

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **THE HACKTHORN CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hackthorn, Lincoln

Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120572

Headteacher: Mr M Oyston

Lead inspector: Mr C Parker

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> -15<sup>th</sup> June 2005

Inspection number: 268061

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 52

School address: Main Street  
Hackthorn  
Lincoln  
Lincolnshire  
Postcode: LN2 3PF

Telephone number: 01673 860295  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of Mrs D Reed  
governors:

Date of previous 13<sup>th</sup> July 1999  
inspection:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Since the school was last inspected the number of pupils on roll has fallen and subsequently risen. There are now 52 pupils who are taught in two classes. Some year groups are very small. All of the pupils are white British and speak English as their first language. Attainment on entry is broadly average.

Four pupils are identified as having special educational needs. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average and there are no pupils with statements.

The school has had a very stable staff over a long period. Unfortunately, one teacher was involved in a very serious road traffic accident and, as a result, has been absent for a long period. An experienced temporary teacher has ensured continuity in the pupils learning throughout this time.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11897	C Parker	Lead inspector	Mathematics; science; information and communication technology; art and design; design and technology; physical education; personal, social and health education; special educational needs
9446	H Griffiths	Lay inspector	
30398	C Scola	Team inspector	English; French; history; geography; music; religious education; Foundation Stage

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>10</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>23</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school. The pupils achieve very well and reach high standards because the teaching and learning are effective and the curriculum is well organised and interesting. The headteacher provides strong leadership. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average by the end of Year 6
- The pupils' social development and sense of community are excellent
- Lessons are challenging and the pupils are well motivated
- The youngest pupils make a good start but do not have sufficient opportunity to make choices or learn outside
- The pupils' personal development is promoted very effectively
- Links with parents are very good; they are kept well informed
- The school provides a caring environment for the pupils

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The very good provision has been maintained and standards have risen. The governors have raised their profile and extended their influence to good effect. The Foundation Stage curriculum is now appropriately planned to reflect the national guidance.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

**The pupils are achieving very well.** The youngest children make a good start to school life and most will attain the goals set for the end of the reception year because they are well taught. The results of national tests should be viewed with some caution as cohorts are very small. This is particularly pertinent at the end of Year 2 where only two or three pupils have taken the tests in the last two years. Standards this year, which has a larger cohort, are above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

In 2004 the results of the Year 6 tests, in English and mathematics were well above average and in the top five per cent when compared to similar schools. Currently standards are similarly high with all pupils working at, and a number exceeding, the expected level in English and mathematics. In science high standards are being maintained. The trend of improvement at the end of Year 6 is above average and value added measures are very high. Scrutiny of the pupils' completed work, lesson observation and discussions with the older pupils suggest that they are doing very well in many areas of the curriculum, notably information and communication technology (ICT), music and religious education.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. They are attentive, eager to learn, concentrate well and join in all activities with enthusiasm. Relationships between pupils and among pupils and adults are very good. **The pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is very good.** They are confident, mature and willing to take responsibility. As a result the school is a happy, close-knit community where at all stages, pupils enjoy their education and all it has to offer.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

Overall the **quality of education provided by the school is very good** because **the teaching is very effective**, the curriculum is interesting and the pupils are given informed guidance and very positive support. The teachers have high expectations of the pupils and set them challenging tasks to which they respond very well. The children in the reception year and Years 1 and 2 are taught in the same class by a class teacher and teaching assistant. Often the youngest children are taught very well by the teaching assistant but they do not have enough opportunities to make choices and learning does not routinely flow outside the classroom.

