develop well, leading to achievement of the learning targets in the majority of cases. A small minority of children develop a higher level of fluency and understanding. These children, in particular, often choose to read books when they have a choice of activities. They are quick to pick up clues when they meet new words. They also read with expression, recognising speech from supporting words such as 'said' and the presence of speech marks. Very good records are kept of the children's progress. With support, they build up words from their knowledge of smaller words. There is an effective, home/school reading arrangement and the school's Foundation Stage governor contributes regularly to the support provided for reading. Most children learn to recognise the repetition of phrases within traditional stories and within their reading books. By the end of the Reception year, children's daily practice in letter sounds enables them to begin building three letter words such as 'fox/box' and 'man/fan'. The majority go on to accurate picture-based matching of rhyming words such as 'goat/coat' and 'moon/spoon'. This emphasis on letter sounds is successfully combined with growing recognition of frequently used words that do not follow normal spelling rules. Together, these skills effectively aid children's good progress in reading. Even the few who find reading difficult know that words have meaning and attempt to write relevant words when engaged in role play. They make effective use of illustrations to help them with reading. Most children understand that words can be combined into sentences which make sense. An effective strategy is employed to combine handwriting practice with this elementary introduction into grammatical awareness, enabling the majority of children to write sentences more or less legibly by the end of the Reception year. For instance, a child of average achievement wrote, 'I came to school (by) car'. However, the school recognises that children's handwriting skills can be improved and is moving towards the introduction of joined-up writing from the Reception year onwards.

### **Mathematical development**

79. Overall, children enter Reception slightly less well prepared for learning in mathematics than in aspects of literacy, but most make good progress and achieve the learning targets by the end of the year, a small minority of children exceeding expectations for

their age. All children can recognise, recite in correct sequence and write numerals to 9. Most can recall the next number after 6, but some are less certain about the number before it. Most understand nought, so that a child with learning difficulties used a systematic subtraction of 1 to take 5 from 5, for example. Children generally have a secure understanding of a correspondence between numerals and items, though a minority cannot yet apply this accurately if items are scattered. Children generally recognise basic geometrical shapes, patterns and symmetry. The teacher provides motivating artistic opportunities to reinforce this knowledge and understanding. Examples include the painting of butterflies, with folding to achieve matching wings, and the making of shape-based collages using a variety of colours.

80. As they approach the end of the Reception year, children's progress in mathematics is reinforced by short, daily sessions of mental calculation. Children respond enthusiastically to these opportunities, eager to display their answers on their number fans. The teacher's ongoing assessment of children's progress is very thorough, leading to reinforcement activities if required. In one lesson, children's understanding of the one to one relationship was reinforced by the use of tally marks to record the number of items in various categories in a picture. A pro-forma helped them to record their findings systematically and, in the majority of cases, accurately. Concepts of the 'more' and 'less' of quantities are well supported by sand and water activities. Most children also master telling time to the hour by the end of the Reception year.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

81. The children are drawn from home backgrounds which provide with them a broadly satisfactory introduction to the wider world. Their continued progress in this area of learning is good. For instance, they have frequent opportunities for role play, enabling them to explore aspects of day to day life such as shopping, transport and domestic routines. During the inspection week, all children had the chance to participate in the running of a 'baby clinic', answering the telephone, making appointments, measuring height and weight gains, writing prescriptions and so on. Some outdoor role play was based on a police station which was dealing with a burglary. The children play cooperatively and act out narratives of imagined events, incidentally developing their language and social skills as well as their creativity and understanding of the world around them. At other times they visit locations in the community. Recent trips have included visits to the local fire station and a butterfly farm. Other aspects of the natural world, including changes in trees through the seasons and the life-cycles of frogs and chickens are also explored.

82. Children develop well in their understanding of the man-made world as they use materials of various kinds to make models and mix ingredients together when cooking gingerbread men and making vegetable soup, for instance. Some children cooperated in the use of sand to build a large castle with a moat, explaining that they were waiting for water to fill it. Use of construction kits helps their developing appreciation of how three-dimensional shapes can be fitted together. Children's progress in the use of computers is good. They showed great interest and confidence as they 'guided' the teacher through elementary routines such as opening a program and using the mouse to click and drag on-screen menus and images. Staff provide regular opportunities for them to apply their computer skills in support of their progress in literacy and numeracy. All children are likely to achieve the required goals in this area. Together, these learning opportunities provide the children with a sound basis for subsequent progress in the main school as their learning diversifies to cover the range of curriculum subjects. The school meets legal requirements by providing these young children with religious education opportunities. Their cultural development is supported by religious celebrations and contacts with the local church. There is passing reference to celebrations in other cultures.

## **Physical development**

83. Children's progress in this area of learning is at least satisfactory. A more precise judgement is not possible, as the evidence available was relatively limited. There was, however, plenty of evidence that fine motor skills are developing well. Most children show good pencil control and are well able to manipulate materials such as mouldable plastic clay to make a range of emergency vehicle shapes, for instance. Most used scissors with little or no help, to combine a range of junk materials and apply glue to make miniature examples of fire fighting equipment, as follow-up to their fire station visit. They can also use such items as hole punches to create pictures.

