

INSPECTION REPORT

**DONINGTON COWLEY ENDOWED PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Donington, Nr Spalding

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120556

Headteacher: Mr J Such

Reporting inspector: Mr T Neat
20007

Dates of inspection: 7th to 10th July 2003

Inspection number: 248150

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 controlled

Age range of pupils: 5 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Towndam Lane
Donington
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Lincolnshire

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Councillor Sheila Whyles

Date of previous inspection: 3/11/97

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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20007	Mr T Neat	Registered inspector	Science Physical education	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught?
19322	Mrs J Bedawi	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	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?
20244	Mr D Morgan	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music	How well is the school led and managed?
30266	Ms H Rask	Team inspector	Geography History Religious education Foundation Stage	
2759	Mr D Sleightholme	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Donington Cowley Endowed Primary is a voluntary controlled school serving the villages of Donington and Bicker, near Spalding in Lincolnshire. It is slightly larger than most other primary schools, having 279 pupils on roll compared with the average size of 242. Most pupils are currently taught in classes which contain more than one year group. Although the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average [1.1 per cent], the school believes that many parents do not claim their entitlement. Pupils are drawn from a variety of backgrounds. Some live in privately owned homes and others in council houses.

The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs [6.5 per cent] is below the national average. The difficulties experienced by these pupils include moderate and specific learning problems and those affecting speech or communication. The percentage with Statements of Special Educational Need [0.7 per cent] is broadly in line with the national average. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The attainment of children joining the reception class is broadly in line with the level normally found. The proportion of pupils moving into or out of the school during term is higher than that found nationally.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Donington is a good and improving school. The very good leadership of the headteacher and senior staff and the good quality teaching result in most pupils achieving well. The school works hard and successfully to give all pupils opportunities to succeed. Despite a great number of staffing changes standards have risen year on year since the new headteacher arrived nearly three years ago. The school was given an Achievement Award by the government this year in recognition of the progress it has made. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve good standards in English, mathematics and music.
- The very good leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff impact well on the standards pupils attain.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Very good provision for pupils' personal development results in them behaving well, having very good attitudes to learning and forming very good relationships.
- A strong shared commitment to succeed is moving the school forward and it has a very good capacity to continue making progress.
- The school cares well for its pupils and forges a good relationship with parents.

What could be improved

- Provision for the youngest pupils.
- The role played by the subject co-ordinators.
- Arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' progress are not sufficiently effective in a few subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1997. Since that time it has developed well. Despite the great difficulties posed by staffing changes standards are rising. This is due to the very good work of the headteacher and senior managers and the improvement in the quality of teaching in spite of the influx of a large number of mainly inexperienced teachers. The key issues identified in the last inspection report have been addressed successfully overall. The attainment of pupils is better, the governors are more involved in making decisions and the provision for information and communication technology has improved.

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
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	C	C	C
mathematics	D	C	C	C
science	D	B	C	C

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

The emphasis placed on raising standards by the new headteacher, and improvements in teaching and assessment have resulted in pupils achieving well. Results in the national tests have improved for three years running. The school was given an Achievement Award by the government this year in recognition of the progress it has made.

Children begin their reception year with average abilities. They make satisfactory progress thanks to effective teaching and the good relationships that the staff make with them. By the time they enter Year 1 most attain the goals agreed nationally for children of this age in all areas of learning.

In the national tests for 2002 - the last year for which comparative data are available - results indicate that at that time pupils at the end of Year 2 attained standards in line with the national average for all schools in reading and writing. In mathematics, standards were well above average. When reading, writing and mathematics scores are taken together results were above the average for schools operating in similar circumstances. The table above shows that at the end of Year 6, results were in line with the national average and also with the average for schools operating in similar circumstances for all the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

Inspection evidence shows that attainment is above average in En and ma at the end of Years 2 and 6. This broadly reflects school records which indicate that the likely outcomes of the 2003 national tests for Year 2, when reading, writing and mathematics scores are taken together, will be well above the national average. It is likely that Year 6's results in 2003 will be above the national and similar schools' averages in English and mathematics. As Year 2 pupils, the standards of the present Year 6 cohort were well below average in reading and writing and below in mathematics. Results in science will probably be in line with the national and similar schools' averages at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Clearly these

pupils have made a great deal of progress in the last few years. The impact of the work of the headteacher and senior staff in raising standards is even more significant when the many changes in teaching staff are taken into account. The school sets challenging targets, which it often achieves or exceeds.

In music, standards are above average throughout the school. Standards are average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and information and communication technology. Not enough lessons were observed to make a valid judgement of overall standards in physical education, but in those elements seen standards were average. Standards in religious education are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.

Boys and girls attain equally well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the good support provided by teachers and teaching assistants.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school life. They participate very well in discussions, listening carefully to their teachers and to each other.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are very aware of their teachers' high expectations of them, and understand the importance of behaving responsibly. The vast majority behave with consideration and think of others.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. There is a strong sense of mutual trust and respect. Adults provide positive role models for pupils, who know that they are valued as individuals. The pupils mix with and take care of younger pupils happily and enjoy taking responsibility.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Levels of attendance are significantly reduced by parents taking their children on holidays during term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The good teaching and learning contribute directly to pupils' achievements. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. Just over two in ten of the lessons observed were very good or excellent and more than seven in ten were good or better. This is a great improvement compared with the findings of the last inspection. The percentage of lessons judged very good or better has more than doubled. This performance is an indication of the potential of the teachers, nearly all of whom have joined the staff in the last two years and the strength of leadership of the headteacher in the face of great staffing difficulties.

The teaching in the pre-reception and reception classes is consistently effective and much good teaching was seen. In Years 1 and 2 and 3 to 6 teaching and learning are good. The teachers' high expectations of what can be achieved result in pupils working very productively and concentrating hard. Teachers handle classes and individuals skilfully, so that behaviour in lessons is nearly always good and sometimes excellent. Everyone applies themselves well to their tasks. Teachers' questioning is often very effective, leading pupils to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding very well. The good relationships between teachers and their classes contribute well to pupils' very good attitudes to learning. A variety of minor areas for development were seen in lessons, such as ensuring that all pupils are listening before giving instructions.

Teachers work hard to meet the needs of different groups and individuals. The provision made in lessons for pupils with special educational needs is good.

The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. Teachers do not yet make full use of computers. The core subjects of English, mathematics and science are taught well throughout the school. Teaching is good in art and design, design and technology, music and religious education. In history it is satisfactory and in geography, information and communication technology and physical education not enough lessons were seen to make reliable judgements.

Teachers work effectively with their assistants who give good support to the groups and individuals they work with. This is particularly true of their work with pupils with special educational needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Very good strategies for promoting pupils' literacy and numeracy skills have helped to raise standards. A very good range of extra-curricular activities enriches the opportunities for learning. There is good provision for personal, social, citizenship and health education. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is not yet fully developed.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils benefit from the variety of learning opportunities provided, especially the practical and investigative work in subjects such as art and science. The considerable time provided for the teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy helps pupils with special educational needs to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision for moral and social development is very effective in helping pupils to become mature, responsible young people. Spiritual development is promoted well. Pupils are encouraged to reflect personally in quiet moments. Cultural development is good with the performing arts having a high profile and the school gaining a deserved reputation for this through a regular programme of concerts.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The attention paid to pupils' welfare is good. The school is very successful in providing pupils with focussed personal and educational support and guidance, which is enhanced by the very positive relationships evident throughout the school. The arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress are good overall. In the core subjects, English, mathematics and science, they are very good, but in a few subjects procedures are not sufficiently effective.
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The school has a good partnership with parents and has established good links and means of communicating with them. The involvement of parents in school life is good and they contribute well to their children's learning. The vast majority of parents express good opinions about the school and the quality of education their children receive.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The very effective work of the headteacher and senior staff has resulted in good and improving standards in the pupils' academic and personal development, and good teaching and learning. There is a strong, shared commitment to succeed and a very good capacity to do so. The role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped because of the many staff changes.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors are led well by the chairman and are very supportive of the headteacher and staff. They are active in their monitoring of the school's activities, and have a strategic view of how the school should improve. Not all the required items of information are included in their annual report to parents. Not all governors have sufficient understanding of the provision needed for the Foundation Stage.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school reviews its performance well. Improvements in the use of assessment data and the evaluation of teaching have helped to raise standards. The introduction of target setting in English, mathematics and science and the action taken to target pupils so that they reach at least average standards have also helped.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes good use of its financial and other resources. The governing body receives good information from the headteacher enabling it to monitor the school's financial planning and evaluate the school's priorities effectively. The school applies the principles of best value well.

The school is staffed well. The accommodation is good and there are sufficient learning resources, except in the Foundation Stage.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children enjoy school.• Behaviour is good.• Pupils are expected to work hard and achieve their best.• Pupils make good progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A small number think the school does not work closely with parents.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views held by the vast majority of parents. It judges that the school has a good partnership with parents and encourages them to become involved in their children's education.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The clear emphasis placed on raising attainment by the headteacher since his appointment and the actions taken to target pupils so that they reach at least average standards, together with improvements in teaching and assessment, have helped to ensure that most now achieve well. These factors have also led to a significant improvement in results gained at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in the national tests. The school was given an Achievement Award by the government this year in recognition of the progress it has made.
2. Children begin their reception year with average abilities. They make satisfactory progress thanks to effective teaching and the good relationships that the staff make with them. By the time they enter Year 1 most attain the goals agreed nationally for children of this age in all areas of learning.
3. The results of the national tests for 2002, the last year for which comparative data are available, indicate that, at that time, pupils at the end of Year 2 attained standards in line with the national average for all schools in reading and writing. In mathematics, standards were well above average. When reading, writing and mathematics scores are taken together results were above the average for schools operating in similar circumstances. Performance at the higher level in the tests was in line with the national average in reading, writing and science and well above average in mathematics. Results at the end of Year 6 were in line with the national average and the average for schools operating in similar circumstances for all the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Higher level performance was in line with the national average in English and science and above average in mathematics.
4. School records supported by inspection evidence show that the likely outcomes of the 2003 national tests for Year 2, when reading, writing and mathematics scores are taken together, will be well above average. As Year 2 pupils, the present Year 6's standards were well below average in reading and writing and below in mathematics. It is likely that their results in 2003 will be above the national and similar schools' averages in English and mathematics. Science results will probably be in line with the national and similar schools' averages at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Clearly this represents a great deal of improvement. The impact of the work of the headteacher and senior staff in raising standards is even more significant in the context of the many changes in teaching staff¹. The school sets challenging targets which it often achieves or exceeds.
5. Inspection evidence shows that in English pupils' attainment in speaking and listening, reading, writing, handwriting and spelling by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is above average. By the end of Year 2, when speaking and listening most pupils listen carefully to instructions and respond well to questions. They explain ideas confidently and make points of view pronouncing words correctly. By the end of Year 6, pupils engage in conversations with their teacher and their peers using a good range of vocabulary. They use terms associated with their work in subjects such as design and technology confidently. In reading, by the end of Year 2, pupils tackle unfamiliar text confidently and attempt challenging vocabulary. They recall the main events in

¹ Please refer to the teaching section of the report.

stories, discuss the characters and predict what might happen next. Year 6 pupils read aloud confidently and introduce strategies such as pausing while reading to an audience to make their performance more effective. In writing, Year 2 pupils prepare plans for stories and produce this neatly using accurate punctuation. They write clear sentences using capital letters, full stops and question marks. Above average pupils use a good vocabulary to create description in their work, writing about, for example, "an awesome falconry display". Average ability pupils in Year 6 write regularly in a variety of forms. They know how to set down a letter using the standard layout. More able pupils draw on their wider vocabulary to produce advertisements for a circus.

