

INSPECTION REPORT

TYDD ST MARY C OF E (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tydd St Mary, Wisbech

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120614

Headteacher: Mrs A Desborough

Reporting inspector: Mr A C Matthews
Rgl's No. 19410

Dates of inspection: 31 March – 1 April 2003

Inspection number: 248164

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 5 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Churchway
Tydd St Mary
Wisbech

Postcode: PE13 5QY

Telephone number: 01945 420269

Fax number: 01945 420269

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs L Griggs

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|-----------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| A C Matthews 19410 | Registered inspector | Information and communication technology Geography Physical education Special educational needs Foundation stage | What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? |
| J Smith 14214 | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| J Good 1411 | Team inspector | Mathematics Science Art and design Design and technology | Educational inclusion |
| I Elkington 32293 | Team inspector | English History Music | 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

Tydd St Mary C of E Primary School is situated in the village of Tydd St Mary, South Lincolnshire. The school is in the Long Sutton ward, which is a rural community with limited employment opportunities. The school was built in 1961 and the great majority of pupils come from the villages of Tydd Gote and Tydd St Mary. The school roll has grown considerably since the last inspection in 1998, although it remains smaller than most other primary schools, with 68 full time pupils – 41 boys and 27 girls aged between five and 11, taught in three classes. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. There are 16 pupils eligible for free school meals, which at 23 per cent is broadly average. There are seven pupils on the special educational needs register, which is 10 per cent, and this is below the national average. An average proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Pupils join the Reception class in the September of the year in which they are five. Pupil mobility rate for last year was high at 23 per cent with ten pupils joining and six leaving the school at other than the normal times. Children's attainment on entry to the school is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Tydd St Mary is a good school with many very good features. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by knowledgeable governors and a dedicated and hard working staff. The teaching is good overall and leads directly to pupils attaining above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is very well led and managed and promotes its aims very successfully.
- Pupils achieve high standards because of good teaching and curricular provision.
- Pupils have good attitudes to school, work hard, behave well and have very good relationships.
- Procedures for the care and support of pupils are very good and highly valued by parents, who give very good support to the school.
- The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good.

What could be improved

- The inspection team found no areas of significant weakness.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvements since the last inspection in March 1998. In relation to the key issues then raised, the school has put into place good assessment procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and very effective systems for recording their progress. Teachers' planning is now consistently good because of very good monitoring by the headteacher and effective in-service training. The governing body now plays a very effective part in the school's management and the school has worked hard and successfully to develop a strong partnership with parents in the joint education of their children. There have also been improvements in the quality of teaching, the quality of children's learning opportunities, pupils' moral, social and cultural development and the quality of leadership and management in the school.

STANDARDS

Usually a table is inserted here to show the attainment of Year 6 pupils over the last three years compared with all schools nationally and to similar schools. As the number of pupils in last year's Year 6 group was less than ten, the table is not printed.

In the 2002 National Curriculum tests, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 was well above average compared with all schools nationally and to schools who draw their pupils from a similar background. In science, pupils' attainment, when compared with similar schools, was very high, being in the top 5 per cent in the country. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels was also well above average overall. The school's targets for 2002 were equalled in mathematics and exceeded in English. The trend of the school's results over the last three years has been above the national trend. Although the size of the Year 6 groups in recent years has been much smaller than average, boys have achieved better than girls in all three subjects. Pupils presently in Year 6 have made very good progress since Year 2, and their attainment is above average in English, mathematics and science. These standards are slightly below those of the previous year, because of the higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs. This year there is no marked difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Higher-attaining pupils are well challenged and pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Evidence from the inspection shows that the present Year 6 pupils are on course to meet the challenging targets set for them in English and mathematics. These pupils' attainment is above national expectations in music and history and in line with national expectations in all other subjects. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests, Year 2 pupils' attainment, when compared with similar schools, was below average in writing, but above average in reading, and well above average in mathematics. There was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Evidence from the inspection shows that the present Year 2 pupils' attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics, with a significant proportion of pupils working at the higher levels in all three subjects. These pupils' attainment is above national expectations in music and history and in line with national expectations in all other subjects. Children in Reception make good progress and enter Year 1 with attainment that is above national expectations in mathematical development but below expectations in their personal, social and emotional development. In all other areas, their attainment is in line with national expectations.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Pupils are enthusiastic about school and have positive attitudes to their work. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Good at all times. |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good. Relationships throughout the school are very strong and impact very positively on pupils' confidence and the way they learn. |
| Attendance | Above average. |

Pupils show a very good understanding and consideration for others. They take their responsibilities seriously and become increasingly confident as they move through the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Reception | Years 1 – 2 | Years 3 – 6 |
|------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| Quality of teaching | Good | 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 quality of teaching is consistently good and equates closely with the good progress that pupils make in the school. There has been a noticeable improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. The teaching observed in literacy, numeracy and science was consistently good in all the years. Pupils of all abilities are well challenged, because teachers know them well and teach the basic skills very effectively. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, explain things clearly and create a very positive learning environment where pupils feel valued and want to do their best. Teachers are very proficient at using questioning to challenge pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding. Pupils also benefit from the expertise of specialist teachers in subjects such as music and swimming. Teachers' planning is consistently good, with much of the work appealing to the interests of the pupils, encouraging them to work hard. Whilst teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously, they do not consistently point out where they need to improve. Children in Reception settle quickly, and respond enthusiastically to the good range of activities that the teachers and teaching assistant plan for them.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Good. The curriculum is well supplemented by a good range of visits and visitors. The school has a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. Pupils' needs are accurately identified and fully met by the school. Good use is made of support staff to work with these pupils. Individual education plans are of good quality. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social and moral development and good provision for their spiritual and cultural development. Good opportunities exist for the older pupils to take responsibility. The newly-established school council is providing a valuable insight into pupils' thinking, whilst giving them an idea of how society functions. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Child protection procedures are very well established and the school has good regard for pupils' health and safety. The school cares well for all pupils and recognises and caters for their individual needs. As a result, all are fully included in the life and work of the school. |

The school curriculum has improved since the last inspection, with the school's use of National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies making a positive contribution to pupils' achievement. The length of the school day is longer than average and some of the younger pupils become very tired towards the end of the afternoon. Parents give good support to their children in the homework that is set and some give valuable help in the classroom, with extra-curricular activities and when accompanying school trips. The involvement of fathers in reading stories to groups of pupils has been a popular and successful initiative.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and her sense of vision inspires the whole school community, pupils, staff, governors and parents. She is ably supported by the hardworking staff who take on the school's priorities positively and work hard and successfully towards them. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Very good. The governing body is fully involved in all areas of school life. Governors are very committed to fulfilling their specific roles and ensuring that statutory requirements are met. They have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and contribute most effectively to the school developments. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Test results are very carefully analysed to ensure weaknesses are addressed in teachers' future planning. The monitoring of the quality of teaching is very thorough and is leading to continued improvements throughout the school. |
| The strategic use of resources | Very good. The school uses its budget most carefully to maintain high standards and applies the principles of best value well in all areas. |

The headteacher's leadership and management are a great strength of the school and have helped its further development since the last inspection. The school's commitment to the constant evaluation of its practices is helping it to improve even more. This improvement is particularly evident in the rise in standards at the end of Year 6. Prudent use of its budget and grants has enabled the school to create new cloakrooms for pupils and improve the internal decoration of the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is very well managed and very approachable. • Children enjoy school and behave well. • The teaching is good and helps pupils make good progress. • The school promotes good attitudes and values. • The school has close relationships with parents and works well with them in the education of their children. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework. • The range of extra-curricular activities. |

The inspectors fully endorse all the parents' positive comments. They do not agree with parents' concerns about homework. This is set regularly, and pupils have a clear understanding of its importance and how it helps their learning. Inspectors judged that the range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory for a school of this size. Discussions with pupils identified an enthusiasm for a larger range of clubs through the years, but inspectors felt that it would be an unreasonable expectation on staff if these were to be provided by the teachers.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When the school was last inspected, in March 1998, standards of attainment were average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 and average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Since then standards have fluctuated, mainly due to the prior attainment of the intake, but overall they have improved strongly, with results at the end of Year 6 showing an improvement above the national trend. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests, the performance of the Year 2 pupils was well above average in mathematics, above average in reading and average in writing. When compared with similar schools, attainment was well above average in mathematics, above average in reading but below average in writing. In the 2002 tests for Year 6 pupils, the school's performance was well above average in English, mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment was well above average in English and mathematics and very high in science, being in the top 5 per cent in the country. Statistics show that this group of pupils made very good progress since taking their National Curriculum tests in Year 2. However, it must be remembered that the cohorts in the school are much smaller than the national average and this can distort statistics.
2. The improvement in the performance of Year 6 pupils in 2002, compared with 2001, was due largely to the much higher proportion of pupils working at the higher levels. However, inspectors also found that measures adopted by the school, especially the procedures for monitoring, evaluating and developing the quality of teaching, are having a positive impact on standards and pupils' achievement. This is particularly so for the present Year 6 pupils. When in Year 2, their attainment was well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Evidence from the inspection shows that these pupils have made very good progress and their attainment is now above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards of attainment for the present Year 2 pupils are also above average in reading, writing and mathematics, with a significant proportion of pupils working at the higher levels. Standards in other subjects are generally in line with national expectations for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. In history and music, standards are above national expectations. While standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations, pupils make good use of their computer skills to support their learning in other subjects.
3. Despite the small year groups, there are some differences in the performance of boys and girls at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Over the last three years, girls have outperformed boys at the end of Year 2, but boys have outperformed girls at the end of Year 6. However, during the inspection, there was no discernible difference between the attainment of boys and girls. The absence of a clear pattern from year to year points to the need for the school to continue to monitor the differences closely.
4. The high quality of leadership and the clear focus of the school on improving achievement demonstrate clearly that the school has a very good capacity to sustain the clear improvements since the last inspection. However, the school's task in continuing to raise attainment is made more difficult by two factors: the size of the year groups is much smaller than the national average and this can cause huge variations in attainment, particularly when some pupils in a small year group have special educational needs. The school also has been subject to above average mobility rates in the last two years, and this too leads to variations in the achievement of those year groups that have been affected most by the pupil turnover.