84. Observations of the children at play showed their confidence and exhilaration as they ran around in the large playing field. They are generally well co-ordinated, agile and energetic, each taking into account the space needed by others. The children are taught how to keep healthy and safe. No formal physical education lessons were available for observation, as this was one of the two terms in which the Reception children learn to swim. Most achieve the target of five metres. Planning indicated that they have opportunities to use large and small equipment in physical education lessons.

## **Creative development**

85. The creative development of the majority of children progresses satisfactorily, with a few showing especial flair in some areas. Almost all make good use of the creative opportunities presented in role play situations, adding body language and facial expressions to enhance the impact of their performances. Dressing up is often part of the children's creative experience. For them, their imaginative responses to the situations turn them into an exciting reality though if things go wrong, as in the police and burglary situation, they immediately return to the real world. Other creative opportunities arise from real world encounters as the children follow up explorations of nature and visits with creative responses of various kinds. For instance, string pattern collages developed from observation of fire fighter's' hoses and large paintings of people in uniform were inspired by a 'people who help us' topic. Life cycle studies led to well observed art and design work showing tadpoles, frogs and frogs-spawn. Large, decorated Easter eggs followed from study of the life cycle of chickens. On other occasions, children paint from their imagination, deciding during the activity that 'I am going to call mine a monster', for instance. Generally, children choose their own paints, show considerable concentration as they work and are proud of their results. Topic planning indicates that staff help children to become aware of variations in texture, shape, colour and other artistic elements as they develop their artistic creativity, though none of this was observed during the period of the inspection. Neither was any computer generated art evident.

86. In the one music lesson observed, the majority of children could hold a steady beat, clapping as they listened to taped music, though a minority were clearly confused at first. Ultimately, most could move in time to the music, changing the speed of their responses as the tempo changed. Some picked up the tune and began to sing along. One or two volunteer soloists showed awareness of pitch. The children applauded the singing of one especially successful performer. Though not observed, children also have access to a good range of percussion instruments.

87. Teaching in the Reception class is at least satisfactory and usually good. Staff show a good understanding of how young children learn and have very good child management skills. Expectations of the children in terms of their personal development and their progress in literacy and numeracy skills are good. A good range of learning experiences is provided to enhance children's knowledge and understanding of the world, including the development of

their ICT skills, but provision in other areas of learning, though satisfactory, leaves room for further development. Planning at all levels is very well organised, clearly reflecting the requirements of the new Foundation Stage curriculum. Assessment of children's progress and record keeping are very good and well used to promote children's progress through the provision of appropriate learning challenges. The learning environment itself is stimulating and well maintained. The Foundation Stage is well led and the education provided for the children at this stage in their learning equips them with a good foundation for their further progress as they move on into the main school.

## ENGLISH

88. The standards reached in writing by the end of Year 2 in the National Curriculum tests in 2001 were similar to the average standards attained at the time of the previous inspection, but in reading, they were below the average standard attained then. Since the previous inspection, there has been a fall in standards, followed by a significant rise in 2000 and 2001. This recent improvement has been the result of the introduction of the literacy hour and good co-ordination of the subject, as well as of other initiatives which have helped to raise standards. Inspection findings show that standards of pupils' attainment by the end of the current Year 2 are:

- average for speaking and listening;
- average for reading;
- average for writing, though the amount of writing undertaken is not always adequate.

Pupils are making satisfactory progress.

89. The standards achieved in English at the end of Year 6 in the 2001 national tests were above average when compared with all schools nationally and average in comparison with schools of a similar nature. Standards for the current Year 6 are average overall. Standards of speaking and listening are good, standards in reading are good, but standards in writing are average, largely because pupils are not used to accomplishing enough writing in the allocated time. The school is aware of this and is addressing the problem. Progress for pupils in these Years 3 to 6 is good overall in relation to their progress in Years 1 and 2, largely because of a high proportion of good teaching and because pupils have a more positive attitude and approach to their work than those in the lower part of the school.

90. Pupils with special educational needs generally make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory progress in Years 3 and 4, where they are less well supported in lessons. Higher attaining pupils are helped to achieve their full potential. No significant difference was seen in the attainments of boys and girls.

91. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils throughout the school to develop their speaking and listening skills. They use the shared work at the beginnings of lessons to help pupils to contribute what they know and to use the vocabulary associated with the work in hand. A very good example of this in Year 6 was where pupils enjoyed sharing two texts, 'The Midnight Fox' and 'The Eighteenth Emergency', investigating the differences between everyday English and 'American English', exploring them and using them with animation and expression. Pupils in Year 2 discussed the differences between characters in two texts with a good level of comprehension and interest. In some years, however, the chatter and disruptive behaviour of a significant minority of pupils sometimes inhibit discussion. Throughout the school, teachers encourage pupils, when working in pairs or small groups, to discuss their work with each other and to take each other's views into account. Teachers place an appropriate emphasis on teaching correct terminology in other subjects, such as science, art and design and history. This emphasis on speaking and listening positively promotes the pupils' oral and listening skills and equips them with speech suitable to the occasion.