6. Standards in mathematics in both Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. By the end of Year 2 most pupils can sequence numbers to 100 and know addition and subtraction facts to 20. They know the properties of squares and circles and tell the time to quarters of an hour. By Year 6 most pupils handle mental and written methods of calculation effectively and begin to understand how letters can take the place of numbers in expressions such as $5a/2b$, where the values of a and b are known. More able pupils draw straight-line graphs to represent equations such as $x = y + 2$.
7. Science standards are average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils in Year 2 often work above the level expected for this age group. They use vocabulary in the study of forces such as 'upthrust' and 'kinetic energy' which is more often used by older pupils. More able pupils measure force in Newtons. The use of an effective revision course results in aspects of Year 6 pupils' work being above the level expected, including their understanding of the role of chlorophyll in plants and wave forms of different sounds. More able pupils show a very clear understanding of dissolving, writing "The smaller the grains of salt the faster they dissolve".
8. In art and design, design and technology, geography, history and information and communication technology, standards are average at both the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In music, standards are above average throughout the school. No judgement is made of overall standards in physical education, since too few lessons were observed, but in those elements seen, standards were average. Pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 attain standards in religious education that are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus.
9. No differences were found between the standards attained by boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to the targets set for them as a result of the good support provided by teachers and teaching assistants. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils enjoy school life and have very good attitudes to learning. Their behaviour, in and out of lessons, is good. Pupils' personal development and the quality of their relationships are very good and a strength of the school. There are now far more opportunities for pupils to work and learn independently, an issue in the last report. Pupil attendance in the last academic year is satisfactory, but has declined since the last inspection.
11. The very youngest children enter the part-time 'Early Years Unit', in the spring and summer terms, aged between three and four years old, moving into the reception classes in the autumn term. They settle happily, quickly learning school routines. The children are excited by learning and are encouraged to discover for themselves,

often showing very good levels of interest and involvement. Praise is used well and motivates the children to do even better. Independence is expected, for example, older children need minimal assistance when changing for a physical development session. Many children are still at an early stage of learning to share and work together as a class or group. However, they have very good relationships with the adults around them and value their approval.

12. The older pupils also have very good attitudes to learning and work hard. They participate very well in discussions, listening carefully to their teachers and to each other, often responding thoughtfully. This not only enhances pupils' speaking and listening skills, but also extends their thinking and introduces new ideas to the debate. Pupils of all abilities are keen to learn. They settle to written work quickly, understanding what they have to do and work purposefully, whether individually or in groups. The boys generally find handwriting and spelling more of a challenge than most of the girls, but they persevere. Boys and girls are equally interested in learning. For example, a group of girls commented that history was their favourite subject; the boys said that they found learning about the Ancient Egyptians difficult at first, but now find the facts they have discovered interesting. Since the last inspection there has been a strong focus on developing independent learning. As a result, pupils of all ages are now becoming confident, independent learners. Opportunities increase appropriately as pupils get older. They enjoy planning and taking responsibility for their learning, perhaps through researching topics and presentation in many different subjects. Pupils are rightly proud of the work they produce. The oldest pupils are prepared well for secondary school. The close and productive information and computer technology link with the nearest secondary school enables pupils in Years 5 and 6 to have a weekly computer session. As a result, their skills are considerably enhanced, both academically and socially. Pupils comment that these weekly visits are "Cool!"
13. Pupil behaviour is good. They know and understand the 'Queen Bee' rules, because they helped to devise them. Pupils are very aware that their teachers have high expectations of them, and they understand the importance of responsibility. The vast majority remember to behave with consideration and to think of others. Those that do sometimes misbehave usually respond well when encouraged to do better. Even during the very hot weather during the inspection, pupils who were uncomfortable and tired continued to behave well. Pupils are polite and friendly and will offer help readily if they see it is needed. They like the house system and particularly enjoy the competitive element of gaining house points for good work, actions or behaviour. The house captains, elected by other junior age pupils, take their duties seriously. They are able to meet the headteacher from time to time to share any issues raised by pupils. During lunch and at play pupils mix and play well together. There are few serious incidents. No bullying was noted and there have been no exclusions.
14. Most pupils with special educational needs enjoy the lessons and work hard. They like working in smaller groups where they are well supported by classroom assistants who help them make good gains in basic skills such as learning to write competently and speaking properly. The pupils' positive attitudes are evident in many subjects. Pupils in Year 4 with special educational needs took a full part in evaluating the purses made by their classmates in previous design and technology lessons and enjoyed showing their work to others.
15. The quality of pupils' personal development and relationships is very good. The adults set positive examples and show good practice in their professional relationships which the pupils learn from and follow. As a result, there is a strong sense of mutual

trust and respect. Pupils know that they are valued as individuals, no matter what their ability or character. The pupils appreciate the way that their teachers and other adults connected with the school will often go 'that one step further', perhaps to help resolve an individual problem, or by giving their free time to run an after school activity. Pupils transfer these skills to their own relationships; they mix with and take care of younger pupils happily and expect to take on responsibility, which they enjoy. They are supportive of pupils who have special educational needs, or those who find work hard to master. They have established firm friendships and feel confident in expressing their likes and dislikes. There is social and racial harmony. Although there are only a very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, they are accepted as equal members of the school community by other pupils and are fully involved in school life. The school works hard to celebrate and reflect the importance of multicultural British and world societies with a good degree of success, despite its rural isolation. Pupils learn about many different faiths, and links in art are particularly strong with good displays of pupils' aboriginal art, or work on batik; some library books promote positive multicultural images. The school is aware that multicultural education is an ongoing area of development; for example, no use is currently made of Internet links with schools of different racial composition.

16. Pupil attendance over the last academic year is satisfactory, but has declined since the last inspection. The main factor contributing to the decline is the many family holidays taken during term time. A good number of holidays last well over 10 days, but remain authorised, some are for odd days that build up over time. Current registers show that holidays are being taken throughout the year and are significantly affecting school attendance. There are many examples of daily and weekly attendance being well below 90 per cent. Parents are expected to complete holiday request forms but not all do so. Too many parents are not supporting the school in its efforts to improve and are not appreciating the positive impact that sustained attendance has on their children's learning and education. The majority of pupils arrive in good time for lessons, but a small number are regularly late.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and contributes directly to pupils' achievements. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. Just over two in ten of the lessons seen were very good or excellent and more than seven in ten were good or better. This is a great improvement compared with the findings of the last inspection when nearly ten per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. The percentage of lessons judged very good or better has more than doubled. Two lessons of the highest quality were seen during this inspection. None was seen in the original inspection. This performance is an indication of the potential of the teachers, nearly all of whom have joined the staff in the last two years, and an indication of the headteacher's strong leadership in the face of great staffing difficulties. In the two years since he was appointed ten teachers have left and ten have joined the staff. There is a variety of reasons for teachers leaving, including promotion, relocation and retirement.
18. Teaching in the Foundation Stage² is consistently effective. Much good teaching was seen. In the important area of personal and social development staff make the need for good behaviour clear from the start and as a result most children settle into school life readily. The early skills of language and number are taught well and generally the staff have good expectations of the children. However, there is now increasing

² The Foundation Stage is the period of education for children aged three to the end of the reception year.

- recognition that the children also need to learn through planned, structured play activities, which are appropriate for their age and understanding.
19. In Years 1 and 2 and 3 to 6 teaching and learning are good. A broadly similar picture of teaching and learning was seen in the infant and junior parts of the school. The teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, pupils work very productively and concentrate hard. Classes and individual pupils are handled skilfully by teachers so that behaviour in lessons is nearly always good and sometimes excellent. This enables everyone to apply themselves well to their tasks. Teachers' questioning is often very effective, leading pupils to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding very well. In a Year 1/2 lesson pupils' writing performance was boosted by enquiries such as "What sort of thing would this character like?" and "Is it going to be a happy ending?" The good relationships between teachers and their classes and touches of humour contribute well to pupils' very good attitudes to learning. A variety of minor areas for development were seen in lessons, such as ensuring that all pupils are listening before giving instructions.
 20. Teachers work hard to meet the needs of different groups and individuals, often circulating to ensure that all pupils are getting on well. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is planned from the outset and as a result the teaching and support provided are good. Pupils with special educational needs in Year 3 were observed working in a group where the teaching assistant acted as their 'scribe' for the flip chart so that their ideas could be recorded and included in the end of lesson summary.
 21. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well, enabling pupils to use them effectively to learn about other subjects. Teachers do not yet make full use of computers. The core subjects of English, mathematics and science are taught well throughout the school. Overall teaching is good in art and design, design and technology, music and religious education. In history it is satisfactory and in geography, information and communication technology and physical education not enough lessons were seen to make reliable judgements.
 22. Teachers work effectively with their assistants and brief them well. The assistants give good support to the groups and individuals they work with. This is particularly true of their work with pupils with special educational needs.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

23. At the time of the previous inspection there was a satisfactory curriculum that met requirements with sound provision for personal and social education (PSE), drugs and sex education. However, weaknesses were found in planning with some inconsistencies in matching work successfully to pupils' abilities and few opportunities for investigative, independent, research-based work. The school had just revised its schemes of work and was starting to implement them.
24. This inspection has noted overall improvement in most of these areas and shows that:
 - the quality and range of learning opportunities are good at both key stages;
 - the taught programme covers well the content required by law for pupils aged five to 11 with very effective approaches to teaching literacy and numeracy;
 - there is good provision for pupils with special educational needs;
 - the programme for PSE has improved, is regularly timetabled and is now good;
 - there is a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