5. The attainment of children on entry to the school is average and is higher than at the time of the last inspection. However, there are significant weaknesses in pupils' personal, social and emotional development and in their basic literacy skills. Children benefit from consistently good teaching, with a strong emphasis on improving basic skills, and so they make good progress in the Reception class. By the time they start in Year 1, the great majority of pupils will have achieved the expected Early Learning Goals¹ except for personal, social and emotional development where children's attainment is below expectations, and in their mathematical development, where their attainment is above expectations.
6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. Children in Reception have their needs identified early and make good progress in relation to their specific targets, because the staff adopt appropriate strategies to address weaknesses. Progress for these pupils continues to be good through the school, because their individual education plans clearly identify small, achievable targets for improvement in the next stage of their learning. Their progress is also helped by the work of the teaching assistants who work and plan closely with the class teachers to ensure that these pupils' learning needs are met, through individual or group support. Higher-achieving pupils are consistently well challenged through the school, make good progress and achieve above average standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The previous inspection found that the attitudes and behaviour of the younger pupils were satisfactory and that their enthusiasm for learning improved as they moved through the school. Over the intervening five years, the attitudes and behaviour of pupils of all ages have improved and are now good. Pupils behave well during lessons and can also be relied upon to be sensible at less formal times, for example, during break and lunchtime. Virtually all the pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and that they look forward to taking part in the wide range of activities provided. Pupils and teachers enjoy each other's company and the result is a friendly and very harmonious community. Relationships are very good and there have been no exclusions over the last school year.
8. Almost all the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agree that their children enjoy school and that they are well taught. Parents' confidence is very well placed. Children entering the Reception class enjoy being part of the school and their enthusiasm helps to create a lively and vibrant atmosphere. The standard of teaching is above average and, by presenting well-planned and interesting lessons, all teachers create a purposeful atmosphere that is very conducive to learning. For example, during a history lesson, pupils in Years 5 and 6 worked really hard when researching the various changes that have come about since the Second World War.
9. Pupils behave very well during assemblies and they are friendly and welcoming towards visitors. During lessons, most of the pupils of all ages, including the children in Reception, settle down quickly and do their best. Outside lessons, pupils can also be relied upon to behave responsibly and with consideration for each other. Lunchtimes are well organised and pupils eat quickly and with the minimum of fuss. Discussions with pupils revealed that there is occasional bullying, but that once a member of staff had been informed, the situation is quickly and effectively resolved.

¹ Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the **F**oundation **S**tage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

10. Although the school does not specifically plan the way in which it promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development during lessons, these strands form an integral part of school life. As a result, pupils' personal development is good overall and their social and moral development is very good. As they get older, pupils are increasingly able to distinguish right from wrong and develop the ability to make reasoned and responsible moral decisions. A school council has recently been established and pupils in Years 2 to 6 now have a forum within which they can air their views. Assemblies are carefully planned and the themes are reinforced throughout other lessons, such as during circle time² and during religious education lessons. Over time, pupils form their own set of moral values and beliefs and increasingly appreciate how their actions impact upon others. The school has a very successful policy for social and educational inclusion and relations between pupils from differing ethnic groups are very good.
11. Most of the pupils play constructively with their classmates and listen to each other's views and opinions. Each class has a range of responsibilities, and pupils of all ages relish being able to help. Year 6 pupils act as monitors, sell fruit at break time and help younger pupils with their reading. Experiences such as these, complemented by a good range of visits and visitors, help pupils to grow in confidence and to become more aware of the opportunities available to them within the wider world.
12. Attendance is good and pupils arrive promptly at the start of the school day. Apart from a small dip two years ago, attendance has been consistently above the national average since the previous inspection. The school attaches great importance to this aspect and it regularly stresses its importance to parents. Although the school regularly reminds parents about the importance of good attendance, some continue to book family holidays during the term. This means that their children miss out on the work that is undertaken by the rest of the class and the ensuing gaps in their knowledge sometimes place them at a disadvantage in the future.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching is consistently good and has improved since the last inspection. There has been a considerable improvement in the proportion of very good and excellent lessons. The quality of teaching continues to improve, spurred on by the consistently strong approach adopted by the headteacher to monitoring, evaluating and developing teaching in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
14. There are many consistent and characteristic strengths of teaching across the school and across subjects. Identifiable strengths are the capable management of the classroom and the very good use of teachers' knowledge and understanding, particularly in the questioning of pupils. Teachers plan their work carefully to ensure lessons are interesting and the work set is challenging to pupils of all abilities. In this way, all pupils are fully included in all the learning opportunities that the school offers and achieve well. The teaching assistants are used effectively by the teachers and have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers set homework regularly, and pupils have a clear understanding of its importance and how it consolidates and extends their learning. Although teachers' marking is carried out regularly, it does not consistently identify how pupils should improve their work. In the class of the oldest pupils, marking does not place enough emphasis on quality handwriting and presentation and, as a result, pupils' attainment in these areas is below expectations.

² During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference of interruption from other children.

15. English and mathematics, including the skills of literacy and numeracy, are taught consistently well through the school and have improved since the last inspection. The development of pupils' speaking and listening skills is particularly good. In English and mathematics, the co-ordinators set high standards and all teachers have high expectations and set work that is challenging for all pupils. The pace of learning is brisk and the teachers use questioning particularly well to challenge and deepen pupils' thinking. This was particularly effective when Year 2 pupils not only had to work out the answers, but also explain to their peers what mathematical processes they had gone through to arrive at their answers. Teachers are enthusiastic and this is transferred to the pupils who are, in turn, very eager learners, making good gains in their learning. However, sometimes the opening session of a numeracy lesson is too long for higher-achieving pupils who understand the new concept more quickly than their peers, and have the ability to work independently, using their newly-acquired skills and knowledge. Teachers plan frequent opportunities for pupils to use their acquired numeracy skills to support their learning in other subjects, such as science, geography and design and technology. Older pupils use grammar effectively in formal exercises, but an over-reliance on worksheets restricts their opportunities to use and practise these skills in their writing. Although pupils' writing skills show a clear improvement through the years, teachers do not plan consistently for the development of these skills in other subjects.
16. Throughout the school, science, history and music are taught consistently well, with pupils attaining above average standards in these subjects. Good use is made of the expertise of specialist teachers for music and swimming, and this has a direct impact on the good progress that the pupils make in these two areas. In Years 1 and 2, teaching in information and communication technology, design and technology, geography and physical education is also good, with pupils making good progress in these subjects. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make above average progress in art because of the good quality teaching. Throughout the school, teachers record pupils' progress carefully, and this information is used effectively by the teachers when they plan future work. As a result of this, pupils are consistently challenged and achieve well. Although by the end of Year 6 there are weaknesses in some aspects of information and communication technology, teachers make good use of computers to support pupils' learning across the curriculum.
17. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. This is because individual education plans and other targets are matched carefully to meet their precise needs. Teachers use a wide range of successful strategies to motivate, involve and challenge these pupils. Records are carefully maintained and regularly updated to enable teachers to track pupils' progress carefully. The occasional example of inappropriate behaviour, such as was seen in the Year 4/5/6 class during the inspection, is dealt with very effectively and this ensures that incidents such as this do not disrupt the learning of the class. Higher-attaining pupils learn well because they are consistently well challenged.

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

18. The quality and range of learning opportunities throughout the school are good. Statutory requirements for all subject areas are met, and coverage includes both religious education and sex education. The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has been well planned. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of these strategies, and this has a positive impact on the development of pupils' speaking, listening, reading, writing and numeracy skills, particularly in the current Year 6. Standards across the school have continued to improve since the last inspection.
19. The time given to each subject is average, except in physical education, where additional time is needed for travelling to and from the swimming pool. Swimming has been recognised to be an essential life skill for all pupils to learn, as the local area has a

number of waterways running through it. The promotion of pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development through the curriculum is good, and pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education. The pupils' learning opportunities fully reflect the aims of the school, and all pupils have equal access to it, regardless of age, ability or gender. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils have good access to a broad and balanced curriculum that is relevant to them. The quality of the support that they receive successfully enhances their access to the full National Curriculum alongside their peers. The special educational needs policy is up to date, and the school is fully meeting the national Code of Practice.

20. The school has detailed schemes of work for all subjects. These are based on national guidelines. They give clear guidance to teachers, and enable them to teach all subjects in a progressive and methodical way. Teachers use the schemes effectively, and this ensures that pupils learn in a structured way and cover all of the requirements of the National Curriculum. There are good learning opportunities for the children in the Reception class. A broad variety and balanced range of activities are provided, which meet the requirements of the Early Learning Goals. There are good strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy, and the planning meets the needs of all of the children. Time is allocated appropriately to each area of learning. The school enjoys good links with the local community. Links are made with other schools; for example, very strong links have been made with the local nursery, which provides the school with some very useful assessment records for pupils who enter the school. Good links have also been formed with the local primary and secondary schools.
21. The pupils' learning is enriched by a number of carefully chosen educational visits and by visitors who come to the school. These include the vicar, who takes assemblies on a regular basis. Special services are also held in the local church, including the popular Harvest Festival service, for which pupils are encouraged to make models out of vegetables. The Parent Teacher Association actively raises money for a pantomime visit at Christmas, as well as other activities and projects. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is sound. These include a puzzle club, dancing clubs, football clubs and cycling safety courses. The school is also involved in the Lincolnshire Healthy Schools initiative.
22. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. In the area of cultural development, this represents an improvement since the last inspection, when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. With regard to spiritual development, adults in the school value the views and ideas of pupils. In the great majority of lessons, pupils are encouraged to listen to each other and to respect each other's ideas. School assemblies play an important part in school life and make a good contribution to the development of pupils' spiritual awareness. Individual effort and achievement are rewarded regularly within the whole school community. For example, the school has introduced a monthly 'drop-in' for parents, when pupils are given the opportunity to show and celebrate their recent best work.
23. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and is promoted by the positive relationships within the school. Adults provide very good role models. Staff respect and value pupils as individuals, and this is reciprocated. Pupils take on responsibilities as monitors, and are welcoming to visitors to the school. A termly visit by the local playschool helps foster the caring ethos of the school and uses the expertise of the older pupils in the activities planned for the visiting children. Pupils' opportunities for developing socially are numerous. The various extra-curricular clubs allow them to work and learn together. Regular sporting fixtures take place against other schools, and pupils are also given the opportunity to take part in the Spalding music festival. Pupils actively raise money for a number of causes, including the National Children's Homes.

24. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to improve upon its provision for cultural development. Pupils' own culture and historical background have a secure place in the curriculum through studies in geography, religious education and history. For example, two visitors to the school talked to the pupils about life in Britain in the Second World War, and brought in artefacts to show them. Visits occur to places of interest, such as Burghley House and a Hindu Temple in Peterborough. Music from different cultures is explored, and a professional jazz drummer recently visited the school. Pupils are aware of the difference between their own lives and the lives of people living in different cultures. For example, the Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils study life in an Indian village. Another visitor soon to visit the school will talk about Christian life in Africa with particular reference to Easter.
25. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is very good. The school uses the Lincolnshire Drug Education in Primary School Initiative (DIPSI) scheme and this includes all the relevant aspects, including sex and drug education. A wide range of topics is covered, each at an appropriate stage in the pupils' development. They include units such as human rights, decision-making and aspects of citizenship. A wide range of people from the local community, such as the school nurse and representatives from the Church of England, also come into school. They talk about their roles and responsibilities and help pupils to develop an awareness and understanding of how society works. Pupils gradually grow in confidence and they gain early experience of some of the personal skills they will need in later life, such as negotiation and compromise. This rich and varied provision prepares pupils very well for their life as independent and socially responsible members of society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

26. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development is good. Effective assessment strategies in the Reception class help staff to plan appropriately challenging work that carefully builds on the children's previous learning. Since the last inspection, new systems have been developed for the tracking of pupils' progress as they move through the school. This system is based upon statutory and optional testing at the end of each year and regular assessments in reading, writing, spelling and mathematics. From this information, the school is now predicting levels of achievement and setting individual learning targets for pupils. For example, following analysis of assessment data, Year 6 pupils were set targets for improvement that included reading a newspaper daily and writing a weekly diary. Teachers are now beginning to break down subject areas other than mathematics, English and science into level grades, so that they can measure individual pupils' performance in each subject. Portfolios of graded work in each subject have been completed.
27. Throughout the school, teachers are developing effective systems for assessment in English, mathematics, science and other subjects. They are using the information gained most effectively to plan work that is matched to the spread of age and ability of pupils within their classes. Where marking is effective, the teachers' comments give the pupils guidance in moving on in their learning, and how to improve their work. However, this good practice is not always consistent across the whole school, with the result that marking does not always consistently focus all of the pupils on the next steps to improvement.
28. All members of staff share a wholehearted and sincere commitment to pupils' welfare. They work closely as a team in order to ensure that the pupils are very well looked after during the school day. The standard of personal support and guidance provided is good and the time that pupils spend at school is happy and enjoyable. Children joining the Reception class are gradually and sensitively introduced to school routines and this helps them to settle in quickly. All members of staff are familiar with child protection procedures

and arrangements are very good. Routine health and safety procedures are in place and they comply fully with current legislation and with local authority guidelines.

29. Procedures for assessing pupils with special educational needs are good overall. These pupils are carefully monitored and supported from the Foundation Stage onwards and this good practice enables them to make good progress towards meeting their individual targets. Detailed records noting pupils' progress are kept by the special educational needs co-ordinator. These are used effectively at regular review meetings when pupils' good quality individual education plans are drawn up. Class teachers, support staff, parents and sometimes pupils are involved in the review progress. This shared responsibility boosts pupils' confidence and raises their motivation to do well. The school makes effective use of other agencies to assess pupils with more serious learning difficulties, and to ensure pupils are given the most appropriate help to meet their needs.
30. Although procedures for the monitoring of pupils' personal development are largely informal, they are effective. Relationships between pupils and members of staff are very good and teachers are sensitive to pupils' 'ups and downs'. Each autumn, Year 6 pupils discuss their progress with the headteacher and individual targets for improvement are agreed. In addition, individual class teachers meet their own pupils and identify targets for improvement. This close liaison helps to ensure that any emerging personal or academic problems are identified and addressed at an early stage.
31. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are straightforward but effective. Procedures for eliminating bullying and other oppressive behaviour are good. Pupils say that such incidents are rare and, if they occur, they are dealt with in a constructive manner that ensures that they do not reoccur. The school has a very successful policy of social and educational inclusion and pupils from all cultural backgrounds get along very well together.
32. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. The school constantly emphasises the importance of regular attendance and discourages parents from booking family holidays during the term. A small minority of parents, however, continues to do so and this inevitably means that their children miss out on work that the rest of the class undertakes. On return, both the pupil and the teacher are put under pressure to try and make up the learning deficit.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

33. Parents have very positive views of the school, which sees a close partnership with parents as fundamental to its work. Over the five years since the previous inspection, the school has encouraged them to become more involved in their children's education. Parents appreciate this and have warmed considerably to this open and welcoming approach. Well over half of the parents returned their pre-inspection questionnaires, and analysis of their responses shows that they are very pleased with many areas of the school's work. There are only two areas of concern; around one in five is dissatisfied with the arrangements for homework and one in four would like a wider range of extra-curricular activities. Inspectors agree with parents' positive views but feel that their concerns are not justified. The amount and type of homework is very similar to that which other schools provide and the range of activities is in line with what would be expected for a school of this size.
34. Links with parents are very effective, and the school provides many opportunities for them to find out about the work their children are doing. The school is keen to improve and is very receptive to suggestions. For example, parents of leaving Year 6 pupils are asked to complete a questionnaire, giving their views on any aspect of the work of the school. Parents are very proud of their school and it receives good support from within the village.

A very high proportion of parents attend their children's consultation evenings with teachers, and information is further supplemented by regular newsletters. Pupils' annual reports are informative and clearly highlight strengths and areas for development. The school works hard to keep parents up to date with national initiatives. For example, evening meetings for parents have been organised on subjects such as national testing, science, reading and writing. Attendance at these meetings, however, is often poor.

35. Links with the village nursery are very close and the children visit each term. They get to know pupils in all classes and a productive partnership between home and school is generally established before the children enrol in the Reception class. The parent teacher association is well supported and organises popular social and fund-raising events.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

36. Both the leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are of very good quality. This is an inclusive school, whose ethos is set by the very strong contribution of the headteacher and is supported by the very good teamwork of all the staff. Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in addressing its key issues and has adopted a much more rigorous approach to monitoring the school's performance through an enhanced programme of classroom observation. Collectively, the impact of these changes has been very positive in improving communication within the school, enhancing the focus on raising standards in the core subjects, increasing the confidence of staff and providing the leadership with a much clearer idea of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The very good quality of the arrangements for monitoring, evaluating and developing the school's educational provision provide a firm foundation for the school to improve even further. Since the last inspection, the school has improved in many areas and the combination of these improvements has impacted noticeably on the standards at the end of Year 6.
37. The governing body fulfils its functions very well and their effectiveness has improved considerably since the last inspection. They have made good use of local education authority training courses and now have a very clear view of the work of the school. Collectively, they have a very good combination of skills and experience, although more use could be made of these skills in helping the school to evaluate the quality of its developments. All governors have responsibility for a particular subject and the great majority of governors monitor teaching in this subject. Feedbacks are given to meetings of the full governing body and help to ensure that governors are very well informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses. Because governors are well informed about the school's performance, their role as critical friend to the school is well developed and makes a valuable contribution to the drawing up of priorities for the school's developments.
38. Issues relating to special educational needs (SEN) are managed well and the SEN co-ordinator oversees this important area effectively. The school's SEN register is regularly updated and good use is made of the strengths of the co-ordinator in her monitoring of these pupils in the classroom. There are good procedures for drawing up pupils' individual education plans and this process is overseen by the co-ordinator. Funding is well directed to provide good quality learning support. Records of individual pupils are well maintained and support from outside agencies is well managed. The governing body is well informed about SEN matters and discharges its duties effectively. The school is particularly good at focusing extra support for pupils with the greatest need. Although much of this money comes from the school budget, it does ensure that these pupils are fully included in all aspects of the school's work.
39. The school aims are highly appropriate and very well incorporated into the school's day to

day routines. They highlight the importance of pupils fulfilling their potential and of good relationships, and show a clear commitment to Christian values and equality of opportunity for all pupils. School developments consistently reflect these aims and help to create a civilised atmosphere in the school, where pupils feel valued, supported and challenged.

40. The school development plan is of good quality and is carefully drawn up to ensure that both school and national issues are addressed and met. Careful financial planning ensures that the requisite budget is allocated to planned developments. The identification of priorities results from monitoring and evaluation by the school and from various governing body committees. This development planning process has been very carefully developed and successfully ensures that the priorities identified are the most appropriate for the school. Past developments have been instrumental in raising standards in English and mathematics and have also brought improvements to the quality of the school accommodation.
41. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good overall and make a good contribution to the quality of education provided. The school is well staffed with a good balance of experienced and newly qualified teachers. The teaching staff are appropriately qualified to teach all areas of the National Curriculum and the Foundation Stage. The three full-time teachers are supported by two part-time colleagues, one of whom teaches music throughout the school and the other releases the headteacher from her classroom duties for two days each week. Both part-time teachers make valuable contributions to the quality of the pupils' learning experiences. The teaching staff are well supported in their classrooms by their teaching assistants. Relationships between all adults in the classrooms are very good. Teamwork is of a high order and each person's role is clearly defined and fully understood. The quality of this support allows pupils of all levels of ability to make good progress in their studies. The efficiency of the administrative staff, lunchtime supervisors and caretaker all ensure the effective day-to-day running of the school.
42. The newly qualified teacher is following a well-managed induction programme. Her experienced colleagues are giving her excellent support. The headteacher monitors her classroom performance on a regular basis and provides positive and helpful feedback. The school has a very effective performance management system which links directly to the training programmes of individual staff. They attend regular in-service training, which is also clearly related to the priorities in the school development plan. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when this aspect of the school's planning was identified as a key area for development.
43. Overall, the accommodation is good and is very well maintained. The building provides sufficient space for the present number of pupils on roll. Most classrooms are of a suitable size for all normal teaching and learning activities. However, if class sizes continue to increase, it will become more difficult to give the current high priority to adopting a practical approach to teaching the National Curriculum. The number of pupils currently in the Year 4/5/6 class requires expert classroom organisation to manage the learning environment. Throughout the school, displays of pupils' work, pictures, and artefacts create an interesting and stimulating environment. The hall is used very effectively for physical education activities, as a dining room at lunchtime, as a base for teaching music, and for assemblies and acts of collective worship. Outdoor play space is good, with a wide hard surface playground and a grassed area. There is a secure play area for children in the Reception class, with a recently purchased playhouse. These children also have supervised access to the large play equipment on the adjacent village sports field. The environmental area surrounding the school is being improved and developed. A colourful rainbow flower border and an impressive millennium tiled area combine well with the mature trees to give the school a pleasant and stimulating setting.