The curriculum is enriched by many interesting activities and enables the pupils to achieve very well. The school has a very well constructed curriculum which makes the most of links between subjects. The pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are used and extended to very good effect right across the curriculum. Personal development and circle time are used very effectively. The pupils are very well cared for and learn in a safe environment. They are given very good support advice and guidance. Pupils' views are sought consistently through questionnaires, circle time, assemblies and personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons. They feel confident that their views are listened to and acted upon.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The **leadership and management are very good.** The governing body now has an appropriately high profile and aspirations based on a clear view of the school's performance. As a result of well developed self evaluation strategies the school improvement plan is clearly focused. The headteacher has established an ethos in the school which is particularly influential in the drive to maintain high standards and the very good achievements of the pupils. The headteacher is extremely enthusiastic and motivates and engages the pupils, leading by example and establishing an ethos of supportive relationships and a quest for high standards.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Pupils and parents hold the school in high regard. The pupils are happy and confident in school and they are proud of what they achieve. This is evident when talking to the older pupils about their roles in the recent production of Macbeth. In a high return to the questionnaire, parents and carers expressed extremely positive views on all aspects of the work of the school. One parent said that the school was 'all that could be wished for'. The range and quality of information provided for parents is very good, including the school's evaluation of its own performance which is published on its website.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- increase the opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage to make choices in their learning and make more effective use of the outdoor area.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve very well.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average by Year 6
- Pupils in the Foundation Stage make a good start
- Performances in music exceed expectations
- Pupils have a good level of competence in ICT by Year 6

#### **Commentary**

1. The youngest children make a good start to school life and achieve well. By the time they start in Year 1 most children have attained the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, creative development, personal and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world.
2. The results of national tests should be viewed with some caution as cohorts are small. This is particularly pertinent to results in the last two or three years where only two or three pupils have taken the tests at the end of Year 2. In these years the results have been well below average. However, the school closely monitors the progress of all pupils and the records of these pupils show they are making good progress. Standards this year are above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
3. In 2004 the results of Year 6 national tests in English and mathematics were well above average and in the top five per cent when compared to similar schools. Currently standards are equally high with all pupils working at, and a number exceeding, the expected level in English and mathematics. In science over half of the pupils attained the higher level in last year's tests and completed work this year shows that these high standards are being maintained. The trend of improvement at the end of Year 6 is above average and value added measures are very high.
4. Lesson observations and discussions with pupils confirm the parents' views that these results are achieved through the very good provision made by the school. Over the last three years boys have done better than girls in the tests at the end of Year 6 but in discussion there is no difference in the attitude of boys and girls and they make equally good progress in lessons.
5. Scrutiny of the pupils' completed work, lesson observation and discussions with the older pupils suggest that they are doing particularly well in many areas of the curriculum. They talk knowledgeably about their work in history, music and religious education. They also speak enthusiastically about their use of ICT and demonstrate a level of competence that exceeds expectations by the end of Year 6.

#### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their attendance is well above average. Pupils' personal development is very effective.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are very eager to learn, concentrate well and join in all activities with enthusiasm.
- Relationships between pupils and among pupils and adults are extremely good.
- Pupils are very willing to take responsibility. They are confident, mature and supportive of one another.
- The pupils' social development is excellent.

## Commentary

6. This is a happy, close-knit school. At all stages, pupils enjoy school and all it has to offer. Children in the reception class settle quickly into school routines and interact exceptionally well with older pupils. Pupils show particularly good levels of concentration and want to do well. They listen well to the views of others, co-operate effectively and are trustworthy, taking pride in their work and treating their environment with great respect. All pupils are confident and have high self-esteem because they know that the school values all that they have to offer. They talk with courtesy and openness to adults: in discussion, pupils particularly liked the warm and friendly atmosphere of a small school. Older pupils in particular are able to express their views with thoughtfulness and maturity in class discussions.
7. Behaviour is very good throughout the school in lessons, assemblies and playtimes, because pupils respond so well to teachers' and other adults' high expectations of them. This reflects the views of the parents who responded to the questionnaire. Pupils know the school rules well, are well aware of how they should behave and fully understand the difference between right and wrong. Pupils are encouraged to monitor their own behaviour on the school bus and the bus company telephoned the school recently to inform them that these were the best behaved children transported by the company. No bullying or harassment was observed during the inspection and pupils know what they should do if it should occur.
8. Pupils are enterprising and respond extremely well to the excellent opportunities for taking responsibility. Relationships between pupils and adults and among the pupils themselves are very good. For example, in a whole school music assembly, lively interaction between the headteacher and pupils contributed significantly to pupils' learning and enjoyment. Pupils are keen to take part in school activities.
9. The pupils show great consideration for others and have a well-developed sense of how their behaviour might affect others because the staff are good role models, presenting a calm and thoughtful approach to life. Older pupils act as buddies to younger pupils for both spelling and reading, contributing strongly to the social development and sense of community of all pupils.
10. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Pupils have many good opportunities to reflect on their own beliefs and the beliefs of others through PHSE, religious education and during collective worship. Grace is said each day at lunchtime and all pupils can recite the Lord's Prayer. Teachers are willing to tackle difficult issues and encourage pupils towards self-awareness. At the end of key stage circle times, for example, pupils assess their own performance, including what they did not as well as what they did say. Consequently, pupils show good self-knowledge, maturity and sensitivity in discussions. The school is well supported by the local church.
11. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Pupils study their own community through the many visits and activities provided for them. All pupils have the opportunity to learn the recorder and all pupils took part in a production of *Macbeth* earlier in the