25. Pupils can access curriculum opportunities readily, some of which help pupils prepare well for the next stage of learning beyond age 11. The time provided for each subject reflects national guidance and includes specific sessions to promote basic skills such as extended writing sessions, handwriting, spelling and the opportunity to learn to swim. The school has taken up the opportunity to introduce several support programmes for pupils with special educational needs such as additional and further literacy booster programmes.
26. The planning of the curriculum is good overall and very good in English and mathematics where the majority of time is allocated. This has been a key factor in the improvement in standards in these two subjects. The planning follows the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and draws on the national planning guidance for the teaching of other subjects. There is a secure overview of the work to be covered across each half term. When teachers make short-term plans they now consistently highlight the objectives for each lesson, the outcomes pupils are expected to achieve and whether computers will be used. This consistent approach helps ensure that pupils from the same year group, but taught in different classes, access the same concepts and skills even if the activities they complete have some variation. The curriculum is extended through a satisfactory school visit programme; for example, pupils in Year 2 have recently followed a local history trail.
27. The considerable time provided for the teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy helps pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This includes the provision of the national booster programmes for literacy provided by trained teaching assistants. However, these pupils also benefit from the variety of learning experiences resulting from practical and investigative work in subjects such as art and science, where the limitations resulting from restricted literacy and numeracy skills do not impact so much.
28. Individual education plans (IEPs), for pupils with special educational needs, include targets mainly for literacy but sometimes also for numeracy and behaviour. Lesson observations showed that the curriculum needs of these pupils, many of whom had a target to improve language and communication, were being met through, for example, activities that promoted conversations. For pupils identified as potentially able of reaching the national standards in core subjects at age 11, known as the target group, the curriculum provision has included improved additional teacher staffing during the autumn and spring terms. As a result, early indications are that a higher proportion of pupils will reach these standards in 2003.
29. The many changes of staff have provided a good opportunity to use new expertise and the provision of extra-curricular activities is now very good. It is delivered through clubs that cater for a wide range of interests. The provision for creative and sporting interests is very good with tuition in instrumental and games skills, for which the school has a good reputation. There are many other interesting activities including playing chess, learning French and a club introduced to promote plant propagation skills in one of the inner gardens.
30. There is good provision for personal, social, citizenship and health education. Appropriate attention is given to education about drugs. The local police provide drugs education through regular visits and in consultation with parents. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide a sex education programme linked to PSE and science.

31. There are good links with the village church and it provides the setting for services that pupils attend at Christmas, Easter and at harvest time. Although the dominant local industry is farming, the nature and scale of its operation, from a health and safety perspective, makes business links difficult for primary age pupils. Pupils move on to one of three local schools at the age of 11 and some good curriculum links have been forged to assist this process. During this inspection older pupils spent one afternoon visiting a local high school to develop their computer skills. Similarly one of the three schools provides the facilities for the pupils from Donington and other local schools to hold an annual sports day.
32. When the school was previously inspected spiritual and cultural development were judged to be satisfactory; moral development was good and social development was very good. This inspection shows overall improvement and now:
- spiritual and cultural development are good;
 - moral and social development are very good.
33. Spiritual development is promoted well. Pupils are encouraged to reflect personally in quiet moments in school assemblies. They follow a unit of work in the religious education programme that is based on the theme of a 'beautiful world' which is relevant to the rural setting of the school. The school holds a memorial sports day to celebrate the life of a former pupil. Pupils are reminded of him as they pass the memorial inner garden each day. Good opportunities are taken to promote spiritual development in timetabled PSE and 'circle time' sessions³. Older pupils have recently prepared their own autobiographies; some of these sensitively reflect the pupils' lives and achievements.
34. Moral development is very good and promoted strongly throughout the school. Pupils have agreed class rules and these are displayed prominently. They also have learned simple rules to follow when accessing the Internet. The day-to-day routines for pupils' movements around the school are well managed. This continues into playtimes. For example, the lunchtime supervisors ensure that marker cones are used to designate areas of the school field for younger pupils to access while, at the same time, older pupils can play active team games.
35. Social development is very good. Many lessons include opportunities for pupils to work in pairs or small teams. A pair of Year 2 pupils accessed a computer to produce a riddle that they printed and read to the class during an English lesson. The school visit programme, such as the day spent at a World War 2 museum, provides good opportunities for pupils to learn together. They operate in small teams and complete some of the monitor duties. They have the opportunity to take on responsibility such as the role of house captain. Some work in teams to set up equipment, for example, for assemblies. Playing in the orchestra is a regular event. A notice pinned up prominently reminds pupils to "set up for orchestra" when the pupils play in school assemblies.
36. Cultural development is good with the performing arts having a high profile and the school gaining a proud reputation through a regular programme of concerts. The range of experiences includes modern dance, Morris dancing, Shakespearean drama and a wide variety of music played in different settings. The school orchestra has been asked to perform at the Spalding Festival Remembrance Concert. Recently, pupils enjoyed a series of enhanced experiences when an arts week was organised.

³ Circle time sessions provide opportunities for pupils to share feelings, opinions and beliefs with their teacher and their peers.

Each teacher ran two workshops and pupils circulated around the class bases to take part in the activities and learn new skills. The school has recognised the mono-cultural nature of its local setting and raises the profile of multicultural issues and religious diversity through the PSE and religious education programmes. Infant pupils had produced art based on African traditions and older junior pupils had learned the techniques developed by the artist Mondrian.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The attention paid to pupils' welfare is good overall. The monitoring of their academic progress and attainment is good, as are assessment procedures for most subjects, a significant improvement since the last inspection. Assessment information is used well to adapt the curriculum to meet all pupils' learning needs. The school is very successful in providing pupils with focussed personal and educational support and guidance. Attendance monitoring is satisfactory. Procedures for promoting behaviour and preventing bullying are good. The attention paid to health and safety matters is satisfactory. Arrangements and procedures related to child protection are good. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
38. The well trained support staff work closely with teachers and provide pupils, who may be less or more able, lacking confidence, or with a special educational need, with good guidance. They build on the teaching well, for example, by quietly explaining work to pupils. As a result, pupils build well on their previous learning, often with a good degree of independence and increasing confidence.
39. The school register of pupils with special educational needs records the stage on the special educational needs Code of Practice and the specific needs of each pupil. Good progress has been made in revising the format of IEPs. The targets, mostly set for planned action in literacy and numeracy, are reviewed regularly with this information communicated to parents. A simple clear target sheet issued to the pupil is attached to each IEP. Sufficient attention is then given to ensuring that the tasks that are set reflect action against these targets. For example, a nursery age pupil with speech and language difficulties was supported well by a structured language game and enjoyed a task that was directly linked to a communication target written into the IEP.
40. The very good attention given to offering pupils support and guidance on learning and personal development is enhanced by the very positive relationships that are embedded throughout the school. The staff want the best for their pupils and use every opportunity to reinforce the highest of expectations, formally perhaps in assemblies or in circle time discussions, or informally through their secure understanding of individual pupils. As a result, positive attributes such as respect and responsibility become second nature to all pupils. The pupils respond very well to the guidance that is provided, so that they are confident of their own ability and potential. At the same time, they genuinely want their fellow pupils to achieve and succeed and show delight when others do well. For example, a girl who was shy was encouraged positively to speak louder and did so. Pupils are always encouraged to extend their skills and so approach learning eagerly, with maturity and independence.
41. Procedures for promoting behaviour and preventing bullying are good. The good quality behaviour policy reflects the values of the school well. Pupils feel that it is followed consistently and fairly. The house system is successful and pupils value the rewards associated with it. These include individual badges that recognize and share pupil achievements both in and out of school. Any form of harassment including