44. The school has sufficient learning resources to support teaching and learning in all subjects of the National Curriculum and the Foundation Stage. The level of resources in information and communication technology, and design and technology has been improved considerably since the last inspection. In all subjects, resources are used effectively to support pupils' learning. The school management team's policy of focussing funds to improve the quality and quantity of resources available to teachers is being rewarded by the improvement in the standards pupils are achieving.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

45. There are no key issues for the school to address. However, to improve standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should consider addressing the following minor issues as part of the school development plan:
- (1) introduce standardised handwriting and presentation policies to ensure continuity through the school (paragraphs 14, 61, 84, 100);
 - (2) develop more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum (paragraphs 15, 60, 105);
 - (3) ensure teachers' marking consistently informs pupils how they can improve their work (paragraphs 14, 28, 64, 75, 84);
 - (4) continue to reinforce the school's policy on holidays during term time (paragraphs 12, 32);
 - (5) review the length of the school day for the younger pupils (paragraph 47).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 22 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 21 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 1 | 3 | 17 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 5 | 14 | 76 | 5 | 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 four percentage points.

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) | | 68 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | | 13 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

| | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | | 1 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | | 7 |

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 | 10 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 6 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 6 |
| National comparative data | 6.1 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.0 |
| 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 | 4 | 6 | 10 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|----------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | - | - | - |
| | Girls | - | - | - |
| | Total | 8 | 8 | 10 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 80 (100) | 80 (92) | 100 (100) |
| | National | 84 (84) | 86 (86) | 90 (91) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | - | - | - |
| | Girls | - | - | - |
| | Total | 8 | 10 | 2 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 80 (85) | 100 (100) | 20 (62) |
| | 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 | 5 | 1 | 6 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|-----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | - | - | - |
| | Girls | - | - | - |
| | Total | 5 | 6 | 6 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 83 (86) | 100 (86) | 100 (100) |
| | National | 75 (75) | 73 (71) | 86 (87) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | - | - | - |
| | Girls | - | - | - |
| | Total | 5 | 6 | 5 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 83 (57) | 100 (57) | 83 (86) |
| | 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 | 62 | 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 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – any other mixed background | 1 | 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 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – African | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Any other ethnic group | 3 | 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) | 5 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 22 |
| Average class size | 22 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 3 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 41 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|---|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 1 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 2 |
| | |
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE) | 0 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE) | 0 |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|--|---------|
| Financial year | 2001/2 |
| | |
| | £ |
| Total income | 158,710 |
| Total expenditure | 160,115 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,287 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 1,797 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 392 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 66 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 39 |

Percentage of responses in each category 59%

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 54 | 44 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 69 | 26 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 31 | 53 | 8 | 0 | 8 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 36 | 46 | 13 | 5 | 0 |
| The teaching is good. | 62 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 41 | 47 | 10 | 2 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 56 | 32 | 2 | 8 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 72 | 26 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 46 | 44 | 2 | 8 | 0 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 56 | 39 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 59 | 41 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 31 | 36 | 23 | 5 | 5 |

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

46. At the time of the inspection, there were ten children of Reception age and they share a class with ten Year 1 pupils. All children start in the September of the year in which they are five years old. The class is taught by the headteacher for three days a week and a part-time teacher for two days a week. The children benefit from the range of expertise that the two teachers bring to their learning. An experienced, full-time teaching assistant supports the teachers. The children's attainment on entry varies widely, but is generally average, except in their personal, social and emotional development, which is well below average and their communication, literacy and language, which is below average.
47. The quality of teaching is consistently good and leads to children making good progress in the Reception class. As a result of the support they receive, the great majority will attain the nationally defined Early Learning Goals in most areas of learning by the time they leave the Reception class. The exceptions are in mathematical development, where their attainment is above expectations and their personal, social and emotional development where their attainment is below expectations. The children benefit from a good range of learning experiences that are well organised and resourced, and leads to a clear and appropriate focus on all six areas of learning that they follow. Activities and associated learning objectives are very carefully chosen to suit the individual needs of different children. Relationships are strong, and adults provide very good role models for pupils' behaviour. They work very effectively as a team to ensure that children are kept constantly on task and that children of different ages and abilities are appropriately challenged. Adults develop children's vocabulary by choosing the words they use carefully and they provide a good model for children's social development by always insisting on the words 'please' and 'thank you'. Good quality displays provide an effective focus for learning. The day begins in a well-ordered way, with children having opportunities to share any news with the group. Teachers and the teaching assistant know the children well and often follow-up the children's news with pertinent questions, such as, 'Have you tried riding without your stabilisers yet?' The school day is longer than average. Towards the end of the afternoon, a significant proportion of children become tired and their learning and concentration suffer.
48. The Foundation Stage is led enthusiastically and very knowledgeably. Good quality planning consistently ensures sufficient challenge to activities that appeal to the children and encourage them to do their best. Assessment is used very effectively to track children's progress and to ensure that the work is suitably challenging and builds well on their previous learning. There are particularly good links with a local nursery from where a majority of the children come, and this adds to the very good induction procedures that the school organises for new children and their parents. Parents benefit from short reports in the autumn and spring terms, which highlight individual children's achievements and set targets for improvements. Parents are encouraged to make comments on these reports. Parents also benefit from a meeting in the autumn term when they discuss their child's progress with the teachers and the results of the baseline assessment that children have taken on entry. Since the last inspection, the school has developed very effective links with parents who now play a much more proactive role as joint educators of their children.

Personal, social and emotional development

49. Children enter the Reception class with poor skills in this area of learning. Due to the teachers' careful planning and their consistently good quality teaching, the children make good progress in developing their personal and social skills and quickly build up their

confidence so that they benefit from the wide range of learning experiences planned for them. Despite strengths of the provision, a significant proportion of children will not reach the expected standards by the time they leave the Reception class. However, the children are all very well motivated because of the enthusiastic approach of the Reception staff who promote very positive attitudes to learning. As a result, they enjoy their work and the good teaching helps them to develop confidence in themselves as learners. They are keen to solve problems and to make choices and decisions about their work. During the inspection, the children showed a wide range of levels of independence. Some are able to listen very carefully to instructions and quickly start their given tasks, whilst others need further support and encouragement. However, even with these careful strategies, some children have weak concentration and do not always successfully follow the convention of waiting until it is their turn to speak. Resources are easily accessible and most children observe the clearly emphasised classroom routines for using these.

50. Children take part in a good range of exciting learning activities. The majority work well together, sharing resources sensitively. Occasionally, such as in a lesson examining materials for 'twistiness', children found it much easier to work on their own rather than with a partner. The teachers and teaching assistant provide very good role models, showing respect, courtesy and patience in their dealings with the children. This in turn is reflected by the children, who are becoming increasingly polite, helpful and considerate of the needs of others. The Reception children's social skills benefit significantly from having Year 1 pupils in the class, with whom they work for parts of the day. There are good opportunities for children to learn about their own culture and to develop awareness of other cultures. They take part in Christian festivals and will shortly be making unleavened bread when they learn about the Passover. Their knowledge of Christianity is further enhanced by regular visits to the church. Teachers provide children with good opportunities to acquire a sense of awe and wonder at the world around them. For example, in a science lesson, children were intrigued by the number of tiny fibres they found as they unravelled pieces of string and twine.

Communication, language and literacy

51. The teaching in this aspect is consistently good. However, a small minority of children will not attain the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the Reception class because of their weak attainment on entry to the school. The teachers and teaching assistant are very successful in promoting children's speaking and listening skills, clearly seen when children talk about their week-end news or the characters in the *Jack and the Beanstalk* text they are reading. What is particularly good about the development of children's speaking and listening skills is the way in which teachers reinterpret children's answers so that their peers also benefit. Teachers are also good at allowing sufficient 'waiting' time for children with less well-developed communication skills to formulate answers to questions. Staff model spoken language well and correct children's language when appropriate. In activities, the staff play a crucial role in developing children's confidence in speaking by responding positively to their contributions. This encourages children of all abilities to join in. Children are making good progress in seeing the link between the sound and shape of a letter. An example of how this is developed further was observed in a lesson when a teacher asked the children 'what two phonemes make the sound 'gr'?' Children's enthusiasm for reading is encouraged by the texts they follow in their literacy lessons and in the stories read to them. Children understand the terms 'author' and 'title' and become excited when they recognise characters in a familiar fairy story. By the time they leave Reception, most children have satisfactory reading skills, with higher-attaining children able to use their letter sounds effectively to break down unknown sounds such as 'widow'. The great majority of children are gaining confidence in blending the sounds of letters. Many children recognise the majority of individual letters and are making good progress in using this knowledge in their writing. Most attempt a simple sentence, with higher-achieving children understanding the convention

of a capital letter to begin a sentence and a full stop at the end. For example, one higher-achieving child wrote, 'My mum has bub oois' (blue eyes). Parents play an important role in helping to consolidate their children's early reading skills, and good use is made of the children's home-school reading diaries to share relevant information about the children's individual progress.