92. Pupils' reading skills on entry to the school are broadly average and they attain average standards by the end of Year 2. In Years 1 and 2, they build upon their experiences of phonics learned in Reception. Pupils enjoy reading. Average and lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, quickly develop their knowledge and understanding of letter sounds through the structured teaching of letter blends and other technical features that they experience in the literacy hour. This enables them to tackle new and unfamiliar words with ease. Higher attaining pupils show enjoyment and interest in reading when, in Year 5, they answer questions on texts of a multicultural nature, such as 'Grandpa Chatterji' and his experiences on a visit to Britain. By the end of Year 6, the overall standard of pupils' reading is good. Most pupils read with improving fluency and accuracy. Higher attaining pupils can discuss a range of authors and demonstrate a wide experience of reading. School reading record books are used well in the lower part of the school. They are regularly monitored by teachers and they provide a good form of communication with parents. Older pupils are beginning to learn to find information from ICT sources and to use desktop publishing to produce their own 'Year 6 Times'.

93. The standard of writing of pupils aged seven is in line with the national average. Many pupils enjoy using a wide range of vocabulary and make good progress in their technical writing skills. A good example of this in Year 2 was the lesson observed on phonic work on the 'ea' sound, when pupils were absorbed in a game activity which gave them good understanding and practice. Many pupils, particularly the higher attaining and average pupils, are capable of sustained writing, using good quality vocabulary, but they are offered too few opportunities to do so regularly. There is, however, sometimes a wide variety in pupils' application, with the majority of the class working productively, but some still displaying disruptive behaviour. In Years 3 to 6, the majority of pupils work with interest, but a minority work at a very slow pace and with little involvement with the task. Lower attaining pupils often work carefully and with great effort, taking care with spelling, punctuation and presentation, but higher attaining pupils are sometimes not fully challenged by teachers' expectations of what they can accomplish in the time allocated to writing. Pupils cover a wide and appropriate range of tasks, such as the Year 5 lesson, where pupils were drafting letters to their parents about a forthcoming school trip to Leicester, but they are too often constrained within the boundaries of the short time available for writing during the literacy hour. As a result, written work is frequently done in short units or left unfinished. Some pupils use different forms of writing appropriately; for instance, when producing a news report. The skills of writing are not, however, sufficiently transferred to the wider curriculum. The use of computers to improve pupils' writing is improving satisfactorily, as seen in anthologies of poems by pupils in Year 4. Standards of spelling and grammar, including punctuation, are often good.

94. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. It is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2:

- teachers' planning is well rooted in the National Literacy Strategy;
- teachers use questions to draw out meaning and develop pupils' understanding effectively;
- speaking and listening and reading skills are developed well.

In literacy lessons, where pupils of different attainment are grouped together, teachers plan work that matches pupils' abilities. As a result, pupils are challenged to learn and they respond by working productively, making satisfactory progress. Less able pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well-supported by teaching assistants.

95. In Years 3 to 6:

- teaching is interesting and pupils learn well;
- expectations are good, except for the amount of writing accomplished, so that most pupils make good progress;
- teachers assess pupils' progress closely and effectively in lessons;
- teachers' planning and methods are good, leading to good learning.

96. In the best teaching, individual pupils are set challenging targets for improvement. Where teachers share the learning objectives, pupils are clear about what they should know and do, such as when altering statements to questions in a Year 4 lesson. Assessment of work within the lesson also identifies clearly what is needed to improve standards. Teachers' marking, however, is not consistent throughout the school in informing pupils on how they could improve, particularly in Years 1 and 2. There is evidence of satisfactory use of homework in English.

97. The co-ordination of English is good. The co-ordinator has a detailed, good knowledge of the literacy hour. He carries out supportive monitoring of planning and teaching. As a result, teachers have, overall, competently adopted the Literacy Strategy. The co-ordinator brings enthusiasm to the subject, attending courses and then passing on their content to staff in school. He has gathered together a portfolio of graded work that gives teachers a secure base for their assessments. He ensures that pupils' work is regularly monitored, looking at progress and attainment and is aware of the need for more extended and structured written work. The number and quality of books, especially in the library, are limited, though teachers do much to help stimulate pupils' interest in reading. Teaching assistants attached to lower attaining groups and pupils with special educational needs work well with the class teachers, affording them the opportunity to focus on other ability groups. All this results in an effective focus on improvement in English throughout the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

98. Standards by the end of Year 2 are similar to those expected nationally. This is an improvement on the results of the national tests in 2001 when standards were below the national average for seven-year-olds. Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average and are similar to those attained in the 2001 national tests. Overall, this shows an improvement since the last inspection.

99. These improvements are the result of a range of initiatives to raise standards. The headteacher, who is also the mathematics co-ordinator, introduced a numeracy training programme during the last school year. This, combined with the support of the Local Education Authority Numeracy Consultant has resulted in an overall improvement in teachers' subject knowledge and expertise.

100. The introduction of detailed assessment procedures for assessing pupils' skills, tracking progress and identifying pupils who would benefit from extra support has also made a good contribution to the school's knowledge of how well pupils are doing. In addition, a programme of monitoring the quality of teaching, planning and standards of work has enabled the co-ordinator to evaluate strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning within the subject and to take appropriate action. 'Booster' and 'Springboard Maths' classes make effective provision for identified pupils to improve their work.

101. Evidence in pupils' books and in lessons indicates that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress. As a result of good quality teaching, pupils in Year 3 have made significant progress since they took their national tests in 2001 and are now attaining standards in line with expectations of pupils of this age. Pupils

in Year 6 also achieve well. This is because of consistently effective teaching and high expectations. No significant difference was identified between the performance of boys and girls.