- bullying is not tolerated and the importance of being a 'telling school' has a high priority. Behaviour records show that there are few ongoing incidents. Parents are kept informed and involved when there are any difficulties.
42. The monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. The school knows that the number of holidays taken by families is having a negative effect on attendance levels. Parents are expected to complete holiday request slips, but not all do so. Holidays include odd days that quickly mount up over time. The majority of holidays are authorised, even when lasting over two weeks, thereby increasing the above average level of authorised absence. Parents are not regularly reminded about the importance of good attendance and punctuality, for example, through newsletters. A good many parents are not supporting the school or their children's education enough because they are not ensuring that their children attend school regularly, a legal parental responsibility. Recently the office staff have started to check absences more frequently, to try to bring about improvement. Requests about unexplained absence are sought, with letters sent if there is no response. A small number of pupils regularly arrive late; reasons are recorded but not the time of arrival. Registers do not meet requirements, for example, there are some missed pupil marks and pencil entries.
 43. Arrangements related to child protection are good. The designated person is trained and aware of procedures and practices. The staff are alert to possible symptoms of abuse and use the correct procedures to instigate a referral, if there is genuine cause. Informal notes are maintained where concern is raised, should the matter go further. Any sensitive records are kept separate and secure with restricted access.
 44. Arrangements for health and safety are satisfactory. Required tests and checks take place and there are appropriately qualified first aiders. There are school and governor representatives for health and safety, and issues are noted and discussed in governors' meetings. The school has had a local authority check on possible risks. The headteacher has been informed of minor issues noted during inspection.
 45. Assessment procedures are good overall and this represents very good improvement since the time of the last inspection. The new headteacher has been instrumental in developing very good assessment procedures to monitor the progress of different groups of pupils in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and this has already had a direct impact on raising standards. Procedures for keeping track of pupils' progress in the core subjects are established very well and the school makes very good use of information about the attainment of children joining the school. However, in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education, procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress are not sufficiently effective. This makes it difficult for teachers to set appropriately challenging tasks. Assessment information is used well to target particular groups of pupils through booster classes and other additional support.
 46. All pupils have individual targets for English, mathematics, science and personal development. In addition, staff make clear to pupils what they have to do in order to improve their work, and involve pupils in self review. Teachers make good use of assessment to inform their planning in most subjects.
 47. The good progress made for improving assessment in core subjects also applies to pupils with special educational needs. There are detailed records of attainment and progress in aspects of English and mathematics such as reading, writing and knowledge of number.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The school has a good partnership with its parents and has established good links and means of communication. The involvement of parents in school life is good. The quality of information received by parents is satisfactory. The contribution that parents make to their children's learning is good. The vast majority of parents express good opinions about the school and the quality of education their children receive.
49. The school welcomes parents who visit and feels that the good partnership it shares with them is a valuable and important asset. Parents are encouraged to become involved whenever they can. A small number, including some who are governors, help regularly in classes, perhaps in design and technology or computer skills lessons, and enjoy the participation. Others offer support in running the many after-school activities that pupils enjoy so much. Parents are invited to help out on trips and respond well to any requests for support. The fundraising skills of the Parent and Friends' Association are much appreciated. The school offers parents opportunities for training, for example, through its links with the Basic Skills Agency, or by trying to find a parent willing to be funded to gain a swimming qualification, in order to help supervise swimming lessons. Parents are consulted regularly about their views of the school; this too enhances communication and understanding.
50. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory overall. Parents receive regular newsletters providing much detail about school dates and events as well as pupil achievements. However, the governors annual report to parents does not comply fully with requirements because not all the necessary information is included. Nonetheless there is much helpful information for parents. The school does more than most schools, by providing brief half-termly summary reports on learning and attendance. The full end of year reports meet requirements, but there is inconsistency in the information given and the quality of targets to help pupils improve. Some are explicit and relevant, and others are too brief to be sufficiently helpful. Comments made tend to focus on what is taught and what pupils can do. Parents' views of pupil reports are sought and received; this is good practice. Parents have ample opportunity to meet staff formally and informally to discuss pupil progress.
51. Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning and are keen for them to do well. Meetings about the curriculum are well attended, as are pupil events. The current production of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' is eagerly awaited. The rehearsal watched by some inspectors was truly enchanting. Parents have given magnificent support to the production through their costume making. Good information about the curriculum is provided. The provision of homework is good overall. Even the very youngest children proudly take home their school reading book bags, so that they can enjoy sharing books with their families. Sometimes, instructions for homework tasks for these children are too detailed and contain jargon, such as 'ordinal numbers'.
52. Parents have good, positive views of the school overall. Only a small minority of parents express individual concerns. Parents spoken to during the inspection were delighted with their children's progress, the headteacher's positive focus on raising standards and the approachability of staff. They feel secure knowing that their children are happy and learning well.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher and senior management team have worked successfully during the last two years, since the appointment of the current headteacher, to establish an effective system of management. This has already resulted in good and improving standards in the pupils' academic and personal development, and good teaching and learning. The school has clear and appropriate aims, is committed to equal opportunities for all and has succeeded in establishing very good relationships between pupils and staff in a caring environment. The inspection team judges that there is a strong, shared commitment to succeed and a very good capacity to do so.
54. The headteacher has exercised firm but supportive leadership, which has enabled him to partly realise his clear vision for the school. Together with the support of the governing body, the effectiveness of the senior managers, the team spirit of the largely new staff and the hard work of all, the school has passed through a period of substantial change successfully and is now entering a new phase in which management systems need to be modified. During the recent past, with a predominantly young and inexperienced staff, the headteacher, with the deputy headteacher and Key Stage 1 co-ordinator (who form the senior management team), have taken the main leadership and management responsibilities including all the monitoring of teaching. This has freed the new subject co-ordinators to concentrate on developing subject policies and programmes of work. They have not been given the additional responsibility of monitoring the planning and teaching of their subjects. The headteacher recognises that this is now necessary in order for them to undertake the full review cycle of their subject to help to further improve standards and this is reflected in the new School Improvement Plan.
55. The governors are led well by the chairman who plays an important role in advising and supporting the headteacher. Other governors are active in their monitoring of the school's activities, and have a strategic view of how the school should improve. The governing body informs parents of the school's successes and priorities for the future, but not all the required items of information are included in their annual report. There is insufficient representation of the Foundation Stage in the senior management team, and some governors do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of the provision needed for the youngest pupils.
56. The school works hard and successfully to promote inclusion for all and to reflect this in all its practices and procedures. It does this well and has developed its inclusive practices well, since the last report. For example, work is now challenging and matched to pupils' needs; pupils are independent learners and the provision for those with special educational needs is good. Much time has been spent in analysing test and pupil performance data well.
57. Different groups of pupils are all well integrated; there is social and racial harmony and girls and boys mix happily. Given the school's comparative rural isolation, multicultural education is promoted well. The school works hard to develop tolerance and appreciation for and understanding of the importance of living in a cosmopolitan society.
58. The leadership of special educational needs is satisfactory. She ensures the special educational needs register is updated regularly, provides advice to other teachers and liaises with external agencies. Although she can arrange release time to meet specialists and complete special educational needs administration, non-contact time

to support the role is not provided on a regular basis. Early assessment of pupils is made by local authority visiting specialists when concerns are raised. The funds provided specifically to support pupils with special educational needs are spent wisely.

59. The school makes good use of its financial and other resources. The information that the governing body receives from the headteacher is good and enables them to properly monitor the school's financial planning and evaluate the school's priorities. The finance committee ensures that all major financial decisions comply with best-value principles, although there is a lack of documentation to embrace these procedures. The larger than average carry forward in the budget has been earmarked for equipping the computer suite already under construction. Teaching assistants are allocated sensibly, with more support being given to classes where there are increased numbers of pupils of lower attainment.
60. After a period of difficulty, day-to-day financial procedures are now very secure and managed well by the financial administrator. The school makes very good use of computers in all its day-to-day management. This includes the drafting and recording of teachers' long and short-term lesson planning documents which are usefully colour-coded to highlight particular aspects.
61. All of the key issues from the last report have been addressed adequately and the new school development plan sets out in appropriate detail the priorities for the coming few years. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented very successfully and all staff have undertaken the national information and communication technology training. The performance of all staff is managed well and an appropriate programme of further continuing professional development is in place. New staff are inducted well and are supported by head and senior staff for as long as is necessary. There is a strong determination throughout the school to continue to raise standards and the school is very well placed to achieve this.
62. The unit cost per pupil is lower than the national average and pupils' achievements and the quality of education are good. The school provides good value for money.
63. The school is staffed appropriately with suitably qualified teachers, and the number of teaching assistants is good. The accommodation is good overall and there are enough learning resources to allow the curriculum to be taught effectively, except in the Foundation Stage.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. In order to build on the progress already made, the headteacher, staff and governors should now:

[1] implement the plans to increase the effectiveness of foundation subject⁴ co-ordinators by enabling them to monitor teachers' planning and the quality of teaching and learning.

[Paragraphs 54, 126, 136, 142]

[2] notwithstanding the hard work already undertaken by members of staff, the governing body should ensure that the planned development of provision for children in the Foundation Stage takes place as soon as possible and that it includes:

- (a) a review of the arrangements for managing this key stage;
- (b) measures to increase governors' knowledge and understanding of the provision required;
- (c) continued development of the curriculum, including the more effective integration of planned opportunities for physical development;
- (d) the development of the use of the outdoor facilities for the whole curriculum and the provision of learning resources and equipment for use outdoors.

[Paragraphs 55, 63, 65, 67, 79, 81]

[3] devise and implement effective, systematic procedures for assessing and recording the attainment and progress of pupils in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education.

[Paragraphs 119, 125, 148, 155]

The governing body should also:

- i. ensure that all the required items of information are provided in their annual report to parents;
- ii. address the health and safety concerns brought to its attention;
- iii. ensure that registers are marked in accordance with the regulations.

⁴ The foundation subjects are art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music and physical education.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	63
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	2	12	32	17	0	0	0
Percentage	3	19	51	27	0	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 one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	10.5	268
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	17

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	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.4

School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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
	2002	15	16	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	15
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	28	28	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (90)	90 (84)	97 (87)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	14
	Girls	15	14	15
	Total	28	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (81)	90 (84)	94 (87)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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
	2002	16	23	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	10	11
	Girls	18	17	22
	Total	29	27	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (72)	69 (75)	85 (92)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	13
	Girls	18	18	21
	Total	29	29	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (75)	74 (78)	87 (94)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	260	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, 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)	10.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.0
Average class size	29.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	156

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	10

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/3
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	£
Total income	502,630
Total expenditure	442,365
Expenditure per pupil	1669
Balance brought forward from previous year	36,000
Balance carried forward to next year	60,024

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	278
Number of questionnaires returned	164

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	43	3	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	48	46	4	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	54	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	55	7	3	1
The teaching is good.	60	32	3	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	38	7	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	32	7	4	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	35	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	35	47	11	3	4
The school is well led and managed.	40	45	4	5	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	46	7	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	38	6	2	6

Not all totals will equal 100 due to rounding

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

65. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. The school provides part-time places in a pre-reception unit for children who are not yet of statutory age. These children may attend for one or two terms on a morning only basis, according to their birth date, before taking up a place in the reception class in the year in which they will be five. At the time of the inspection 21 children attended the part-time pre-reception unit, 28 children were in the reception class and a further ten older reception children were in a mixed Year 1 and reception class. Both the reception class and the pre-reception unit have direct access to small, enclosed outdoor areas. The mixed Year 1 and reception class has direct outdoor access but this is not enclosed or surfaced. Overall resources for outdoor activities are unsatisfactory, although the school has already prioritised this as an area for development. Children in the pre-reception unit have a small range of appropriate equipment for outdoor use, but resources for children in the reception classes are very limited. This limits the range of experience provided for children to promote their physical development, problem solving and investigative exploration.
66. Children make satisfactory progress during their time in the reception classes and this means that by the end of their reception year the majority successfully achieve the targets set for this age group. A few more able children achieve above this level in literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. At the time of the inspection, a minority of more able pupils were already starting to work within the early stages of the National Curriculum. Children with special educational needs receive good support from additional staff and this enables them to take a full part in classroom activities. They make good progress towards their individual targets.
67. A member of the senior management team in the school satisfactorily oversees provision for the Foundation Stage in addition to her other duties, but there is no co-ordinator. The lack of a manager for this important stage of children's education detracts from the efforts being made to ensure that the planned developments in the curriculum take place as soon as possible. The teachers in the reception classes have undertaken recent and relevant additional training on the curriculum for the early years of education. The reception class teacher has worked very hard to develop new comprehensive long and medium-term planning which appropriately takes account of the areas of learning for this age range. Relationships between staff and children are good and teachers and support staff are hard working and enthusiastic.
68. Assessment procedures are good and the school makes good use of a commercial standardised assessment programme which is undertaken at the start and end of the reception year to evaluate progress over time. The school has satisfactorily introduced the new statutory assessment for children in the final year of the Foundation Stage and staff maintain effective records.