Mathematical development

52. The great majority of children will exceed the Early Learning Goals in their mathematical development by the time they join Year 1. Their attainment at the beginning of the Reception class is higher in this aspect than in language and literacy and is carefully developed by good quality teaching. Children benefit from taking part in a wide range of free and structured activities which continually build on their previous learning. Staff assess children's ability very carefully to ensure that the work is appropriately challenging. High expectations are placed on the children and every opportunity is taken for them to develop their counting and number recognition skills. The teacher's questioning is particularly challenging and makes good use of children's subject knowledge: for example, in a lesson on three-dimensional shapes, the teacher described a shape she had in her bag as having 'six faces and eight corners'. This was identified correctly as either being a cube or a cuboid. Children's knowledge of three-dimensional shapes was further developed when they had to sort shapes, using their own criteria. Particularly impressive was a higher-achieving child who decided to put her cylinder with the rectangles because if it were cut longitudinally the curved side of the cylinder would make a rectangle. All children count up to ten, with songs and rhymes reinforcing their understanding. A significant number of children have a good understanding of simple patterns. The higher-achievers will exceed the Early Learning Goals before the end of the year and be moving on to Year 1 activities before leaving the Reception class.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

53. By the end of Reception, children have made good progress in this area and most will have achieved the Early Learning Goals. The teaching is consistently good and activities that are planned successfully promote the skills of enquiry and observation to encourage children to find things out for themselves. Children investigate objects and materials through their regular access to sand, water and play dough. They know about the features of plants and have planted and looked after their own tulip bulbs. Good questioning by the teachers encourages children to study objects carefully. For example, in a science lesson, pupils realised that, by twisting pipe cleaners together like a rope, they could not be separated by pulling but only by untwisting. They then applied this new knowledge to see how many small fibres, when twisted together, will make string. The village is a rich resource and children make regular visits into the community to look at the different buildings and other features as part of their environmental project work. Children have a good understanding of the past. Carefully planned activities, such as visiting a local National Trust property and comparing old and new toys, are successfully developing their awareness of chronology. Children are developing good computer skills in the wide range of programs they use. Some of these are designed to develop children's mouse and keyboard skills whilst others, such as the one of three-dimensional shapes, reinforce their learning in a particular subject.

Physical development

54. Children make satisfactory progress in their physical development and the great majority will achieve the expected Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. The teaching in this area is satisfactory and leads to children making appropriate gains in the development of their control and movement. Children show a good awareness of space, such as when they moved under, over and around different pieces of apparatus. They

have satisfactory balancing skills when working at different levels. Children are able to improve their skills by watching demonstrations of good quality movements by their peers. However, their own skills of evaluating each other's work are not well developed as they are not stressed sufficiently by the teacher. Children's physical development is also helped by a satisfactory range of play equipment in their secure area and easy access to large climbing frames on the adjacent village playing field. Children handle tools, paintbrushes and pencils with increasing control because staff carefully plan the development of these skills. As a result, their fine motor skills have improved well since the beginning of the year, as witnessed in their careful drawings of daffodils.

Creative development

55. Good teaching helps children to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area. The staff plan a wide range of activities which successfully develop children's creative skills. A good range of dressing-up clothes encourages the development of children's role-play as does their home corner which, at present is a flower shop that is run, in turn, by small groups of pupils. Children enjoy opportunities to cook. For example, they made three different types of porridge as part of their work on the story of *The Three Bears*. They benefit from the expertise of a specialist music teacher who encourages the singing of songs and the playing of musical instruments, both tuned and untuned.

ENGLISH

56. Results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils showed that attainment in reading was above average in comparison with schools nationally and with similar schools. In writing, the pupils' attainment was average when compared with all schools but below average when compared with similar schools. In both reading and writing, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels was above average. National Curriculum test results for Year 6 pupils showed that in 2002, pupils' attainment was well above average when compared with both schools nationally and similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels was well above average and statistics show that this group of Year 6 pupils had made very good progress since Year 2. Overall, both boys and girls throughout the school make good progress in English and the trend for improvement has continued to rise. The attainment of the present Year 2 and Year 6 pupils is above average, with the Year 6 pupils making noticeable improvements since Year 2. There has been a good overall improvement in standards since the last inspection.
57. Standards in speaking and listening are good at the end of Years 2 and 6. Teachers use a rich and wide vocabulary to promote the pupils' interest in new words. Pupils' listening skills have improved since the last inspection, and are now good. Pupils listen attentively in lessons to the teacher and to each other. Many pupils are confident, articulate speakers with a wide vocabulary. For example, a group of Reception and Year 1 pupils talked with great enthusiasm of how much they had enjoyed a trip to an old house. They used photographs to compare a modern cooker with a 'range' of 100 years ago and included much detail in their explanation.
58. Pupils' attainment in reading is good throughout the school. By the end of Year 2, pupils use a range of appropriate strategies to help them gain meaning from text, including the use of phonics and recognising parts of words and pictures. They develop a good knowledge of sounds and letters and are aware of the purpose of punctuation. The range of literature used to teach reading is appropriate, and 'big books' are used effectively for whole class teaching of reading skills. Pupils understand the difference between non-fiction and fiction books, and the purpose of the book title, contents and index. From Year 3 onwards, pupils continue to make good progress in developing their reading skills. The majority of pupils read texts fluently, using appropriate strategies to establish

meaning. Confident readers in Years 5 and 6 read with fluency and good expression. They respond well to a range of texts and often show an understanding of the significant ideas, themes, events and characters within it. Pupils are given good opportunities to locate information from a variety of sources, such as reference books, newspaper articles and the Internet. They are encouraged to take books home to read, and reading diaries show that a significant proportion of families help their children to read at home.

59. Overall standards in writing throughout the school are good. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils understand how to sequence sentences and are able to set out a simple story appropriately. Activities include the writing of poetry, reports, stories and accounts. Teachers' expectations are high. Pupils are aware of the need to add detail and interesting words, to hold the reader's interest. One Year 3 pupil started a poem:

'The drumming of the raindrops,
The squeaking of the stair,
The popping of the toaster,
The creaking of the chair'.

They make appropriate use of full stops, capital letters and question marks. Pupils use their phonic knowledge well to help them spell words.

60. By the end of Year 6, pupils write independently. Their writing is organised, and they use a more adventurous vocabulary. Completed work in their grammar books shows that they understand how to use grammar effectively in their writing. However, in Years 4, 5 and 6 there is an over-reliance on work sheets, which restrict the opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills further. Pupils are not given enough frameworks to help them organise their thoughts during writing tasks. Overall, they need more opportunities to plan their writing, create drafts and develop a further awareness of the important stages within the writing process. Dictionaries and thesaurus are used well to extend pupils' vocabulary. For example, in one lesson during a whole class shared reading activity, Year 6 pupils demonstrated that they had effective independent research strategies by looking up unknown words, such as 'tortilla', whilst the story was being read. Writing skills are sometimes developed in other curriculum areas. For example, some Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils wrote an account of evacuees in the Second World War. However, teachers do not consistently plan for pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects and as such, opportunities are missed for the pupils to consolidate and develop their skills across the curriculum.
61. Handwriting is variable, with the best examples being legible, joined and consistently fluent. Handwriting practice does take place, with younger pupils regularly practising forming their letters correctly. However, a number of books seen, particularly of the older pupils, were untidily presented, with the handwriting being poorly formed and not joined. Spelling is good throughout the school, and the phonics programme ensures that pupils use appropriate strategies to attempt more difficult words.
62. The quality of teaching is good overall and sometimes very good. In all of the lessons observed, teachers shared learning objectives with pupils at the beginning and discussed what has been learned at the end of the lesson. Where teaching is very good, questions are well directed at a level that encourages pupils to think and reflect on the answer. For example, Year 2 and Year 3 pupils listened to a recording of 'Peter and the Wolf' and discussed the mood and effect that the music invoked. Teachers' lesson planning is good. It follows a systematic format and is based upon the National Literacy Strategy. Lesson objectives are included in the planning, and where teaching is very good, evaluations made from the previous lesson feed into the next lesson.
63. Pupils are appropriately organised into groups when carrying out their activities, and work

is set depending on the age or needs of the individuals within them. National strategies to support the development of basic literacy skills are successfully implemented. A teaching assistant gives very valuable support to younger pupils who are withdrawn from class for this extra tuition.

64. Work is marked regularly and, in the best examples, comments are included that help pupils improve upon their work. This good practice is not evident in all of the classes, resulting in the fact that some pupils do not know how to improve upon their current work. Overall, teachers have a secure knowledge about the teaching of English to enable pupils to achieve as much as they should. Since the last inspection, the National Literacy Strategy has been introduced, and this has had a positive impact on the teaching of reading and writing skills. This has been an important factor with regard to pupils making good progress in English throughout the school. However, pupils now need more opportunities to practise, in other subjects, the skills they have learned in literacy lessons.
65. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work are generally very good. Relationships are positive between teachers and pupils and between the pupils.
66. The headteacher co-ordinates English and has made good progress in identifying strengths and weaknesses within the subject. Any weaknesses that are found are incorporated into the school development plan. Resources are satisfactory and are used well. The co-ordinator and governors monitor teaching and learning on a regular basis. Improved assessment procedures, including the testing of pupils' comprehension and reading skills, have allowed teachers to analyse pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses. The new procedures have also resulted in teachers setting work more closely linked to the needs of individual pupils, although pupils' involvement in this process needs to be developed further. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is appropriate. These pupils have detailed individual action plans, which are carefully followed, resulting in good teaching that is well focused.