102. A good amount of work has been done in all classes during the year. The large majority of pupils develop a good grasp of number as well as a secure knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measures and data handling. Currently, not enough use is made of the pupils' number skills to provide them with a wide range of opportunities to investigate and solve real-life mathematical problems.

103. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve well in number. This is because of the systematic and challenging way that number facts and rules are taught, particularly at Year 2. In the lesson observed, pupils showed a good grasp of addition and subtraction number operations to 100. Work in books shows that by the end of Year 2, the large majority of pupils can add and subtract accurately up to 100, are beginning to make consistent and sensible estimates and are learning the importance of checking these. Most pupils in the lesson observed were able to use their knowledge of the ten times table to mentally work out money problems. In their exercise books, many pupils work accurately with 2, 5 and 10 times tables.

104. Pupils' work shows a satisfactory understanding of the properties of 2 and 3 dimensional shapes and that they understand simple analogue and digital time. They investigate mass and measure objects using standard and non-standard units. Work in pupils' books at Year 2 indicates a developing ability to organise and present their work clearly. At Year 1, the over-use of prepared worksheets often prevents pupils from making their own decisions about how to set out their work. Teachers' expectations of effort are high. Pupils respond well and all work is completed.

105. During Year 6, pupils make good progress and nearly all reach Level 4 as expected for their age with approximately one third of pupils working at Level 5. They are secure in dealing with all aspects of mathematics. Their good understanding of number allows them to think quickly and accurately when solving number problems, using a variety of mental and written strategies. The substantial majority of pupils work confidently when applying their knowledge to, for example, placing negative and positive decimals in order. In the lesson observed, pupils were confident when asked to explain, for example, the difference between 1.5 and 1.05. They organise numerical data and compile frequency graphs as a method of recording their findings. Work in exercise books indicates that pupils are provided with a limited number of opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills to investigating and solving mathematical problems.

106. Of the lessons seen, eighty-four percent of teaching was satisfactory or better, of which thirty-four percent was good and thirty-four percent very good. A small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was observed in Year 1. In the substantial majority of lessons, teachers' confidence and secure subject knowledge are evident. Pupils are often highly motivated and keen to be involved and as a result, their learning is good and in some cases, very good. During the inspection, this was particularly evident in Years 2, 3, 5 and 6. Most teachers apply the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy effectively. They plan conscientiously and make effective use of practical resources such as acetate sheets for pupils to work on and present to the rest of the class and washing lines to sequence decimals. In sharing the purpose of the lesson with the pupils, most teachers refer to what the pupils have learned in previous lessons. All work in books and on worksheets is marked and teachers make positive comments. With the exception of Year 5, however, marking does not provide pupils with enough written information to help them find out how well they are doing and to point out how they might improve their work.

107. Lesson planning provides a secure framework for teaching and learning in most lessons. Occasionally, too much is planned and this results in not enough time being available at the end of the lesson for the class to reflect on what they have learned. The mental mathematics parts of lessons are generally lively and teachers prompt the pupils to think quickly and to explain their answers. In sharing and discussing strategies, teachers often provide helpful demonstrations and this enables pupils to tackle their work with confidence. In the most successful lessons, teachers' skilful questioning skills ensure that all pupils are engaged in the lesson. Where this is not the case, some pupils lose interest and this often leads to inappropriate behaviour.

108. Most teachers manage their pupils effectively. Pupils settle quickly, are attentive and prepared to work hard. Where lessons are less successful, teachers do not have sufficiently strong strategies in place to ensure that all pupils listen, behave appropriately and maintain concentration during group or individual activities.

109. The co-ordinator provides good subject leadership. She has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. The initiatives outlined above have already begun to raise attainment, particularly by the end of Year 2. There are enough resources to support teaching and learning across the programme of study. Limited use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 use spreadsheets in working out the number of people to invite to a party based on a fixed cost. However, little documented or observed evidence of the use of ICT for other mathematical purposes was available during the inspection. The provision of homework is similar to that found in most schools.

## **SCIENCE**

110. Pupils' attainment in science at the end of Year 2 is generally in line with national expectations for the age group, with nearly a quarter achieving above this level, as at the time of the previous inspection. This finding echoes that arising from teachers' assessments in 2001, when almost all pupils reached the required standard and one in four pupils exceeded them. Results were close to the average for schools nationally. There is evidence that boys out-perform girls. Standards in science at this stage were higher than those in English and mathematics.

111. Attainment in science by the end of Year 6 is at least in line with national expectations, with the majority of pupils achieving above the level expected for the age group. This is a slight improvement on the good results achieved by the school in 2001 when nearly half the pupils achieved above the nationally expected level and the school's results were above the national average. It was, however, a slightly lower result than that in the preceding year. It is similar to attainment at the time of the previous inspection. National records show that, overall, there has been a significant rise in standards in science over recent years, though there are occasional dips as year groups of pupils vary in their capacity to succeed. In 2001, pupils performed well relative to their prior attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, indicating that they made especially good progress in science as they moved through their later years in the school. The school's results in 2001 matched those for schools with a similar intake of pupils.

112. Pupil's achievements through Years 1 and 2 are at least satisfactory and often good, though there is room for more pupils to achieve above average results through the provision of more challenging learning activities. Those with special educational needs receive extra support and achieve good progress. Pupils' learning is clearly grounded in the relevant National Curriculum targets for the age group. In particular, they are given good opportunities

to carry out investigative work and teachers have high expectations for the quality of the pupils' recording of findings. Good classroom displays on aspects of science support learning throughout the school.

113. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is well informed and at least satisfactory. Good features include detailed and constructive marking, the provision of motivating learning activities and good quality lesson planning. Weaker aspects include a tendency to overlook the lower levels of involvement of girls in science lessons in Year 1 and the dominance of boys during practical work in Year 2. In general, girls at this stage show less confidence in their ability to be successful in science. Both year groups were observed studying aspects of light, though at differing levels of difficulty. Year 1 pupils learned to identify sources of light, helped by the good resourcing of the lesson. Good resources were also available to Year 2 pupils who were investigating the reflective behaviour of light. The learning activity was well-structured with pupils testing out their hypotheses as to whether or not shiny materials shone in the dark. A talented pupil summed up the class findings by reminding his fellow pupils that if it were not for the sun, they would not see him 'talking to you now', however shiny his clothes! By the end of the key stage, pupils also know about the differences between living and non-living things - their teddy bears and themselves in particular. They learn about the importance of the senses for both animals and humans and are also introduced to various aspects of health education.

114. Pupils achieve well during Years 3 to 6, though progress is less good in the case of pupils currently in Year 4. This group of pupils achieved results, which were below the national average at the end of their time in Key Stage 1. In the main, pupils in the key stage respond well to the good quality, well informed teaching provided.

115. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is usually good and sometimes very good. Its strength derives from good understanding of the subject matter and effective emphasis on experimental work. Lessons are well planned, with relevant objectives. Questioning is well-focused and effective. As a result-, pupils develop a clear idea of the features and importance of 'fair testing' if explanations of scientific findings are to be deduced. Pupils' experimental activities also secure their knowledge in the other aspects of the science curriculum and deepen their understanding. The extensive use of science to support learning in design and technology activities and occasional visits to industrial plants are effective in alerting pupils to the applications of science. Pupil's work reflects the good coverage of the National Curriculum programs of study. By the time they are in Year 6, notebooks show high quality recording of processes, clearly stated findings and their interpretation. The work of higher achieving pupils is excellent in this respect. Pupils show real pride in their work, following the high expectations indicated in the marking of it. One very good Year 6 lesson on food chains and webs did not include experimental work but showed just how thorough the teaching is and how well the pupils respond to their learning opportunities. These include some use of the computer to record data and of the Internet to gather information. Computer software which can monitor scientific processes is on order. Outdoor facilities for research have been significantly enhanced by a local donor.

116. The subject benefits from well informed and committed leadership. Assessment of pupils' progress is thorough in Years 3 to 6, but not in Years 1 and 2. The co-ordinator monitors the quality of pupils' work and aspects of teachers' planning but has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching. Developments in the subject include strategies for enhancing colleagues' expertise and plans to extend provision for talented pupils. Year 6 pupils undertake homework, with higher achieving pupils attempting more challenging projects.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

117. Pupils' attainment in art and design is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Since the last inspection, sound standards have been maintained throughout the school. Progress is satisfactory and pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to the rest of the class.

118. In Years 1 and 2 pupils develop good observational skills. They acquire appropriate levels of skill in drawing, painting and picture composition. They pay particular attention to the natural world as a basis for their work. For example, pupils in Year 1 arrange leaves, seeds and twigs together to make an interesting and well-balanced collage. Pupils in Year 2 draw leaves and flowers with careful attention to shape and detail. Work is often linked to other subjects, when pupils illustrate their writing with lively drawings.

119. By the end of Year 6, pupils demonstrate a broad range of skills, which they use effectively to support work in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 4 use their drawing skills when translating a message into hieroglyphics as part of their historical study of Ancient Egypt. In geography, pupils in Year 6 paint landscapes and seascapes to illustrate their work on contrasting environments.

120. Pupils know how some significant artists worked and use their techniques to bring interest to their own work. Pupils in Year 1 compose their own collage pictures in the style of Henri Matisse. In Years 5 and 6 pupils study the work of Pablo Picasso and create paintings and collage in his style. Pupils in Year 1 were inspired to make their own bark paintings by examining artefacts from the aboriginal people of Australia. However, the knowledge and use of art from other cultures is underdeveloped.

121. Pupils are enthusiastic about their art and design lessons and are keen to share their enjoyment. Pupils who have special educational needs benefit from expressing their ideas in a subject where words are not needed. Attractive displays of pupils' work raises their self-esteem. Only one lesson in art and design was observed. Evidence from analysis of pupils' work, examination of teachers' planning and discussion with teachers and pupils, indicates that the teaching of art and design is sound.

122. The curriculum is good with a broadly based range of activities. Assessments of pupils' attainment and progress are made informally within lessons. The school recognises the need to develop a more formal assessment programme. Visiting artists enrich pupils' artistic knowledge and understanding. Pupils' work of all ages has recently been displayed, along with work from other local schools, in the Stamford Art Centre. A twice-weekly after school arts club has recently been formed.