Personal, social and emotional development

69. Teaching in this area is sound, as all staff make clear their expectations for good behaviour and from the start of their time in school children are taught to understand the difference between right and wrong actions. The school's strong emphasis on moral development is reflected in the way in which children quickly learn the school

rules as their own code. They behave well in lessons and are eager to learn and to take on tasks around the classroom, such as clearing up and putting things away in the right place. Relationships between staff and children are good and this promotes children's overall personal social and emotional development. Those in the pre-reception unit learn how to share. For example, adults encourage children to take turns with favourite equipment in the role-play ticket office and involve themselves in the children's play through talk. In one of the reception classes the children enthusiastically recalled their recent teddy bears' picnic to which they had invited a Year 3 class.

70. Lessons in religious education provide children with the opportunity to find out about special celebrations, such as weddings, and to reflect on special people in their own lives and the lives of others. Children also start to gain an appreciation of diverse beliefs, attitudes and values through a range of stories from major world faiths told in assemblies and in class. Whilst teachers encourage children to concentrate well and to stay on task, there is scope to extend the range of opportunities for children to plan and undertake self-initiated activities through structured play and for fuller provision to be made in the outdoor area of both the pre-reception unit and the reception classes. By the end of their time in the reception classes the majority of children achieve the expected learning targets in this area of learning.

Communication, language and literacy

71. Teaching in this area is consistently sound and sometimes good and, as a result, children make steady progress in developing their early literacy skills over time. Teachers make effective use of the guidelines in the National Literacy Strategy. Children in the pre-reception unit have regular sessions where, through games and rhymes, they learn some initial letter sounds. Staff take care to extend children's speaking and listening skills alongside play activities and storytelling. In the reception classes, speaking and listening skills continue to have an effective focus and teachers emphasise new vocabulary through discussions. The children are taught how to form their letters in a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting, and they are encouraged to apply their knowledge of letter sounds to their early written recording. This means that children are confident at attempting writing activities. Teachers provide children with a good range of contexts for writing, such as postcards, letters, lists, stories and factual accounts. These are linked to first hand experiences, such as a recent visit to an owl sanctuary. Teaching is good when, for example, the teacher models the process of writing and reading in a well structured approach using whiteboards and links this work well to the text of a large class book which has been read together as a class.
72. Reading is taught in a consistent approach and parents play a valuable role in supporting children with this at home. Books are taken home on a routine basis and children have regular homework to support the development of early literacy skills. They are encouraged to build up a range of words which they recognise on sight and use their knowledge of individual sounds to attempt unknown words. Staff support children in thinking about the overall meaning of what they read and anticipating what might happen next. Children enjoy their group reading activities in the classroom. Effective record keeping helps teachers to plan for the next steps in learning to read and write.
73. By the end of the reception year the majority of children achieve the targets set for this age. Some more able children achieve above this level and are already working within the National Curriculum.

Mathematical development

74. Teaching in this area is satisfactory and has some good features. Children in the pre-reception unit have appropriate opportunities to undertake counting through the use of games and practical activities. They enjoy exploring sand and water, using a range of different sized containers to fill and pour, and staff extend vocabulary in a positive manner, when they talk alongside such practical activities. Teachers working with reception aged children build on early skills and take good account of the approaches of the National Numeracy Strategy when working with the whole class on, for example, ordering numbers from five to 15 using a washing line of number cards. The majority of children count reliably up to ten by the end of the reception year and recognise these numerals. They start to apply this knowledge through undertaking simple calculations of addition and subtraction and sorting sets of numbers. A few more able children are confident with handling larger numbers up to 20.
75. Teachers introduce children to an appropriate range of mathematical vocabulary alongside practical mathematics. For example, children in the mixed reception and Year 1 class explore capacity using terms such as larger and smaller container, and more than and less than. Children in the reception class move traffic around a play mat using directional instructions they have learnt, such as turn right, go back and move forward. Children learn the names of shapes and recognise and recreate simple repeat patterns. All children have similar opportunities to undertake recorded work and to solve practical mathematical tasks, but not enough use is made of the outdoor area to extend the range of mathematical problem solving. By the end of the reception year most children achieve the expected targets set for this age and a minority of more able pupils achieve above this.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. Teaching in this area is sound overall and children have good opportunities for visits to extend their knowledge and understanding. For example, the reception aged children visit a nearby owl centre, the local neighbourhood and church and explore the school grounds on a map trail. Children have appropriate opportunities to develop early computer skills in the pre-reception unit and in the reception classes. Their mouse handling and control is good.
77. Children in the pre-reception unit enjoy taking on the role of travellers as they buy tickets and set off on pretend journeys in role-play areas. Children in the reception classes are fascinated by their scientific exploration into the growth of seeds and most are able to name parts of plants after discussing this with their teacher. They gain sound early map skills through following a well organised trail around the school and explore their own early history appropriately. Early skills in designing and making are satisfactorily developed in all the classes. Children in the reception class recalled with interest the sandwiches they had made for their teddy bears picnic and thought about ways to improve the picnic.
78. Children are encouraged to extend their own cultural experiences and to value and respect the beliefs of others through work undertaken on celebrations and through stories and discussion. By the end of their reception year, the majority of children meet the targets set for this age and a minority of more able children achieve at a level above this.

Physical development

79. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good teaching of throwing and catching skills observed during the inspection. The children in the pre-reception unit have regular opportunities to use a small range of outdoor equipment in a secure, enclosed playground area. However, this space is rather small, has no safety surface area and lacks a sufficiently wide range of outdoor equipment. Supervision of play is satisfactory and staff encourage children to develop their physical skills appropriately. Although teachers in the reception class and mixed Year 1 and reception class make good use of the school hall and the extensive playing fields to encourage children's physical skills development and their awareness of space, there is insufficient outdoor equipment available for the reception children for climbing, pushing and pulling for example. The use of the enclosed outdoor play area is underdeveloped as a result of this. The school has recognised this and identified this as an area for development.
80. In both the pre-reception unit and the reception classes, children have good opportunities to develop their fine motor skills through handling scissors, glue and a range of tools. They enjoy using construction kits and handling materials such as clay and show increasing control as they do so. Children show good self help skills when changing for physical education.
81. By the end of their time in the reception year, the majority of children are likely to achieve the expected targets set for this age. However, they will not have experienced the full range of opportunities to develop their skills because of the lack of outdoor equipment.

Creative development

82. Teaching in this area is consistently sound overall and this means that children produce some lively creative work, enjoy music making and the role-play opportunities provided for them. Children in all the settings have good opportunities to use paint, play dough, collage and a range of other materials, and they learn to handle paintbrushes, chalks and clay with confidence. Some very attractive paintings by children in the reception class based on the work of artists such as Van Gogh and Klee show a good early sense of colour, form and space.
83. All the children have opportunities to undertake music making. They enjoy learning new songs and using a range of percussion instruments to explore how sounds can be made and changed. Photographic evidence of work undertaken on the senses shows that children respond excitedly to exploration through smelling, touching and feeling a variety of materials. No evidence of dance or movement was seen during the inspection week.
84. Children in the pre-reception unit are eager to play in the role-play areas set up as a ticket office and a train and enjoy dressing up. Their play is enriched by adult support. In the reception classes, although provision is made for role play, there is scope to develop this area through more adult interaction in the play and more stimulating provision linked to current topic themes.
85. By the end of the reception year the majority of pupils meet the targets set for this age.

ENGLISH

86. Pupils' results in the 2002 statutory tests were better than those of the previous year at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and, despite many staff changes, continued a trend of steady improvement in recent years. The performance of girls at the end of Year 2 was slightly better than that of boys; the reverse was true at the end of Year 6. The results at the end of Year 6 exceeded the target for 2002 by three per cent.
87. This inspection has found that pupils' attainment in speaking and listening, reading, writing, handwriting and spelling by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is above average. Although this is similar to findings of the previous inspection at age seven, standards have improved at age 11. Early indications are that this year results will again show further improvement in the national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6. This can be traced to:
- the improvement in the number of pupils in Years 2 and 6 now reaching above average National Curriculum levels;
 - the actions taken to target pupils so that they reach at least average standards;
 - the improvements in teaching and assessment that have helped to focus action on raising standards.
88. The attainment of pupils entering Year 1 continues to be average. Given the inspection evidence, many have achieved well across all aspects of English by the time they reach the end of Year 2. However, as most of the pupils currently in Year 6 also attended the school at the end of Year 2 when they attained well below average standards in reading and writing, most have achieved very well to make the improvements shown in this inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in terms of the targets set for them because they benefit from the careful and sensitive support they receive from classroom assistants.
89. In speaking and listening, by the end of Year 2, most pupils listen carefully to instructions from their teachers and respond well to questions. They read aloud well and speak confidently when describing experiences and recalling events. Pupils in Year 2 listened carefully when their teacher asked them to play a literacy game that was based on true and false statements. A Year 2 pupil who had recently had a birthday spoke confidently in front of all other pupils during their weekly assembly. Most pupils' confidently explain ideas and make points of view using correct pronunciation; this shows that they have learned to use Standard English correctly. In speaking and listening, by the end of Year 6, most pupils can engage in conversations with their teacher and each other drawing on a good range of vocabulary. Pupils confidently use terms associated with specific subjects or themes they have studied; for example, when they evaluated design and technology products most pupils confidently used terms such as "design specification". Many pupils are sufficiently confident to want to take on leading roles in school productions. During a rehearsal of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' it was clear that they had listened to advice and taken steps to project their voices.
90. In reading, by the end of Year 2, most pupils approach unfamiliar text confidently and are prepared to attempt challenging vocabulary. They recall the main events in stories, name and comment on the characters and suggest what might happen next. With most pupils reading at average levels and an increasing proportion showing above average standards, pupils' research skills using the contents and index pages within information books are very secure. Most pupils read fluently and many are introducing expression into their reading technique. By the end of Year 6, pupils are skilfully using strategies to make their reading more effective. A Year 6 pupil was

asked to read to the class. She read aloud confidently and introduced a pause to make the reading more effective. In the same class, when the teacher asked questions related to the text the pupils' good comprehension skills meant that they could locate information securely, state in which paragraph their answer was located and offer alternative descriptions of feelings to those portrayed in the story. Most pupils skim read the text to obtain the main points being covered and most know the function of the blurb on the rear cover of a book. More able pupils know the purpose of a glossary. Lower ability pupils, although lacking fluency and expression, nevertheless are keen to read. They use reading support strategies such as sounding out letters and looking for picture clues to help overcome the difficulties they meet. Regular reading practice is helping them to make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