year. The school is conscious of being a monocultural school and is taking steps to address this, through multicultural displays, visits to the places of worship of other cultures and through exploring links with multicultural schools. Older pupils learn French each week.

## Attendance

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	2.8	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

*The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

Attendance is much higher than the national average and there is no unauthorised absence. Punctuality is good. The headteacher and the administrative officer monitor attendance effectively.

## Exclusions

There have been no exclusions.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall **the quality of education provided by the school is very good** because the teaching is very effective, the curriculum is interesting and the pupils are given informed guidance and positive support.

## Teaching and learning

The teaching and learning are very good. Assessment is good.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers have high expectations of the pupils
- The pupils are set challenging tasks and respond enthusiastically
- The teachers engage the pupils so that they learn effectively
- The youngest children do not have a sufficiently broad range of opportunities to make choices

## Commentary

12. The children in the reception year and Years 1 and 2 are taught in the same class by a class teacher and teaching assistant. Often the youngest children are taught by the teaching assistant.
13. The teaching of the areas of learning for the Foundation Stage is effective and ensures the children are well prepared to move into Year 1. Accomplished teaching by the experienced

teaching assistant provides the youngest children with a range of activities and opportunities. However, there are occasions when the children could be given greater choice and more independence. To a large extent this aspect of learning is restricted because the outdoor area is not well designed for this purpose.

14. The planning of work for the wide age range and spread of capabilities within the class is well done and the lessons proceed at a rapid pace so that very effective learning takes place. The calm and purposeful atmosphere developed in the classroom also encourages and maintains the self-confidence of the children. This applies equally to the pupils in Years 1 and 2. The teacher's careful selection of tasks ensures the pupils are challenged, notably in English and mathematics. Consequently, they make good progress and achieve very well. The modification of tasks and the skilful use of common themes for the Foundation Stage was well illustrated in a geography lesson where the older pupils created their own maps of a seaside resort whilst those in the Foundation Stage used a range of materials, including sand and shells, to create their own 'seaside'.
15. The teaching responsibilities are shared in Years 3 to 6 and organised with a degree of flexibility that allows both teachers to work together and support small groups of pupils if a specific need arises. The headteacher is enthusiastic and motivates and engages the pupils through well chosen challenges that engage them in problem solving activities. The use of computer presentations in mathematics lessons helps to focus the learning as well interesting the pupils in the content and activities. Following some interesting work on patterns and relationships in number using a spreadsheet the pupils were set interesting and thought provoking challenges one of which required them to work out the cost of smoking 20 and 40 cigarettes per day over a period of one, two, three and four weeks and one, five, ten, twenty and twenty five years. This not only proved an interesting mathematical challenge using ICT but also carried a strong message to reinforce work on the dangers of smoking. Relationships are extremely good. This was evident in a circle time session and is also a key feature of other lessons, ensuring learning takes place within a positive environment.
16. The pupils apply themselves well. They concentrate on the tasks they are set and show a pride in the work they produce. Expectations are high and pupils do not have to be reminded of the quality of work that is expected because they are surrounded by displays of careful and well presented writing and art work. The older pupils respond particularly well to the teachers' questions.
17. Assessment is good with a great deal of verbal feedback which helps the pupils to improve their work. In addition, self assessment is used to good effect with older pupils to ensure they know what is expected and how well they are doing. They are well versed in analysing their own writing so that they can improve it with the features that will enhance it further and help them to attain higher levels.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 15 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	9	5				

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

**The curriculum**

The curriculum is very good and enriched by many interesting activities. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Personal development and circle time are very effective
- The pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education
- Not enough use is made of the outdoor area in the Foundation Stage

## **Commentary**

18. The curriculum enables the pupils to achieve very well. The school has a well constructed curriculum which makes the most of links between subjects. The pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are used and extended to good effect right across the curriculum. The links that have been exploited between English and other subjects are providing the pupils with purposeful and interesting opportunities to write and communicate in a wide range of contexts. Similarly the older pupils make good use of ICT in other subjects, notably music, where pupils have used sophisticated software to create dance tunes of an extremely high standard. These are now available on CD for parents to purchase.