123. The co-ordination of art and design is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is currently seeking local education authority advice to secure extra money to fund more artists to visit the school. Photographic records from previous years' work show good quality displays, which give added value to pupils' work.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

124. The attainment of the majority of pupils by the end of Year 6 is above national expectations for the age group. A particular strength is their ability to apply their scientific knowledge to their design and technology projects. Most also have a good understanding of the design and technology process with its focus on purpose and its emphasis on the evaluation of the design and construction result against this criterion, leading to improvements as needed. The standards achieved by the end of Year 2 show signs of

similar strengths and generally match national expectations for the age group, though a minority of pupils display deeper levels of understanding of design and technology. These results are broadly in line with those found at the time of the last inspection.

125. Pupils' achievement across the two key stages is good. Year 6 pupils were observed in the first lesson of a bread-making topic. As with a number of the design and technology topics provided for the pupils, it began with a useful study of commercial products. Pupils tasted and evaluated the qualities of a wide range of breads and recorded their evaluations systematically, though they struggled to find the adjectives which described their findings. Pupils worked with interest and concentration. The well-informed teacher effectively communicated the relevance of the scientific concepts of evaporation and irreversible change to the bread-making process. Year 5 pupils were seen working steadily through the design and technology process to make a model of a fairground ride. Their previous assignments included highly decorated stick puppets, Christingle lights and slippers. Though well-designed, the latter showed a need for improved standards in joining techniques. Scientific knowledge informed a well-executed lamp-making project by Year 4 pupils and an understanding of pneumatic force will underpin the exciting 'moving monster' project planned for Year 3 pupils.

126. The work provided in Years 1 and 2 gradually develops to include all stages of the design and technology process by the time pupils are ready to move on from Key Stage 1. For instance, Year 1 pupils were making models of equipment and layout for a playground area. They had previously visited a real playground. Their notebooks showed detailed observations of the equipment provided, layout and safety features. Their manipulative skills as they work in groups on such assignments are good. Year 2 pupils progress from design and make assignments such as the template-based production of highly decorated, dreamcoats for a miniature Joseph to the making and evaluation of toy vehicles with wooden wheels and designing toys with winding mechanisms.

127. It can be safely inferred from the available evidence, that teaching is good in this subject. Though few lessons were available for observation, there were many displays of pupils' work around the school and their notebooks were available for scrutiny. These show that the design and technology curriculum provided is good in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory with good features in Key Stage 1. However, there are no systematic arrangements for monitoring the time made available for the subject in the different classes nor the strengths and weaknesses in teaching across the school. Though the curriculum has been updated in line with national guidelines, the collection of evidence which will support its refinement in line with the school's particular needs is underdeveloped. Arrangements for the assessment of pupils' progress are also inadequate. Similar weaknesses were identified at the time of the last inspection.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

128. Pupils achieve expected levels of attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

129. Pupils in Year 1 complete informative worksheets and colour in pictures quite well, but rarely have the chance to produce their own versions of what they learn. As a result, pupils of all abilities work at a very similar level. By the age of seven, pupils acquire a range of geographical skills and increase their knowledge and understanding of their local area and the wider world.

130. Pupils in Year 2 develop good mapping skills. For example they carefully draw plans of the school area, including the location of various features in it. Pupils practise their research skills when they survey the type and volume of traffic outside the school. Most pupils know that climate and vegetation in some countries is different from that in the United Kingdom. For example, they are able to compare a day in their lives with a day of a child in rural Kenya.

131. Mapping skills developed in Year 2 are built on effectively in Year 3 and 4. Assessing different land use in the town and locating these areas on a selection of different maps extends pupils map-reading skills. Studying the contrasting locality of a village in India provides pupils with further good opportunities to develop these skills and begin to understand life in a rural community in other parts of the world.

132. Geography in Years 5 and 6 is often interlinked with pupils' work in the history of the local area. During the inspection pupils in Year 6 were preparing for their forthcoming residential trip to Northumbria. They were able to plot on the map the best road route for the coach to travel and discuss enthusiastically the programme of places they were going to see. This visit is planned to give pupils an excellent opportunity to both practise and enhance their geographical, personal and social skills.

133. Although pupils in most classes, present their knowledge reasonably well on paper older pupils have few opportunities to write longer in-depth pieces of work.

134. Only one lesson was seen but an examination of teachers' planning and analysis of pupils' work, indicate that the teaching of geography is sound. Pupils' written work is marked but the quality of teachers' comments varies from class to class. At its most effective, marking provides pupils with a clear understanding of what they need to do next to progress further.

135. The curriculum is satisfactory and is based partly on national guidance and partly on the schools' own scheme of work. Good use is made of visits to consolidate pupils' learning. The school is beginning to make more effective use of ICT, including the Internet, to support teaching and learning in geography. The school is aware that procedures for assessing pupils' progress are inadequate and developments are planned.

136. The co-ordination of geography is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has monitored teachers' planning and pupils' work but no direct monitoring of teaching and learning has taken place.

## **HISTORY**

137. Standards in history have been maintained since the last inspection. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils reach levels in line with national expectations.

138. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a good understanding of the passing of time as they consider how they themselves have changed and grown older. As they look further into the past, they compare how clothes and homes have changed over the last 50 years. Pupils in Year 2 have a good grasp of the historical concepts of similarity and difference, as well as that of change over time. For example, pupils listen to one child's Grandma talk about the clothes she wore as a child. This, they compare with now and make some perceptive observations. They use the correct vocabulary such as 'pinafore' and 'ruff'. As pupils develop a deeper sense of history, they become more aware of how significant figures from the past, such as Florence Nightingale still have a considerable influence on life today.