91. In writing, by the end of Year 2, most pupils can prepare a plan to write a story and produce this neatly using punctuation correctly. They write clear sentences using capital letters, full stops and question marks and they label diagrams simply and correctly. Some are attempting to introduce speech marks into their work. In a Year 2 lesson the pupils wrote riddles. Two pupils collaborated successfully in using a computer to do this. They completed the task, printed their work and read this to other pupils at the end of the lesson. The decision to timetable lessons specifically for extended writing has had a positive impact on standards as many pupils now are sufficiently confident in the skills of sentence construction and use of grammar to write longer passages. Their good knowledge of how to spell commonly used words and ability to form letters consistently raises the quality of their work. By the end of Year 6, average ability pupils are regularly writing in a variety of forms and most use a joined up style. They know how to set down a letter using the standard layout for recording the source and destination addresses. Above average pupils draw on a good vocabulary to introduce description in their work, for example a pupil writing an eye witness description reported the sight of birds of prey as "an awesome falconry display". Pupils write for an increasingly wide range of purposes. Those of average ability wrote the stage directions for a play, others wrote a letter in which they described a problem and suggested a possible solution. Pupils have good opportunities for writing in other subjects and scrutiny of a sample of books reveals writing a geographical description, the instructions for making footwear, a report of a science experiment and a job application letter. Through this range of writing experiences pupils have made good progress in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 and learned to use layout devices such as paragraphs, newspaper style columns, event logs and the computer skill of wrapping text around illustrations.
92. Standards of handwriting and presentation are above average in both infant and junior classes. Writing practice books have been used throughout the year to help pupils become more skilled in writing technique. As a result, many pupils can present work well, their work reveals good standards of letter formation and they produce joined up writing in a legible style. Some lessons are focussed on improving spellings as pupils learn to spell an increasing list of high frequency words correctly. Pupils have regular access to computers and use edit commands to correct spellings prior to printing out text. However, one of the most important strategies influencing the good standards of spelling is the good marking scheme for English introduced when extended writing sessions began to be timetabled. Pupils only write on alternate pages of their books. This allows their teacher to mark the spellings clearly and provide the correct answer on the page opposite the pupils' text; the spellings found to be incorrect are then rewritten and practised.

93. The quality of English teaching ranges from very good to satisfactory; mostly it is good. Most lessons are very well planned, allow time for speaking, listening, reading and writing activities and involve the pupils in tasks they enjoy completing. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils might achieve. In a very good Year 2 lesson the teacher helped the pupils learn to recognise words with similar spelling patterns by organising an effective practical task that involved them all. The pupils were given a word card that included the 'ea' letter combination such as 'leaf' or 'bread'. More able pupils were issued with harder words such as 'pleasure' or 'heaven'. The pupils read the words and placed them in a box to distinguish between the 'ea' sounds. They all took part, lower attaining pupils being supported by a classroom assistant. When the boxes were emptied two word lists were produced. The more able pupils were then challenged further to think about the position of the "ea" sound in the word. In a very good Year 6 lesson the very confident teacher demonstrated, explained and directed the pupils to use a comma, colon and semi-colon correctly, by selecting examples of text relevant to the pupils' understanding. In a class debate on using animals as performers in a circus the teacher insisted that pupils express their views clearly from opposing positions by first formally addressing the teacher as the chairperson.
94. Pupils respond to these opportunities well and by the end of the school year many have produced several books of work representing a good range of English activities. They are committed to improving their work, know that they are expected to complete the tasks and correct work that has been marked for their attention.
95. The school provides a good English curriculum that fully meets statutory requirements. The subject has been allocated the highest percentage of time; this allows, in addition to the daily literacy session, the timetabling of lessons focussed on improving reading, handwriting, spelling and extended writing. Regular assessments in writing each term, individual target setting and analysis of past national test papers have been used well to identify action needed to help pupils improve. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support pupils with special educational needs and they help these pupils make good progress. Some of the assistants have been trained to deliver booster programmes such as the Additional Literacy Strategy and their work has impacted positively, ensuring that lower ability pupils learn elementary skills of speaking, listening and writing.
96. The co-ordination of English, shared between two senior staff members, is very good. Both have provided a clear lead that has raised overall expectations of what pupils might be capable. Very good action through a range of monitoring activities has informed decisions to:
- target pupils potentially capable of reaching the nationally expected level at age 11;
 - improve assessment of the progress all pupils are making;
 - use assessment information to plan carefully the next stage of pupils' learning;
 - provide longer opportunities for pupils to practise writing techniques;
 - ensure basic skills have high priority;
 - and has resulted in pupils' performance at age 11 exceeding the targets agreed by governors.
97. Resources for learning are good. The well organised library, located near the school entrance, contains a good selection of up to date reference books that pupils use well to research information. Some titles, such as those supporting science topics, incorporate CD-ROM software providing activities that pupils can follow on a computer. The book stock that forms the school reading programme has been colour coded across the range of published schemes and well organised for easy access in

each wing of the school. Support materials for writing are good; the decision to provide larger format books for extended writing has had a positive impact on standards because this allows pupils to correct work systematically.

MATHEMATICS

98. In the national tests for 2002, pupils at the end of Year 2 reached standards well above the average for all schools and similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher than average Level 3 was also above average. Pupils' standards at the end of Year 6 were below the national average for all schools and similar schools, but the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was a little above average.
99. Early indications suggest that the 2003 test results for pupils at the end of Year 2 will be above the national average for all schools and similar schools. This finding is confirmed by inspection evidence. For pupils at the end of Year 6, early indications suggest that the 2003 test results will show that standards in mathematics are a little above the national average for all and similar schools. This improvement is supported by inspection findings, and represents good achievement as these pupils were below average when this cohort was aged seven.
100. Pupils' standards show an improvement overall at the end of Years 2 and 6 over the last five years, apart from a dip three years ago. The rigorous attention to standards since the new headteacher's appointment has ensured that improvement has been consistent and significant.
101. Pupils enter Year 1 with about average understanding of mathematics, and make good and even progress as they pass through the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as do the most able pupils.
102. The school's mixed age year groups mean that the sequence in which different numeracy topics are taught varies from class to class. By the end of Year 2, most pupils sequence numbers to 100, know addition and subtraction facts to 20, tell the time to quarters of an hour and know the properties of squares and circles. By the end of Year 4, most pupils know the properties of some regular polygons and quadrilaterals. They have developed a range of mental calculation strategies such as adding or subtracting numbers such as 19, 29, 21 or 31, by using the nearest ten and compensating. They apply their understanding of money to problems relating to a Theme Park and use calculators appropriately. By Year 6 most pupils have developed secure mental arithmetic processes, use written methods of calculation effectively, and begin to have an understanding of how letters can represent numbers in calculations such as $5a/2b$, where the values of a and b are known. More able pupils construct straight-line graphs to represent equations such as $x = y + 2$. Although there is evidence that mathematics is applied to real life situations, the practice is inconsistent across the school and is an area for improvement, as is the need to teach pupils particular strategies for solving problems.
103. The school has successfully adopted the National Numeracy Strategy, and teachers are confident in their teaching of mathematics. Whilst the main principles are firmly established, there are still areas that require further development. The mental/oral sessions at the start of the lessons are used well to develop a good range of calculation strategies, but there is insufficient attention to 'quick fire' questions to encourage greater speed and agility. The middle sections of numeracy lessons are planned well with appropriate activities for all abilities, but the provision for challenging

the most able pupils is inconsistent through the school. Generally, the final part of lessons are used effectively, but not enough emphasis is given to extending the pupils' knowledge and understanding rather than simply consolidating what has been learned in the lesson.

104. The quality of teaching is good overall, sometimes very good and occasionally excellent, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Teachers plan their lessons well, provide appropriate resources and prepare activities effectively. Teachers manage their classes skilfully and have good relationships with their pupils. This results in a relaxed but productive working atmosphere in which pupils respond well to questions and remain on-task throughout the lesson. This significantly enhances their learning. In one Year 1/2 lesson pupils displayed excellent work habits resulting in very effective learning.
105. The teaching of mathematics is supported by the use of computers through the use of spreadsheets to set up calculation frameworks, and through the control language, 'Logo' which they use to construct regular polygons having calculated the external angle. Although information and communication technology is having a positive impact on the pupils' attainment, it is still an area for further development. Pupils confidently use mathematics in other subjects such as science to tabulate and manipulate data.
106. The two co-ordinators for mathematics provide good leadership of the subject. They successfully support the staff in the application of the National Numeracy Strategy, and monitor the teaching of mathematics in order to identify what aspects need to be improved. Samples of pupils' work are monitored half-termly and the results of national tests are analysed to ensure that future planning adequately reflects pupils' needs. Good assessment records are kept of attainment and pupils' progress is tracked through the school. Appropriate targets are set and reviewed regularly. The co-ordinators have a good understanding of the subject's development needs, and are committed to the raising of standards.

SCIENCE

107. Pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 attain average standards. Inspection evidence reflects that provided by the school's records which show that the likely results of the national tests and teachers' assessments for 2003 will be broadly in line with the average for all schools at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. This was the case at the time of the last inspection. In the intervening period, standards at the end of Year 6 fell, so that in 1999 they were well below average. Latterly, improvements in teaching and assessment have helped to raise standards to their previous levels. Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen faster over the last few years than the national trend of improvement.
108. About a quarter of Year 2 pupils currently achieve at higher levels than expected for their age, whereas the previous report noted that none did. The high expectations that the teachers currently in Years 1 and 2 have of what pupils can achieve are helping to drive up standards. A good deal of the work set for pupils in Year 2 is above the level expected for this age group. This is particularly noticeable in the study of forces in which vocabulary more often used by older pupils, such as 'upthrust' and 'kinetic energy', is introduced. More able pupils measure force in Newtons. Pupils' knowledge of materials is above average. They understand that matter can be classified as solid, liquid or gas.

109. The introduction of an effective revision course is helping to raise standards at the end of Year 6. Its use results in aspects of pupils' work being above the level expected, including their understanding of the role of chlorophyll in plants and wave forms that give rise to different sounds. More able pupils show a very clear understanding of dissolving, concluding "The smaller the grains of salt the faster they dissolve". Pupils' learning is also boosted because teachers mark their written work well, pointing out ways of improving. Although Year 6 pupils attain satisfactory standards in the investigative aspects of science, discussion with them shows that they have undertaken only two experiments this academic year, limiting the progress they made in this aspect of science.
110. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good throughout the school. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. This is a clear improvement on the position at the last inspection in which teaching was described as "generally satisfactory". The main strengths seen in lessons are:
- skilful questioning. In a Year 5/6 lesson questions such as "What is the most distinctive difference between the two soil samples?" increased learning;
 - strong skills of management and control result in very good behaviour; and,
 - the good pace at which teaching proceeds helps pupils to engage well. Consequently, they concentrate hard and try to do their best. It will take time for the improved teaching and learning to be reflected fully in the results pupils achieve. Occasionally minor weaknesses in the teaching detract from the progress made in lessons. These include not encouraging pupils to listen more carefully to instructions and discussions that last too long. Homework is used well to consolidate and extend the work done in lessons.
111. The subject co-ordinator is relatively new to her responsibilities. She is enthusiastic and committed to improving performance. Last year she chose to use some of the money available to her in her first year of teaching to find out about science teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2. She is aware that the school lacks a wide enough range of computer software to fully promote learning in science.