19. Visits and visitors provide the pupils with good opportunities to extend their knowledge of their own and other cultures. A visit by a military band enhanced the pupils' knowledge of their own culture and visits to a Hindu temple in Leicester broadened their understanding of other cultures. In addition, the curriculum is enriched by visiting theatre groups and sporting opportunities which are currently being expanded through developing links with the local sports college.

20. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans have clear and precise targets and the teachers are particularly effective in their support of these pupils. Where necessary, external agencies are involved and discussions indicate that the school responds well to the advice and guidance they receive

21. Although the school does not have a hall, the addition of a classroom provides generous space for the younger pupils, which is used well. The playground is well laid out and there is a small grassed area close to the school that is used for games. However, the school is severely restricted in its ability to provide for gymnastics. The outdoor area for the Foundation Stage is under development and is currently not offering a range of experiences to further extend the learning of the youngest children. The school has satisfactory resources. These are also of good quality and aid the pupils in their learning. Resources for ICT are used well but the absence of a fast internet connection means the pupils are unable to use this extensive resource in lessons.

## **Care, guidance and support**

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on the monitoring of pupils' achievement is particularly effective. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is very good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The induction arrangements for pupils in reception are effective
- There are effective procedures for health and safety, child protection and first aid
- There are well used systems for monitoring pupils' academic standards and progress

- Arrangements for monitoring pupils' personal development are particularly good.

### **Commentary**

22. The support, guidance and welfare of the pupils continue to be strong features of the schools' provision. There are very good arrangements for children when they start at the school, which are enhanced by the strong relationships with the local playgroup. The arrangements include preliminary visits to the school by both children and parents. These visits enable teachers to gather information about the children and, as a result, they settle in quickly and make good progress.
23. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are well supported both by their teachers and other pupils. These pupils often seek and are given help by their peers aiding not only their progress but also their social development.
24. The school has particularly good health and safety procedures. The headteacher, in the absence of the designated person, is responsible for child protection and for pupils in public care; procedures are effective. Some members of staff are yet to be trained because of a shortage of local training opportunities. Nevertheless, all are aware of child protection issues and maintain logs of concerns. Arrangements for the administration of first aid and for monitoring pupils' medical conditions are very good and many members of staff have been trained in first aid. Emergency procedures are thorough. Risk assessments are carried out regularly and additional assessments are carried out for trips and visits. The level of supervision at playtimes is good.
25. There is a strong bond of trust between pupils and all adults who work in the school. All pupils who responded to a recent questionnaire felt there was at least one adult to whom they could turn for advice. Adults know the pupils well and monitor their personal development effectively through class files and reports. Academic monitoring is used well to inform pupils' reports. Very good tracking systems are used to monitor the pupils' progress so that they really understand what they have to do to improve. Pupils set their own targets and assess and monitor their progress. Pupils' views are sought consistently through questionnaires, circle time, assemblies and PHSE. Pupils in their questionnaire felt confident that their views were heard and acted upon.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school's links with parents, the community and other schools are very good.

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have extremely positive views of the school.
- The school provides parents with good information.
- Good links with other local schools provide many benefits for the pupils.

### **Commentary**

26. In a high return to the questionnaire, parents and carers expressed positive views on all aspects of the work of the school. One parent said that the school was 'all that could be wished for'.
27. Information provided for parents is very good. The website is well presented and includes the school's evaluation of its own performance. Details about the work pupils

are to cover are provided each term and home/school books are used well as a means of dialogue between school and parents. Regular, lively newsletters keep parents well informed of events and teachers are always available for informal consultation at the end of the day. The school prospectus (which is due to be revised) is brief but clearly written and informative, as is the governors' annual report. Written annual reports are good: they provide diagnostic and thorough information on children's progress, set targets and offer parents the opportunity to comment. Pupils assess their own progress each year.