MATHEMATICS

67. Standards in mathematics have improved since the last inspection. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests, Year 6 pupils achieved standards that were well above average when compared with all schools and with schools in a similar context. All pupils achieved the expected standard for 11 year olds and an above average proportion reached the higher levels. Although statistical evidence shows that over the last three years there has been some variation in standards, comparison between years is unreliable because year groups are small with often fewer than ten pupils. However, the overall trend for improvement is upwards and it is better than the national average. In the tests at the end of the last school year, pupils in Year 2 achieved standards that were also well above the national average. All pupils achieved the expected Level 2 or better and the proportion achieving the higher Level 3 was in-line with the national average. Over the last three-year period, girls in the Year 2 groups have consistently out-performed boys, but there has been no significant variation between boys and girls in Year 6.
68. Evidence from classroom observation, work analysis and discussion with pupils indicates that pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 are on course to achieve standards that are above the national average. All pupils are being given equal access to all areas of the curriculum and are achieving to their full potential. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are well supported in all normal classroom activities and this is enabling them to make good progress in their studies. The educational needs of higher-attaining pupils are being well catered for, and pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 are on-line to achieve levels that are above the national average. During the inspection, there was no significant difference between the levels of attainment of boys and girls.

69. Across the school, standards are improving because of the effective way in which the National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced. It has led to significant improvements in planning, in the monitoring of pupils' progress, and in the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers are making better use of assessment data in setting targets for improvement and tracking pupils' progress across the school. Extensive and very effective use is made of end of unit and other published tests to identify strengths and weaknesses in delivering the agreed curriculum programme. For example, analysis of test data identified problem solving, mental strategies and data handling as areas for further development. As a result, these topics were correctly included in the subject's development plan and the staff have worked collaboratively to address them. Scrutiny of pupils' previous and current work shows that they are becoming more competent in handling data from a variety of sources and in solving written mathematical problems. During the question and answer sessions at the start of lessons, pupils respond quickly and confidently. Throughout the school, mental strategies are of an above average standard.
70. By the end of Year 2, almost all pupils have a good understanding of number and calculate accurately for their age. The majority can order two digit numbers and have a secure understanding of place value to 100 and beyond. During lesson observations, they demonstrated a good understanding of halves and quarters. Most of them confidently explain the method they use to arrive at their answer to a problem of dividing 20 sweets between two and then four pupils. They make good use of their knowledge of two, three, four, five and ten times tables during the quick-fire mental activity at the start of the lesson. The higher-attaining pupils use mental methods to recall addition and subtraction facts to solve problems. They can identify different simple fractions that have the same value. Pupils in Year 1 make good progress in all areas and have good knowledge and understanding of two-dimensional shapes. They select the correct shapes to build a repeating pattern and confidently give the correct name. Higher-attaining pupils select three-dimensional shapes from a 'feely bag' and record the number of faces, edges and corners in a chart. Scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that, throughout Years 1 and 2, they achieve above average standards in all areas of the curriculum.
71. The majority of pupils in the Year 4/5/6 class have a good understanding of place value, with the Year 6 pupils achieving standards that are above average. Most of the oldest pupils confidently convert halves, quarters, fifths, and eighths into decimals and correctly place their answers on a number line. The higher-attaining pupils can correctly predict where three-eighths and four-fifths would be placed on the number line and can explain why. Pupils correctly order numbers to three decimal places and successfully round them to two and then one decimal place. All pupils in the class enjoy the question and answer session at the start of the lesson. They eagerly wait for their turn to answer, and pupils of all ages show good understanding and recall of number bonds and how to partition numbers to make calculation easier. They count accurately from zero to six in quarters and halves, and most can accurately count back to zero.
72. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is good. All teachers have good subject knowledge and this enables them to explain new knowledge in simple language that is fully understood by their pupils. In addition, they give clear and simple explanations to pupils' questions and encourage them to ask if they do not understand. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. Tasks are suitably adapted to meet the needs of groups and, where necessary, individuals. Care is taken to plan tasks that enable all pupils to build upon their previous experiences and knowledge. Throughout the school, the educational needs of all pupils are being met successfully and pupils of all ability levels are fully included in all normal classroom activities. Teachers and their teaching assistants are good teams. They are fully aware of their individual roles during the lesson and this results in all pupils being given appropriate support and

being able to make good progress in their studies. Scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that whenever possible a practical approach is adopted and pupils are given some responsibility for their own learning. The teaching of basic numeracy skills is good. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to use their acquired numeracy skills to support learning in other subjects. For example, measuring materials to construct models in design and technology, using geometrical shapes to produce repeating patterns in art, time-lines in history, and interpreting graphs and data in science.

73. Relationships are very good and almost all pupils co-operate willingly and fully. Most of them have very good attitudes and they try hard to complete the set tasks. They share practical apparatus sensibly and give good support to one another when working in pairs or small groups. For example, pupils in Year 1 shared the three-dimensional geometric building blocks and worked as a team to build a castle for a giant. Throughout the school, pupils of all ages work responsibly at the computer stations and enjoy the freedom they are given to work at their own pace. Year 6 pupils work very enthusiastically and competitively in increasing their speed to match percentages with fractions. Pupils have good listening skills and this is reflected in their response to their teacher's questions. They are keen to share their ideas and willingly explain the methods they have used in calculating their answers to problems. During discussion, many pupils identified mathematics as one of their favourite subjects because teachers make learning fun.
74. The school has made good progress in addressing the issues raised in the previous inspection. Standards in both key stages have improved as a direct result of the improved educational provision on offer to the pupils. Teachers now make good use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. This gives added variety to classroom activities and is being used very effectively to improve understanding of number and mathematical processes. The increased use of a practical approach to learning has improved pupils' ability to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to aid learning in other subjects. In particular, science, and design and technology have benefited from this initiative.
75. The quality of teachers' marking is variable. All work is marked on a regular basis but does not always indicate to pupils what standard they have achieved and how it might be improved. Teachers know their pupils well and they do have a clear knowledge of their individual strengths and weaknesses. The presentation of pupils' written work varies in standard from unsatisfactory to very good and is generally in need of improvement. Targets for achievement at the end of Year 6 are agreed and they are accurately based upon a secure evidence base. The school is fully aware of the standards likely to be achieved by successive groups of Year 6 pupils. The staff work successfully to enable all pupils to achieve to their full potential.
76. The co-ordinator gives a good lead to the subject and she has a clear vision for its future development. She has worked hard to adapt the National Numeracy Strategy to meet the school's changing needs. The good quality scheme of work aids teachers' planning and ensures that the needs of each age group in the mixed-aged classes are being satisfactorily met. She monitors teaching in her colleagues' classrooms and has first-hand knowledge of the quality of the educational programme on offer to pupils as they move through the school.

SCIENCE

77. Standards in science have improved since the last inspection, particularly for older pupils. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of the last school year, pupils in Year 6 achieved standards that were well above the national average and placed the school in the top 5 per cent for attainment in science. All of the pupils achieved the expected Level 4 and two thirds of them reached the higher Level 5. This dramatic improvement, which is higher than that found nationally, has resulted from a combination of more effective planning of tasks to meet pupils' individual needs, adopting a more practical and investigative approach, and high quality teaching,
78. Teacher assessments of pupils in Year 2 in 2002 showed their standards to be very low and in the bottom 5 per cent nationally. Only one fifth of pupils achieved the expected Level 2 and no pupil reached the higher Level 3. The school has concerns with regard to the reliability of the assessments and feels that they did not truly reflect the ability of the pupils. In order to guard against any repetition of this in future years, the headteacher has introduced procedures for assessing pupils' work against a portfolio of standardised examples for each area of the subject.
79. The evidence from the inspection indicates that pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 are on course to achieve standards that are above the national average. However, in both age groups there are pupils who are reaching levels that are well above average in certain aspects of the subject. The current Year 2 pupils are already achieving standards significantly better than those reported in 2002. Pupils in Year 6 have made very good progress as they have moved through the school because records show that when they were in Year 2 they achieved standards that were below average. Classroom observation and work scrutiny did not indicate any difference between the performance of boys and girls. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully integrated into all normal classroom activities. The good quality of the curriculum provision and teaching enables all pupils to achieve to their full potential and make good progress in their studies. These findings represent a good improvement since the previous inspection.
80. Pupils in Year 2 are developing good practical skills through a wide range of opportunities to investigate and observe. Currently they are investigating materials. The majority of them can explain the differences between natural and man-made materials. In practical work, they sort different materials into groups depending upon their properties. Most of them name a range of materials and what they are used for. They know that melted chocolate is liquid and use this knowledge to make chocolate nest cakes. The higher-attaining pupils can explain the differences between reversible and irreversible reactions. For example, they know that if the melted chocolate is left too long it will become solid again. Scrutiny of their previous work shows good coverage of all areas required for the National Curriculum and the majority of pupils are achieving above average standards.
81. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of a fair test procedure and have developed good practical skills as they have progressed through the school. Scrutiny of their previous work shows that they have had numerous opportunities to conduct their own experiments. They make sensible predictions and, at the end of the investigation, draw reliable conclusions. For example, during a good lesson in the inspection, pupils investigated how different sounds could be produced using a range of materials. They discovered that sounds could be made in many ways and could explain why some were louder than others. In discussion after the lesson, pupils demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of previous work on life processes, light, magnetism, food chains, ecosystems and electricity. In responding to questions, they use the appropriate scientific language and terminology and show that they understand the importance of science to their everyday lives.

82. The quality of teaching is good and is an improvement on the satisfactory standards reported at the time of the last inspection. Teachers have good subject knowledge and the ability to share this with their pupils in language that they understand. Basic practical skills are well taught and this is reflected in the pupils' good ability to take responsibility for conducting fair tests. Pupils are taught to work safely, observe accurately, and predict sensibly and realistically. All lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives that are shared with the pupils. Teachers are fully aware of the individual needs of their pupils because the procedures for assessing their achievements and tracking their progress have been much improved since the last inspection. All teachers plan tasks that allow each pupil to build upon their previous knowledge and experiences. They successfully integrate all pupils of all abilities into normal classroom activities. The good quality of the support allows all pupils to make good progress in their studies and achieve well. Higher-attaining pupils are well catered for and are given frequent opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and achieve to their full potential.
83. Relationships are very good. Almost all pupils have very good attitudes and co-operate fully. They enjoy science lessons because their teachers present them with interesting but challenging tasks. They appreciate being given opportunities to find out for themselves rather than being told the answer. They know that their teachers appreciate their efforts and value their contributions to the lessons. Science makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. In discussion, pupils talk excitedly about their visit to a butterfly park and their planned visit to the local education authority's residential centre.
84. All teachers mark pupils' work on a regular basis but it is of a variable quality. Pupils generally need to be given more indication of the standard of the work and how it can be improved. Work scrutiny shows that the presentation of pupils' work varies in standard from unsatisfactory to very good. Although it is creditable that pupils are asked to write their own individual reports and accounts, the presentation of these in many instances is in need of improvement. The scientific content is of a good standard but the poor quality of some of the handwriting, diagrams, and charts detracts from the overall standard.
85. Co-ordination of the subject is currently by the whole teaching team. Although this is a satisfactory arrangement, there are plans for the newly qualified teacher to assume sole responsibility at the end of her induction year. The strengths and weaknesses in the educational provision are clearly identified and there is a shared vision for the future development of the subject. Practical resources are satisfactory and available in sufficient numbers and range to deliver the agreed curriculum programme. Teachers are making increasing use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning, and this is proving to be a very useful link between the two subjects.