ART AND DESIGN

112. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment in art is broadly average. Observational drawing skills in both Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. This is a slight improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.
113. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have learned how to use pencils to create pleasing results in terms of shade, line and tone. Lower attaining pupils have not yet developed the control in shading typical of those who are more artistically skilled. Most pupils can cut accurately and in doing so mount their work well. They can use printing stamps carefully, achieving even tone when making a printed sheet. Pupils have acquired the skill of blending two colours together as they commence landscape colour wash techniques. By Year 2, pupils are already being encouraged to draw carefully from observation. Work mounted in Year 2 shows many pupils producing above average results when they reproduced the image of cornflowers to standards better than would normally be expected at this age.
114. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made satisfactory progress in the acquisition of artistic skills and they have become more confident through using a wider range of materials. Pupils in Year 6 can reproduce patterns in the style of Mondrian that show satisfactory attention to drawing straight lines, even shading and colour selection.

More able pupils have become more selective by using colours that blend harmoniously. Pupils have also learned about the work of other artists such as Lowry where they have successfully introduced the dimension of perspective. More able pupils draw the converging lines representing streets of houses accurately as they produce convincing results that draw the eye from foreground to background. Although most pupils recognise primary colours and can predict the results of mixing them, they have little understanding of how shades can contrast and compliment each other when placed in the form of a colour wheel.

115. Pupils' work in exercise books and on displays throughout the school confirms that their artistic skills are used regularly when illustrating work in other subjects. Year 2 pupils attempted to convey their view of the creation through art when following this theme in religious education. Year 6 pupils produced a shaded map of Europe, added borders to their project work and wrapped text around illustrations when writing stories.
116. Given the average attainment of pupils entering Year 1, most have achieved satisfactorily by the end of Years 2 and 6. Analysis of pupils' work from Year 2 shows they have made appropriate progress in a range of art experiences. Having been introduced to landscape painting techniques in the autumn term, pupils' skills were enhanced during the following term when they began to introduce foreground and background over a base colour wash. Many pupils make more rapid progress in observational skills so that by the summer term pupils are reproducing the finer detail of seeds on a half cut tomato or the characteristic markings of a bourbon biscuit. By Year 6, pupils' skills in using a range of pencils are applied successfully when they reproduce an image of a watch accurately. Here the more artistically able pupils work well to achieve very good proportion and fine detail in their work. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils; teaching assistants make a positive contribution to their development and improvement.
117. In this inspection, art teaching was mostly good; this is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Year 2 pupils were observed being taught by an art specialist who is engaged to work at the school in a part-time capacity. The teacher provided the pupils with an insight into the effects that can be produced when painting on board, rather than paper, and by using acrylic paint. The pupils were fascinated by the demonstration; one more able pupil remarked, "The board is 3D and paper is 2D", another suggested, "It's like painting a wall!" When the teacher skilfully questioned the pupils about their knowledge of colour mixing many knew that blue and yellow could be combined to make green. However, the teacher challenged them to think about how a range of shades of green might be produced and a more able pupil confidently explained how. Another pupil exclaimed "Wow" as the hue of the paint was subtly changed.
118. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher encouraged the pupils to create patterns in the style of Kandinski. A circle theme was developed through well organised group work that featured paint, chalk and paper tissue collage. The key impact of teaching in this lesson came from the teacher's careful assessment of the progress pupils were making and the difficulties some were experiencing. The teacher was able to take action by providing additional skills teaching to those pupils who found the techniques difficult. As pupils completed their work the teacher pinned up samples so that they could see the effects produced when light shades or alternatively dark shades formed the centre of the circle. Good teaching points were made about impact of colour and its use to convey images. Pupils respond well to this good teaching; they find the work interesting and show good effort.

119. Over a year pupils have satisfactory access to lessons where they are taught skills and through these they learn about the work of famous artists. The recent Arts Week provided a higher profile for the subject and gave pupils the opportunity to try a range of activities as they rotated from class to class. At present the headteacher is holding responsibility for subject leadership. The school improvement plan has art as a priority area, with a commitment to provide further access by pupils to more specialised teaching. The use of computers is developing with a satisfactory range of software installed. The headteacher has already identified how the use of information and communication technology will be extended when the new computer suite is operational. The lack of systematic arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress reduces teachers' ability to plan appropriately for different groups and individuals. Good use is made of the satisfactory range of resources.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

120. Most pupils attain average standards by the end of Years 2 and 6; this is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.
121. By end of Year 2, most pupils have looked at patterns in fabrics such as checks and stripes and the way materials are joined to make garments. They have learned about running stitches and how they are hidden on the reverse side of the fabric and they have practised these sewing skills on Easter bags before developing their own designs based on the biblical story 'Joseph's Coat of Many Colours'. The pupils began by using art software to make their designs on a computer; these were printed to make paper patterns which they used as a guide when cutting out the fabrics. When the work was completed the pupils evaluated their work by answering questions such as "How does it look?" "What changes will you make?" Pupils construct winding mechanisms which they use to illustrate nursery rhymes mimicking, for example, the mouse running up the clock in the well known rhyme 'Hickory Dickory Dock'. Through this work they became familiar with new terms such as handle, reel and axle.
122. By end of Year 6 most pupils can design and make a soft drink that is appealing in both appearance and taste. Pupils tested and compared a number of soft drinks prior to drawing up a specification and writing a recipe in clear logical steps. Some practised a technique with sugar that resulted in a frosted effect on the drinking glass rim. Others thought carefully how they could decorate the glass with a straw, umbrella and ribbon. Pupils have become confident in using a range of tools and are aware of safety issues. They designed a tent that was windproof and waterproof. They used straws, dowelling and plastic and nylon sheets to make the tents and then tested their wind resistance by using a hairdryer. They also learned how to design and make a slipper learning the terms 'insole' and 'outside stiffener'.
123. Given the average attainment of most pupils entering Year 1, most have achieved satisfactorily by the end of Years 2 and 6. Most pupils have made satisfactory progress in learning how to evaluate their work in order that improvements might be made. Year 4 pupils designed and made a purse. They evaluated each other's work, identifying strengths in construction and appeal in design. This activity helped them to reflect on their own work and how it might be improved. In a well organised science activity the pupils tested out their product in terms of its strength and resistance to water. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils, particularly as they enjoy these practical activities.

124. During this inspection most of the teaching was good. In a good lesson for a combined class of Year 5 and 6 pupils, the teacher began with a very clear explanation of the objective for the session with just sufficient input in order for pupils to begin. The teacher then circulated around the class helping individual pupils to make careful evaluations of the soft drinks they had designed in terms of strengths and weaknesses. Above average and average pupils could make quick progress towards completing the carefully prepared evaluation sheets. Lower attaining pupils benefited from the support of a teaching assistant who helped them with their writing. As the written evaluations were prepared, one more able pupil described the drink as "smooth, cool and refreshing". A pupil of average ability had observed, "The ice cream melted and the strawberries floated". This lesson had provided good opportunities for evaluative and descriptive writing. The pupils benefited from lively teaching of evaluation skills and became confident in expressing their points of view. When they were asked to name their new drink; one called it "The Big Idea", another "Frisky Fizz!" The advice given to individual pupils had been focussed and helpful.
125. Pupils responded to this good teaching well. Year 4 pupils were offered the opportunity to circulate around the room and identify strengths in each other's work to help them reflect on their own practice. They enjoyed this activity and could offer constructive views on the design ideas that they liked and why. Pupils' work is scrutinised sufficiently for each teacher to be able to assess progress in the annual subject report to parents, but the lack of systematic arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress reduces teachers' ability to plan appropriately challenging activities.
126. The design and technology programme is one way the school is promoting more opportunities for pupils to engage in more independent and investigative work. The co-ordinator, who provides satisfactory leadership, has sufficient understanding of the range of work being undertaken across the school gained by looking at examples or finished products and scrutinising medium-term plans. The co-ordinator does not however, monitor teaching. There is a satisfactory range of resources which are used well.

GEOGRAPHY

127. Standards remain average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There has been improvement in assessment and resources since the last inspection. It was only possible to see one lesson during the inspection due to timetable arrangements. Judgements also take account of the scrutiny of pupils' work, displays and discussions with pupils and teachers. The curriculum is planned to take account of the needs of pupils in mixed age classes to ensure that pupils have similar progression in skills, knowledge and understanding, although they learn these through different topics.
128. Pupils in the lower school enjoy work in geography and pupils in the upper school say that they find practical investigations and fieldwork more interesting than the study of physical geography. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject over time and those with special educational needs receive effective support.
129. Pupils in Year 1 learn early mapping skills when they explore the locality. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 investigate the seaside, comparing rocky shores with busy ports. They enjoy making posters to show features of different holiday destinations. The Year 2 class learns about South Africa through investigating land use and jobs and distinguishes between similarities and differences in Africa and Britain. Pupils in the

upper part of the school build on these early skills and by the end of Year 6 pupils demonstrate good map skills, sound awareness of environmental issues and know how climate and environment impact on people's lives. They undertake appropriate work on contrasting localities; for example they compare Dartmouth, Kettering and Woolacombe, and learn about the physical aspects of France through their study of rivers and cities

130. No overall judgement is made on teaching, although evidence indicates teaching is likely to be at least satisfactory throughout the school. Regular assessment is undertaken and marking is constructive. The school has extended the range of atlases, maps, globes and local aerial maps, and a good variety of reference books is available. Work is well presented and good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their writing skills. There is scope to increase the extent to which computers are used.
131. Visits are used well to enrich learning. Although this year the annual Year 6 residential trip to France had to be postponed, Year 4 pupils visited Snipedale as part of their work on rivers and dams, whilst Year 3 visited Lincoln and compared features with Donington.
132. Subject co-ordination is satisfactory, although the co-ordinator has no release time to monitor standards and teaching since this is undertaken by the senior management team.