28. Parents support the school well through attendance at performances and consultation meetings. Parents are keen to be involved in their children's learning and feel encouraged to do so through, for example, Friday assemblies. Many parents help in school and at weekends. Parents also support the school through the PTA, which raises significant sums for the school to buy equipment to enhance pupils' learning.
29. The school has developed very productive links with other local primary schools through sports, CDT challenges and music. Strong links have been established with the local technology college through French and CDT teaching. Older pupils take part in the church schools festival.
30. The school has strong local links, especially the church, and is an integral part of the community. For example, pupils have supported the recasting of the church bell

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management are very good. Governance is very effective.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher leads by example to very good effect
- The governors are well informed and active in monitoring the school's performance
- Self evaluation is firmly embedded in the school improvement strategy

### **Commentary**

31. The leadership and management have remained strong since the last inspection and governance has improved. The governing body now has an appropriately high profile and high aspirations based on a clear view of where the school is and what it needs to do to improve further. To this end the headteacher makes an annual presentation to governors showing the school's achievements, which is then published on the school website. As a result of well developed self evaluation strategies the school improvement plan is clearly focused on activities that will lead to improvements. Monitoring arrangements are highlighted and involve the governors who maintain an overview of progress through their committees. The process of school improvement is extremely well managed.
32. The views of parents and pupils are sought and taken into account. Governors also seek parents' views through meetings and discussion at school events, such as consultation evenings. This illustrates the improvement in the role and effectiveness of the governing body and its links with the school and the parents.
33. The headteacher has established an ethos in the school which is influential in the drive to maintain high standards and the very good achievements of the pupils. The high

expectations established within the school motivate both staff and pupils to give their best. He provides a role model not only in terms of his teaching but also in the development of personal qualities. Discussions with parents indicate that the headteacher's willingness to meet them and iron out any potential problems ensure that the school runs smoothly. Consequently, almost all parents agree the school is well led and managed.

34. Monitoring of the school's performance is appropriately focused on the progress of individuals in English and mathematics because there are so few pupils in each cohort. The headteacher carries out a performance review of all staff. Where professional development is needed steps are taken, for example, by identifying additional training opportunities.
35. The curriculum is managed corporately and development priorities are set out in the school development plan. With such a small group of teachers this works well and ensures their joint efforts result in improvements. The school's efficient administrative support allows the headteacher and teachers to focus their efforts on providing a very good quality education.

### ***Financial information***

#### ***Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	168 860
Total expenditure	161 826
Expenditure per pupil	3 112

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	18 223
Balance carried forward to the next	7 033

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

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

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very good because activities are well planned
- Children develop positive attitudes to learning and achieve very well
- Assessment information is used well to plan work
- The outdoor area is limited and there are too few opportunities for children to make independent choices in their learning

#### **Commentary**

36. Year groups vary in size but are normally small. Children enter the school in the reception class the term after their fourth birthday. There are currently ten children taught alongside the Year 1 and 2 class, where the teacher and teaching assistant work closely together to plan work for these children. This planning to meet the Early Learning Goals has greatly improved since the most recent inspection. The teaching assistant has a high level of expertise and she often teaches the Foundation Stage children separately. Recently an additional teaching assistant has been appointed to support her and to enable staff to be deployed more flexibly. Very good links with children and their parents before children start school full time, ensure that they settle in quickly.
37. Over the last few years, information collected when children start school indicates that attainment on entry is broadly average, although there is generally a wide range of abilities. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and, as a result, the children achieve very well. Lessons are planned effectively and the teachers' knowledge of the children ensures that work offers the right level of challenge for all. However lack of a suitable outdoor area limits opportunities for children to plan their own learning and consolidate it through structured play. Good assessment procedures are used effectively to ensure that work set matches the needs of the children. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. By the time they start in Year 1 most children attain the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, creative development, personal and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world.
38. Children achieve very well in **personal, social and emotional development**. Children learn quickly from older pupils about school routines, such as entering the classroom and they soon get used to what is expected of them. The school staff have high expectations of behaviour and children respond well. Children quickly learn that they have to put their hand up in carpet sessions and take turns when working in groups. The children have positive attitudes to learning and relationships within the class are particularly good. Opportunities to work in groups have a positive effect on developing social skills. This was seen during a circle time activity, when children picked objects out of a treasure box and took turns in asking questions and listened patiently to each other. Older children in the school are good at providing role models for the younger children. When they leave Reception, children listen to each other and respond to instructions well. The personal, social and emotional development of pupils in Year 1 show that good

progress is made in this area and that most children are likely to reach the early learning goals in this aspect.