ART AND DESIGN

86. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, the majority of pupils achieve standards that are in line with national expectations for their age. However, in all three classes, a significant proportion of pupils achieve standards that are above average. For example, some of the pictures of iris, daffodils and crocus in Year 1, silhouettes of buildings against a sunset in Year 2, and still life paintings in Year 6 are of a good standard. Art and design has a high profile in the school and the pupils' work is valued and celebrated throughout the school in good quality displays. All pupils are included in activities and make good overall progress as they move through the school. Those with special educational needs are well supported and this enables them to make good progress. These findings are similar to those of the previous inspection.

87. By the end of the end of Year 2, pupils are beginning to express their ideas and feelings. They use a range of tools, materials, and techniques in producing their drawings. They practise hatching, stippling and blending and utilise these skills effectively in their self-portraits. The backgrounds for their silhouettes pictures show their increasing confidence and appreciation of colour and the technique of blending. Pupils make good progress in developing a wider range of skills as they move through the school. Teachers make good use of the work of famous artists and this is a good improvement since the last inspection. Famous works of art are used to stimulate interest and set high standards for pupils to achieve. Teachers encourage pupils to use the experience to develop their own artistic style rather than just copy the work of the artist. Pupils in the Year 4/5/6 class have completed pictures in the style of Cezanne, Van Gogh and Pissaro, some of which are of a good standard and accurately reflect the style of the artist. Many pupils show a keen eye for detail in their paintings and in their observational drawings of still life objects.
88. Teachers plan a satisfactory range of experiences so that pupils work with different media, such as chinks, pencils, crayons, string, wool and clay. Pupils are stimulated because their work in art is often linked to topics in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 1 print leaves on a giant beanstalk linked to their literacy work on *Jack and the Beanstalk*, and pupils in the Year 4/5/6 class use different techniques to create a picture of a bridge linked to their work in design technology.
89. The quality of teaching and learning for the older pupils is good. It was not possible to observe any direct teaching in the Year 1/2 class but scrutiny of pupils' current and previous work indicates that it is at least satisfactory. All lessons are well planned. Tasks are designed to enable pupils to build upon their previous knowledge and experiences. Tasks are challenging but sufficiently open-ended to allow pupils opportunities to express their own feelings and develop their own artistic style. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and this results in most pupils trying hard and co-operating fully. Pupils enjoy art lessons and give good support and encouragement to one another. They work carefully and use resource materials sensibly and safely. Art and design lessons make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.
90. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The teaching staff are jointly responsible for identifying areas for development and collaborate in reviewing policies and schemes of work. There is a shared vision for future development and maintaining the high profile of the subject in the curriculum. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

91. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, the majority of pupils achieve standards that are average for their age. However, in all classes there are pupils who achieve good standards and some that are well above average. Across the school, pupils of all abilities are included in the learning activities. They are well supported by teachers and their learning support assistants and this enables them to make good progress in developing practical skills. These findings represent a good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below average and progress was slow. This improvement has resulted from a combination of better planning of tasks, higher quality teaching, improved levels of resources to support pupils' learning, and more attention to evaluating the final product.
92. Teachers' planning shows that pupils experience all aspects required for the National Curriculum except those areas dependent upon the use of specialist items of information and communication technology equipment. However, the school has arranged for pupils to visit a local secondary school to experience modelling and control. Work scrutiny and

discussion with pupils indicate that topics begin with a period devoted to brainstorming ideas and looking at the materials and tools that are available. Pupils then plan their own individual design for the tasks and identify the various steps necessary to complete them. In discussion, Year 6 pupils described in detail how they have become less ambitious in their designs as they have moved through the school. They now have a more realistic view of what they can achieve given the school's range and quantity of materials. They aim to keep designs simple so that the final model is similar to the design. The success of this approach was demonstrated by the appearance of their slippers and toys, which closely resembled their original drawings. This area of the school's work has shown good improvement since the last inspection when models were said to bear little similarity to the original design.

93. Scrutiny of pupils' previous work and photographic evidence shows that, from the very beginning of Year 1, pupils learn the basic skills of making. As they progress through the school, pupils learn how to use tools safely and have good opportunities to develop and practise new skills before using them in a particular project. Pupils in Year 1 use scissors accurately to cut out the net of a cube. They successfully put glue on the tabs and join the edges to form the three-dimensional shape. Pupils in Year 2 use needle and thread to join the two pieces of fabric that they have previously cut out in order to make Joseph's Coat of Many Colours. Their running stitches vary considerably in length and quality but enable the great majority of them to complete the task successfully. In the Year 4/5/6 class, pupils make good use of the Internet to research their topic on bridge building, for which carefully planned focused tasks help them to discover how card can be strengthened by folding. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their current topics, most of which are planned to reinforce pupils' learning in history or geography.
94. Discussion with pupils from the Year 4/5/6 class and scrutiny of their work show that they fully appreciate the importance of evaluating their final product. Some of the higher-attaining pupils explain carefully how they have learnt from their experiences and used this information in future work. For example, they have made use of their experiences in design and technology during the planning to make a clay pot in art. The quality and effectiveness of pupils' evaluations at the end of a topic have shown a good improvement since the last inspection.
95. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. Timetable arrangements did not allow any direct observation of teaching in the class of the older pupils but discussion with them about their learning indicates that it is at least of a satisfactory standard. Lessons are carefully planned with clear learning objectives. Teachers have friendly and supportive teaching styles. They have very good working relationships with their pupils and they are fully aware of their individual strengths and weaknesses. All pupils are well supported in normal classroom activities and this enables them to make good progress in their studies. Pupils enjoy design and technology lessons. They give good support and encouragement to one another. For example, in the Year 2/3 class, their peers give help to those pupils who find it impossible to thread their needle. Pupils make good use of their acquired numeracy skills to correctly measure lengths of materials for use in making their models.
96. Since the last inspection, the staff have worked collaboratively to address the issues raised in the report. There is now a policy and a scheme of work. The curriculum has been developed and the new arrangement with the local secondary school will result in pupils experiencing all the elements required by the National Curriculum. An assessment scheme is being developed and is closely linked to the improving standards. A wider range and variety of resources are now available to support learning and this is reflected in the increased number of practical tasks that the pupils are now able to experience. Co-ordination of the subject continues to be by the whole-staff working together. This is a satisfactory arrangement and puts less pressure on any one individual member of staff.

The strengths and weaknesses of each unit of work are clearly evaluated and areas for development are included in the school development plan. The staff of the school deserve much credit for the good improvements that have been made in design and technology since the last inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

97. Standards in geography by the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 are broadly in line with those expected nationally. Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 make good progress, whilst those in Years 4, 5 and 6 make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make the same progress as their peers. Standards are the same as at the time of the last inspection.
98. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are developing good map skills. They know how to use an ordinance survey map of the village to plan their route for a visit to the church. They understand and recognise the differences between human and physical features, such as trees and fields, fences and roads. They know that land in the village has different uses, such as for farming and gardening. They use their knowledge successfully to compare characteristics of their local village with the Isle of Struay, which they study as part of their literacy work. Pupils understand the difference between the local city of Peterborough and their own village. They recognise a map of the British Isles, identify the different countries and know that their village is in Lincolnshire, which they can also find on the map. Pupils make good use of their data handling skills when they draw a graph of the different jobs done by parents in the area and also of their literacy skills when they carefully write up the findings of this analysis.
99. By the end of Year 6, pupils show good geographical skills in comparing their own village with a village in the Yorkshire Dales. They understand how the physical features impact on industry and employment. They know that people can damage the environment and draw up their own codes to make people aware, such as 'Don't break dry stone walls' and 'Always fasten gates'. In their study of Chembakolli in India, pupils understand how the lack of an infrastructure impacts on the lives and activities of the people living there. However, pupils' ability to use their geographical knowledge to pose questions is under-developed as this aspect of their work is not so strongly emphasised in lessons.
100. The quality of teaching is good in Years 1, 2 and 3 and satisfactory in the other years. A strength in both classes is the good use of questioning which makes pupils think more deeply. For example, in the Year 2/3 class, well-focused questioning led to pupils' deeper understanding of how the print size of place names on a map relates to the size of its population. Good assessment by the teacher in the Year 4, 5, 6 class revealed that pupils had quickly understood the notion of co-ordinates. As a result, more challenging work was introduced which enabled most pupils to be working securely with four digit grid references. Particularly good use is made of the teaching assistant in the class of the older pupils, to support pupils in their work and to ensure they keep on task. The main reason for the difference in progress between the two classes is the use of worksheets in the older class, which do not consistently challenge the higher-achieving pupils. In the Year 2/3 class, pupils are not restricted by boxes on worksheets for their answers, and there is a greater insistence that the pupils take more pride in the presentation of their findings.
101. The co-ordination of the subject is done jointly by all the teachers. Whilst there has been limited monitoring and evaluation of the teaching, the school has developed a very good system for clearly recording pupils' attainment and progress as they move through the school. The curriculum is based on national guidelines, which have been carefully adapted to take account of the school's geographical location. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology in lessons to develop pupils' learning, for

instance on the topic of rivers. The subject is enriched through visits to places of interest, such as the Green Quay in Kings Lynn as part of a river topic. Good use is also made of residential visits, particularly for the older pupils whose three-day visit to Freiston will have a geographical bias. Although not specifically planned, the subject has a good impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