HISTORY

133. Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, as at the time of the last inspection. The school takes care to review the curriculum each year to meet the needs of pupils in mixed age classes. Although pupils of the same age study different topics, planning takes account of progression of skills, knowledge and understanding and if a topic is revisited, different aspects are investigated. All pupils have the opportunity to study aspects of ancient history and the more recent past.
134. Pupils throughout the school enjoy their lessons in history and make sound progress. Those with special educational needs receive appropriate support and take a full part in lessons. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are aware of the differences in their own lives and those of people in other times. For example, they imagine how Samuel Pepys might have felt when he saw the Great Fire of London. "He was worried that it might burn his wigs and all his cheese" wrote one child. Pupils in Year 2 investigate a trail on Mathew Flinders which leads them to a memorial window in Donington church. They know that the local explorer made a map of Australia and discover that a nearby street is named after him. Pupils in Year 4 say that they are glad they did not go to school in Victorian times after experiencing a recreation of this. Year 6 pupils reflect on why people acted as they did in the past and undertake independent research to extend their knowledge of life in ancient Egypt. Year 6 recall a visit to Eden Camp as a part of their investigation of World War 2. They empathise with the lives of evacuee children and write thoughtful accounts of this. Pupils learn to distinguish between fact and opinion appropriately.
135. The overall quality of teaching is consistently satisfactory in Years 3,4,5 and 6 and good in Years 1 and 2. In the best lessons teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and participation. Probing questions help pupils to develop early enquiry skills and good use is made of stories. Strong links are made with literacy and art in work undertaken throughout the school and presentation of work is good. Displays

are of good quality. Fuller use could be made of time lines in the upper part of the school to consolidate understanding of chronology linking ancient periods with more recent history.

136. Subject co-ordination is satisfactory, although the co-ordinator is new to her role and has no release time to monitor standards and teaching since this is currently undertaken by the senior management team. The next step is for the co-ordinator to adopt the same good procedures, which she is well equipped to do. Assessment procedures are sound and teachers correct any misunderstandings through marking. Resources are good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

137. By the end of Year 2 standards of attainment in information and communication technology [ICT] are in line with what is expected nationally. So are standards at the end of Year 6, although they vary between classes and between the ICT applications used.
138. Pupils enter Year 1 with some experience of computers, but with insufficient confidence in the basic skills such as using a mouse. By the end of Year 2 they have made satisfactory progress, using computers to produce pictures and simple word processing, but still lack a fully comprehensive range of skills, as they have restricted access to computers at present.
139. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made satisfactory progress overall, having acquired a good range of skills, and are using computers to support work in other subjects. This is directly as a result of visits to the nearby secondary school, which provides them with access to a computer suite and the expertise of a specialist teacher. They are competent in word processing, editing their work efficiently, selecting appropriate fonts and inserting pictures and photographs. They use presentation software to support their geography topic on France, importing photographs that they have taken with a digital camera. This is a particularly effective use of ICT. They use spreadsheets to record statistical information. One class of Year 3 pupils has established an email link with a school in Australia and exchanges information for their geography topic. Peripheral devices such as digital microscopes are underused and the pupils have not used sensors for monitoring or software to control simple machines, other than floor turtles. This is an area for development.
140. The use of ICT to support literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. Pupils use word processing facilities regularly to prepare notes to accompany wall displays in Years 1 and 2 and use their editing skills to redraft stories in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Numeracy software is used to construct calculation frameworks on spreadsheets and for constructing regular polygons.
141. All members of staff have received the training provided by the government but some have not yet firmly embedded ICT into their teaching, This is, in part the result of an inadequate number of computers. In its plans to improve ICT, the school has budgeted for a new computer suite, which is already under construction. This provision, combined with the secure skills and commitment of the staff, means that the school is well paced for substantial improvement in ICT.
142. The co-ordinator for the subject supports the teachers well and offers advice when needed. Although the school has acquired the services of a technician, the co-ordinator maintains the printer in her room, which is net-linked to all the other classes

and used by all the teachers. She plans the subject well and has successfully bid for additionally money to improve resources. Although the management of the subject is satisfactory overall, the co-ordinator has not been given time to monitor the teaching of the subject, although the senior managers have undertaken some monitoring. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of how to develop the subject in order to raise standards further.

MUSIC

143. Music is a strength of the school and, combined with other performing arts, substantially enriches the curriculum offered to the pupils. The standards of attainment reached by pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 are above average, and well above average in composition for those at the end of Year 6.
144. By the end of Year 2, pupils sing enthusiastically and largely in tune. Most can clap a steady beat and repeat a short, simple four-beat rhythm. They understand the difference between high and low pitch and long and short notes. In one lesson seen, Year 2 pupils composed a simple piece of music to imitate a clock. This involved groups clicking and clapping rhythmically and chiming in unison. Pupils showed good degree of confidence when they sang short phrases by themselves.
145. By the end of Year 6, pupils have learned to sing clearly and enthusiastically in unison and in parts. They listen to a wide range of music such as Irish folk music, jazz, pop and classical, often related to topics such as weather or a particular country. They listen to live concerts by visiting specialists and to each other in performance assemblies. On these occasions they listen quietly and appreciatively, applauding the efforts of their peers. They learn the rudiments of music theory whilst performing and composing on tuned percussion instruments, recorders, keyboards and orchestral instruments. Their composition becomes more formal as they move through the school, as they experiment with ostinato rhythms, scales such as the pentatonic scale, and effects to create particular moods. During the inspection, a group of more able pupils demonstrated sophisticated listening skills as they listened to a tone poem by Smetana, with a visiting specialist teacher, during which they identified major and minor keys, and successfully interpreted what the music represented. Later they composed short pieces to describe similar events, by creating a four-beat ostinato rhythm, a melody to fit that rhythm and simple accompaniment. One group composed a most appropriate melody to portray a hunt and accompanied it with a two-note ground base. This challenging experience enables the most able to make very good progress.
146. The quality of music teaching is good and sometimes very good, with a number of staff having very good music skills, including the headteacher and the music co-ordinator. Their examples help the pupils develop a great love for the subject and account in part for the large number of pupils taking part in the wide range of music activities.
147. Visiting peripatetic teachers teach violin, woodwind, brass and guitar. Three teachers in the school teach recorder, including four-part consort playing for the most able. When pupils reach the appropriate standard they join the orchestra, which plays regularly in assembly, as does the choir. Other instrumental groups combine with the choir and orchestra in several performances a year, culminating for the last three years in a performance of a Shakespeare play. The orchestra accompanies the dancers and the choir and its members often double as actors on stage. A rehearsal for this year's play, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' took place during the inspection

week. It not only revealed very high standards of performance, but gave all the musicians and actors, a major performing arts experience which very substantially enriched their education. This bringing together of the creative arts is further extended during an arts week in which all teachers offer two workshops for the pupils, often linked to topics in other subjects. The school's high standards of performance are recognised in the local community and have resulted in a number of invitations to perform including at a Remembrance Concert and at the Spalding Festival.

148. Music is led well. The co-ordinator is a good musician and enthusiastically promotes music in the school. She monitors teachers' planning, samples pupils' work and has monitored the teaching of music. An elementary system of assessment is in operation, but this is not sufficiently developed to track pupils' progress adequately and ensure that talented pupils are identified. Music resources are generally good, and pupils and teachers have good access to them.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

149. Although the school makes proper provision for teaching physical education, it was only possible to see one lesson in the infant part of the school and one in the junior part. Consequently, no overall judgement is made of the standards that pupils attain at the end of Years 2 and 6 or of the quality of teaching and learning. The pupils in Years 2 and 6 attained satisfactory standards in the two lessons observed. Standards were average at the time of the last inspection. There is no difference in the standards of boys and girls.
150. The school has worked effectively to address the weaknesses identified in the last inspection report. The subject policy has been revised.
151. Both the lessons seen focussed on the improvement of throwing and catching skills. In Year 2 and Year 6 pupils showed appropriately developed ability. More able pupils in Year 6 achieved a high degree of accuracy and consistency.
152. The quality of teaching was good. The strengths common to both lessons were:
- strong control and management skills resulting in pupils behaving very well indeed;
 - good expectations of what pupils can achieve leading them to strive hard to improve.
- In the Year 2 lesson the large amount of time given to observing the pupils' throwing actions and coaching for improvement impacted well on the progress they made.
153. Pupils in Year 3 have swimming instruction at a municipal pool. They follow a programme of work devised by the pool's staff. No records have been provided to show the percentage of pupils who meet the nationally expected standards by the time pupils leave the school.
154. A good range of activities outside lessons, including unusually Morris and country dancing, enhance learning opportunities and pupils' personal development. The good links with a local secondary modern school also contribute. For example, all pupils in Years 3 to 6 go there for a day of athletics activities.
155. The co-ordinator's work has a positive effect on standards through her drafting and revision of the programme of work and the improvement of learning resources. She is aware that the lack of effective arrangements for assessing and recording pupils'

attainment and progress reduces teachers' ability to plan appropriately challenging activities, and has plans to deal with this.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

156. Standards are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6. Judgements take into account the scrutiny of pupils' work, lesson observations, displays and staff and pupil discussions. There has been an improvement in the medium-term planning since the last inspection and the quantity of recorded work reflects effective links with literacy.
157. Pupils make good progress in developing an understanding of Christianity and other world faiths over time, which helps them to develop a positive appreciation of diverse values and beliefs. Pupils with special educational needs are appropriately supported and take a full part in lessons.
158. Year 2 pupils are fascinated to learn that the Old Testament in the Bible has the same content as the Torah in Judaism. They enjoy reading and writing about the story of Jonah and the whale and in discussion they start to understand the need to keep to obligations just as Jonah did. Year 4 pupils are interested to find out how Christians use the Bible and learn how it has had an impact on the lives of famous people such as Saint Francis of Assisi. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 explore the teachings of Islam and Judaism as well as Christianity. They learn about special celebrations and the significance of particular religious artefacts and symbols within different places of worship.
159. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. In the best lessons, pupils reflect thoughtfully, for example, on how religious belief has inspired people's work. In a lively discussion pupils in Years 4 and 5 considered the life of Mother Theresa and later produced thoughtful written work. Pupils behave well in lessons and are keen to record their ideas in writing. Good use is made of displays to extend learning about world faiths. Work undertaken in lessons makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development in addition to literacy.
160. Subject co-ordination is very good. The headteacher presently undertakes this role and brings very good subject knowledge and understanding to it. He makes strong links between work undertaken in religious education with whole school assembly themes and stories. Assessment procedures are well established and the school has good resources to support teaching, including a wide range of religious artefacts and books. The school has links with the local church through regular visits. However, it has no other links with places of worship or other major world faiths through visitors or Internet links and this is an area for development.