139. Pupils in Year 3 discover what life was like in Ancient Egypt and use their developing word-processing skills to record their findings. Their studies of invaders and settlers show a good understanding of the reasons why people move. Pupils in Year 4 look at the methods of writing used by the Ancient Egyptians. They discover for themselves the difficulties there would be if hieroglyphics were used for recording today.

140. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 recognise that the past can be divided into periods of time. They realise that different information sources can be used to answer questions about the past and can explain and suggest the reasons and consequences of the main events over a period of time. For example pupils in Year 5, tracking the chronological order and fate of Henry VIII's wives, understood the significance of these events in the King's eventual split with the Catholic Church and Rome. Stamford through the centuries is the focus of historical enquiry for pupils in Year 6. They consider how groups such as the Vikings, Anglo-Saxons and Romans influenced the growth of their town.

141. Direct teaching of a lesson in Years 1 and 2 was not seen during the inspection but evidence from analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning show a satisfactory curriculum and the systematic development of historical skills.

142. The teaching of history is sound in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and use discussion and questioning to good effect. However expectations of the range and amounts of personal writing, particularly for average and above average pupils, are not high enough. Written work is not always presented well. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

143. The curriculum is satisfactory and is based, partly on national guidance and partly on the school's own scheme of work. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are inadequate and appropriate improvements are planned. Good use is made of the rich history in the local environment. Visits to historical sights and visitors to school enhance pupils' learning.

144. Co-ordination of history is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has identified priorities for development. He has begun to monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work. No monitoring of teaching is taking place currently.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

145. Standards are below national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This indicates that standards have not improved enough since the previous inspection, when attainment was judged as below expectations overall. However, through careful strategic planning, the school has made satisfactory progress in its efforts to improve attainment across the school.

146. In order to address the issue of pupils not having had the benefit of long-term access to the programme of study and thus not achieving as well as they might, the school has recently introduced a skills building planning strategy. Planning is now organised so that for this year, two year groups broadly follow the same programme of study and it is based upon the skills expected for the younger set of pupils. This is gaining success in that pupils in Years 1, 3 and 5 are now reaching the expected standards for their age. Pupils in Years 2, 4 and 6 are developing their skills, but are not yet able to attain the standards appropriate to their age.

147. Satisfactory improvements have been made in the number and quality of computers since the previous inspection, when resources were judged as inadequate. The school now has a computer suite, in addition to computers in classrooms. However, the number of

computers in the suite is only sufficient for half of a class to work on at any one time. Teachers do their best in the situation by ensuring that, at some point, all pupils have similar access. Lesson planning is often frustrated, however, by unreliable machines and during the inspection, two were out of use. Computers in the classrooms are usable but are not compatible with those in the suite. This currently hampers opportunities for the school to extend its networking system. The school has plans to upgrade both resources and facilities during the coming school year. During the inspection, limited use of computers was observed in classrooms during lessons.

148. At the time of the previous inspection, teaching was judged as unsatisfactory across the school. During the inspection, the quality of the teaching seen was good in three-quarters of lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. All teachers have received training and this has resulted in improved subject knowledge and confidence, a weakness identified at the time of the previous inspection. In all of the lessons seen, teachers' knowledge of ICT ensured that basic skills were taught effectively. Teachers gave clear instructions and explanations and this helped the pupils to build upon their skills and to work with increasing independence. An additional training programme is due to commence in September. During the inspection, although pupils in Years 5 and 6 were able to make good links between data handling and mathematics in the lessons observed, there was only limited evidence of ICT being used in other subjects.

149. Pupils in Year 2 are currently following the same programme as those in Year 1 as part of the school's two-year, skills-building strategy. Year 2 pupils have developed basic skills in word processing, but many are still reliant on the support of an adult. In the lesson observed, pupils listened attentively and followed the teacher's instructions carefully, so that by the end of the lesson, many were able to input, highlight and change the appearance of text. As a result of the school's programme, pupils in Year 1 follow the same planning and are working at a level broadly in line with national expectations for pupils of this age.

150. Pupils in Year 6 can use spreadsheets, applying formulae as they work out the number of people they could invite to a party for a fixed sum of money. Pupils enjoyed the challenge and competition of tackling a 'real-life' problem. By the end of the lesson, the average and higher attaining pupils had learned some basic skills in the use of spreadsheets as a tool for managing data. Evidence of work done previously indicates that by Year 6, most pupils know how to combine text and graphics. This skill was used effectively to produce a newspaper, the 'Year 6 Times'. Pupils in Year 5 follow the same programme and are currently attaining at a level appropriate to their age. Pupils with special educational needs are attaining at the same level as their peers, in relation to their prior attainment. The school is careful to include them in all ICT activities.

151. A satisfactory policy is in place. The school has adopted the most recent subject guidelines for planning and this addresses all aspects of the subject programme of study. The school's priority for helping pupils to build their skills gradually means that, although standards are currently below expectations for pupils in Years 2 and 6, these groups of pupils are developing a more secure learning base. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Teachers keep an ongoing record of what pupils can do and use this information to inform their writing of reports to parents. A new assessment and recording procedure is due to be introduced at the end of the summer term ready for the next school year. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has a clear overview of priorities for the subject. The school is well-placed to improve standards.