HISTORY

102. Standards in history at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above those expected of pupils of a similar age and have improved since the last inspection. The teachers' planning is detailed, based on national guidance and helps to ensure that pupils' knowledge and skills are developed through a series of themes that become progressively challenging as they move through the school.
103. By the end of Year 2, pupils have made good progress in developing their knowledge of different times and famous people of the past. For example, they know that Florence Nightingale was a famous nurse, who nursed soldiers in the Crimean war. They also know that life in Victorian and Aztec times was very different from their own. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject because their teachers link work effectively with other subjects, such as when they made Aztec pots, head-dresses and shields as part of their art work. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to bring history alive. Year 1 pupils talked with enthusiasm about a recent visit to Peckover House, and showed that they had a good understanding of the nature, causes and process of historical change. In a very good lesson observed, the teacher used resources very well to build on this knowledge to develop pupils' understanding of chronology. For example, effective questioning challenged pupils to decide how old certain toys were, place them on a time line and explain their reasons. This not only challenged the pupils, but gave the teacher valuable assessment opportunities whilst ensuring that all pupils in the class benefited from the answers.
104. Work in their books and photographic evidence demonstrate that pupils in Year 6 are making good progress in developing their historical skills. In their studies of Britain in Tudor times and since 1930, they have made effective use of the Internet to find out about post war reconstruction, such as the use of pre-fabricated homes, and information and communication technology to write up their accounts. Pupils have again gained from the personal expertise of visiting speakers who brought in and talked about artefacts from the twentieth century. Younger pupils in the school also benefited from this topic when the older pupils performed in an assembly, using songs from the period and talked about the experiences of evacuees.
105. The quality of teaching is consistently good and lessons are carefully planned to interest and include pupils of all abilities. As such, the subject makes a good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers make effective use of resources to bring the subject alive. For example, Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils investigated the changes that have occurred to the way of life of people since 1948 and used their mathematical knowledge to work out relationships between old and new coins that they were working with. Good encouragement is given to pupils to work on their own, or in groups. Opportunities for speaking and listening are well planned, such as when each research group fed back to the rest of the class at the end of the lesson about post-war Britain which also gave the teacher the opportunity to make a judgement of individual understanding. Pupils' have regular opportunities to record the findings of their research in writing. Sometimes, however, too much use is made of work sheets, such as in their work on the Tudors, and when this happens opportunities for developing writing skills further are lost.

106. Overall, resources in history are sound, although there is a need to continue to develop the use of the Internet as a source for information. Assessment of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding is developing, with the school aware that it needs to develop ways of assessing work done by individuals in more detail, so that their progress can be accurately measured. Governors have monitored some lessons, but no monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject has yet been carried out.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

107. By the end of Year 2, attainment is in line with national expectations and pupils are currently making good progress in all areas of the subject. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is also in line with national expectations. Pupils are making satisfactory progress overall, although there are weaknesses in some aspects of provision that are affecting their learning, particularly of control and monitoring applications. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
108. By the end of Year 2, pupils build successfully on their good work in the Reception class and have acquired basic mouse skills and familiarity with the keyboard. Pupils are making good progress in using information and communication technology (ICT) to communicate. They show a good awareness of the importance of presentation when they word process their work, such as in their New Year resolutions and poems about 'My fish'. Pupils make good use of computers to support their work in other subjects, such as literacy, numeracy and science. Pupils know how to access the Internet and have used this effectively to find out about the life of Florence Nightingale. They have a satisfactory understanding of how computers make things happen, clearly demonstrated when they prepare sequences of commands for the floor robot.
109. By the end of Year 6, pupils are attaining standards that are in line with national expectations in communications. They make good use of these skills when they write up book reviews on their class reader *Goodnight Mr Tom*. Pupils have satisfactory data handling skills. They know how to create a database and turn this information into graphs. This was clearly demonstrated in their work on the flu epidemic which struck the school earlier in the term. The Internet is becoming a natural resource tool in many subjects. For example, pupils access the Chembakolli site for their work in geography and make good use of it in their investigation into pre-fab housing as part of their World War II topic. Work on development of pupils' multi-media skills is planned for next term. There are weaknesses in pupils' control and monitoring skills as, at present, the school does not have the relevant software to teach these two aspects of the subject. However, this weakness is going to be addressed with the help of a local secondary school. Through the use of a special grant for rural schools, specialist teachers will be bringing laptops into the school to work on these two aspects of the curriculum with Year 6 pupils.
110. All pupils enjoy using computers and work well collaboratively when the opportunities are planned. As they move through the school, pupils make more and more use of this resource as part of their everyday learning. The quality of teaching is good in Years 1, 2 and 3 and satisfactory in all other years. Although no direct teaching of ICT was seen, pupils regularly use computers as an aid to their learning. Limited space in the classroom makes the teaching of computer skills difficult, particularly for the older children, as they find it very hard to see the monitor during whole class teaching sessions. However, good use is made of the new teaching assistant in the Year 4, 5 and 6 class, who has particularly good computer skills and works effectively with groups of pupils.
111. The school has developed an effective system for tracking pupils' progress through the school. At present staff are investigating the possibility of creating an ICT suite, for the whole class teaching of computer skills. Teachers have benefited from the national in-service training and, as a result, are confident in the use of computers and have good

knowledge of all the programs they use. The school has carefully improved the number and quality of its computers since the last inspection.

112. The co-ordination of ICT is shared by all the staff and, as such, all work hard to incorporate the subject into the pupils' learning. In this way the subject makes a good contribution towards pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, there has been no monitoring of the teaching and learning in the different classes and, as a result, the school is not able to identify and share the good practice that exists.

MUSIC

113. Pupils in the school, including those with special educational needs, achieve good standards for their age, and provision for music is good. There has been a marked improvement since the last inspection. Only two lessons in music were observed during the inspection, and these were in Years 2 and 3, and Year 4. The quality of the teaching observed was judged to be good overall, and one lesson was excellent. Further evidence has been drawn from pupils' workbooks and recordings of performances.
114. In the Year 2 and 3 lesson observed, the pupils listened carefully to a recording of 'Peter and the Wolf' by Prokofiev. Pupils thought carefully about words to describe the mood and speed of the music. Well focused questioning by the teacher challenged the pupils to link the music with the story, with one higher-achieving pupil realising that the pace changed 'when the fox was creeping up on the duck'. Pupils showed good skills in identifying the different instruments they could hear and how these were used for overall effect. The good organisation of groups enabled the pupils to share their views and feelings effectively.
115. In an excellent Year 4 music lesson, the pupils made exceptional progress in learning to sing songs as rounds. Throughout the lesson, excellent teacher knowledge ensured that expectations of the pupils were high. Highly effective questioning, demonstration and practical involvement sustained their interest and motivation. New musical vocabulary was introduced. For example, the pupils learned of the difference between 'legato' and 'staccato'. The lesson effectively built on the pupils' previous learning and led to their singing five note scales. Pupils understand how to work out the third and fifth note of a scale, having been given the first note. Very good use of assessment of pupils' progress by the teacher ensured that the lesson progressed at a very challenging pace. Opportunities for speaking and listening were continually explored, and pupils were actively encouraged to describe various sounds, with one pupil commenting, 'That's very percussive, isn't it?'. Pupils were expertly introduced to 'scat' patterns, and knew how these fitted in with their work. The majority of the pupils in the group were boys, who gave their best throughout and felt confident to sing solo to the rest of the group. The lesson was further enhanced by a relevant homework task.
116. Teachers' termly and weekly planning demonstrates that pupils have a well balanced musical experience that fully meets the National Curriculum requirements. A good quality scheme of work is in place. Assessments of individual pupils' progress are carefully made, and are used to inform future planning. This ensures that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are appropriately challenged. Pupils have had good opportunities for composing music; for example, Year 1 and 2 pupils composed sound effects for the recent 'Peace at Last' school production. Older pupils also have the opportunity to make compositions based on famous paintings, such as 'Luncheon of the Boating Party' by Renoir. Opportunities such as these have allowed pupils to explore and express their own ideas about music, and think about the links with subjects, such as art. Resources for the subject are satisfactory. The school is fortunate to have the services of a very highly skilled specialist teacher who very successfully enhances the pupils'

learning and enjoyment of the subject. The subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. Standards at the end of Year 2 have been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with national expectations. Although standards in swimming are above national expectations through the school, no judgement could be made of pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 as no lessons were observed.
118. By the end of Year 2, pupils are developing good stamina because of the teacher's high expectations for pupils' physical effort during lessons. Pupils understand the importance of warming up and exert themselves vigorously in such activities as hopping, running and jumping. The teacher makes good use of exemplars to demonstrate good quality movements and allows pupils time to copy and practise these. Effective use of praise is made by the teacher to encourage all pupils to do their best. Pupils throw accurately underarm but their catching skills are not as well developed, as they do not understand the importance of a good hand position before making a catch. Pupils show a good understanding of space when receiving a pass, as this tactic is clearly emphasised by the teacher. Some smaller pupils do not make the same progress as their peers in these passing games, as the netballs are too heavy for them to catch safely and pass accurately.
119. All pupils swim regularly as this skill is considered important by the governors because of the school's close proximity to large water-filled dykes. Good use is made of the expertise of the swimming pool staff in the teaching of skills. Records show that pupils make consistently good progress through the school and, by the time they leave the school, the great majority are extremely confident in the water and can swim long distances.
120. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and enjoy a satisfactory range of activities, which are well supplemented by after-school clubs during the year. Teachers have benefited recently from a national in-service training scheme that has also led to an improvement in the resources. The school is fortunate to have a large playground and a sheltered playing field. The school also benefits from its very close proximity to the village recreation ground, where games requiring more space, such as rounders, take place. Assessment of pupils' progress through the years is informal, apart from swimming, where good records are kept. The resources are satisfactory but a greater range of different size and weighted balls are required, particularly for the younger children.