## **MUSIC**

152. Standards are in line with national expectation by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. At the time of the previous inspection, they were above average in Years 1 and 2 and average in Years 3 to 6. The co-ordinator for the subject is new since the previous inspection.

153. Opportunities for pupils to develop their musical skills, knowledge and appreciation occur both in the planned curriculum and in the daily life of the school. In the Reception class, pupils sing rhyming games as part of their numeracy lessons. In both key stages, pupils are introduced to a range of music through the planned topics in the commercial scheme used by the school. Music from other cultures is sometimes used, as in a Year 5 lesson in which pupils were composing and playing their own music to accompany a Jamaican song, 'Mango Walk'. In assembly, music is played as the pupils enter and leave the hall and pupils are encouraged to sit and listen.

154. Pupils join in singing during assembly. They can sing in unison, tunefully and with enthusiasm. For the most part, they take pleasure in the activity. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy their lessons and make satisfactory progress.

155. In Year 2, pupils explore a range of pitched and un-pitched percussion instruments to make animal sounds and are given good opportunities to perform in front of the rest of the class. Percussion instruments are chosen which are best suited to a particular sound and pupils gain a good sense of tone. In Year 1, they learn the difference between sound and silence, then move into an understanding of beat and 'silent beat', using a simple graphic score.

156. In Years 3 to 6, pupils learn how to recognise musical patterns and changes of pitch. They are able to describe pulse and rhythm and they use their knowledge to good effect in their performances. They are able to evaluate their own performance and that of others, identifying good points and areas for improvement. Pupils from Year 3 upwards regularly sing in a weekly choir practice and there are recorder groups at lunchtimes.

157. In the lessons observed, teaching was always at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers used the scheme of work effectively to interest the majority of pupils and to include all pupils, of whatever level of attainment, in all aspects of the work.

158. There is a satisfactory range of musical instruments and good use is made of them. The school choir sings in the town centre at Christmas and pupils are, at present, preparing for their first summer concert. Groups of musicians visit the school during the year to demonstrate particular instruments and styles of music, such as the recent visit of a folk singer from America.

159. Opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their musical skills in the choir, in musical performances, in the recorder club and also through the teaching of peripatetic staff. In addition, the school has taken part in an exciting venture, the 'Blue Sky' project, which has resulted in the making of a video of pupils performing their own composition to accompany a film to be shown on television later this year. The new co-ordinator is keen to carry on and extend the musical tradition within the school and is beginning to monitor teaching and learning in the subject. Her leadership is satisfactory and is beginning to help support other teachers. As yet, there is no formal assessment of pupils' progress. The subject makes a useful contribution to pupils' cultural development.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

160. Standards at the time of the previous inspection were satisfactory at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on standards, as no physical education lessons were observed, but on the games, athletics and orienteering lessons observed, attainment in Years 1, 3 and 4 lessons was in line with expectations for pupils in these age groups, though below them in Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to others during lessons.

161. The school has a tradition of providing swimming for pupils in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2. Evidence indicates that the majority of these pupils are achieving well. However, because no provision is made for older pupils, it is not possible to make a judgement on standards in swimming by the age of eleven.

162. Year 1 pupils are developing appropriate ball skills. The lesson seen was well organised and pupils were provided with good opportunities to practise their skills. They enjoyed the lesson, particularly when playing in the circle game and, as a result, were enthusiastic and tried hard to improve their skills. However, in a Year 2 lesson, the majority of pupils achieved very little and attainment was below national expectations because of poor attitudes and lack of self control following a session sitting a national test.

163. In the Year 3 lesson observed, the teacher's good management and effective skills' teaching resulted in improvement in pupils' long-jumping skills, so that by the end of the lesson, the large majority achieved in line with national expectations. The well-prepared and carefully organised orienteering lesson in Year 4 made for an enjoyable lesson, where most pupils worked hard to locate the symbols hidden around the school grounds. Points awarded for each symbol found encouraged the pupils to try even harder and they were obviously pleased as their scores increased. As a result, pupils developed a satisfactory awareness of the need to keep north as a constant when using a map as an information source.

164. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It was satisfactory in three-quarters of the lessons seen, with some unsatisfactory teaching observed. Planning for lessons provides a progressive programme of activities in line with National Curriculum requirements and incorporates aspects of a commercial scheme. Most teachers include an appropriate warm-up/cool-down session. Some opportunities are provided for pupils to develop skills in thinking about their own or others' performance, but this is not consistent across the school. Teachers keep individual records of pupils' skills' development. In addition, a more detailed gymnastics record is maintained.

165. The subject is soundly led. The co-ordinator has only recently taken over the role. She is enthusiastic and gives much time to the development of sports activities outside normal school hours. However, she has not yet had the opportunity to observe teaching and learning throughout the school. The quality of the accommodation is good. The hall and extensive grounds make good provision for much of the programme of study. Resources are plentiful, and, apart from minor wear on the large gymnastics mats, are of a good quality and organised well. The school provides outdoor adventure activities for older pupils and Year 6 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit each year. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to take part in sports clubs after school. In addition, the school takes part in a range of competitive sport, including regular involvement in Stamford Town Sports. Good links are maintained with the local Further Education College and the school is working towards a 'Healthy Schools' accreditation.