39. In **communication, language and literacy**, the teaching assistant provides a wide range of activities to develop learning. Teaching is very good. There is a strong emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills. The teaching assistant encourages the children to respond to questioning with more than simple answers and, consequently, the vocabulary of the children increases rapidly. Reading skills are developed well, which results in children picking up books, identifying the sounds of letters and reading well for their age. They easily identify the main characters such as Ben in the story of the 'Scary Dragon.' Most children write simple sentences and use basic punctuation correctly and reach the expected level when they enter Year 1. There is a good emphasis on correct letter formation and on pencil grip and this provides a firm foundation for further learning.
40. In **Mathematical development** children achieve very well and extend their ability to count to 20 and beyond and to carry out simple addition and subtraction. In a very good lesson on identifying different coins, the children showed they have good knowledge of coins and can identify and describe most of them. However, because of the limitations of the outdoor area there are too few opportunities for children to plan activities to extend and reinforce their mathematical skills through practical activities, such as using sand and water. Also much better use could be made of role-play. For example, there are too few opportunities to 'buy' from the shop and develop their understanding of money and the concept of buying and giving change. Nevertheless, most children achieve the expected levels on entry to Year 1.
41. The children are on course to reach the expected goals in **knowledge and understanding of the world** because the adults engage and interest them. They work with Year 1 pupil in to try out various winding mechanisms and using pieces of wood and string construct their own. They visit Skegness and identify key features of seaside places and begin to develop a good idea of the local area and identify key buildings. The adults provide good opportunities to use construction toys. By the time they enter Year 1, children have a simple scientific understanding, for example, they know that there are healthy and unhealthy foods.
42. In **creative development** children are encouraged to use paints to produce portraits of themselves and to experiment with colour mixing. All children have regular access to a suitable range of picture making activities. They paint, stick, draw and make models to illustrate a particular topic. Children experience a good range of music making activities. They enjoy singing and make good progress in controlling sounds and know the words of a repertoire of songs. They are encouraged by the adults to use various instruments to create sounds of different pitch. They use a range of simple tools and materials to make winding mechanisms and most children demonstrate a good control of saws and scissors.
43. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on **physical development**. Children were observed in the playground using small apparatus to make a circuit that involved jumping, balancing and moving in different ways. The teaching assistant made the best of the facilities available but these were unsatisfactory. There are few opportunities to work with constructional toys, push and ride wheeled toys and use large apparatus for climbing and moving over and along. The existing facilities are not well suited to children in the Foundation Stage and the school has rightly identified that this is an area that needs addressing.



## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

#### English

Provision in English is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are well above average at the end of Year 6
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well because they are very well taught, consistently work hard and have very good attitudes to learning
- There are productive links with other areas of the curriculum
- The recent initiatives to improve writing have ensured more pupils are now attaining at the higher levels

#### Commentary

44. Standards in Year 2 are above average and are well above average in Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection. A greater proportion of pupils are now attaining the higher levels. In Year 6 nearly half the pupils attain this level and in Year 2 a fifth of the pupils attain at the higher level in reading. Throughout the school the teaching, and the motivation and enthusiasm of the pupils, explain why they all achieve well, make good progress and attain such high standards.

45. Standards in speaking and listening are very high across the school. All pupils achieve very well and most pupils speak confidently because there are many good opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills. This is particularly noticeable during whole-class discussions because the teachers' questioning skilfully addresses all abilities and ages, which results in all pupils being involved. One particularly effective feature of the curriculum is the emphasis it gives to speaking and listening through drama. Such activities as the 'conscience tunnel,' 'hot seating' and the use of a computer programme to create dialogue and character interaction, develop pupils' ability to clearly articulate their thoughts which in turn develops skills in writing. All pupils have opportunities to perform in public and older pupils speak with great enthusiasm about their recent production of Macbeth. Drama workshops, visits to and from theatre groups and the many opportunities the school gives to develop self-confidence, whether speaking in assemblies or performing publicly in school productions, ensure that all pupils achieve very well.

46. Standards of reading are well above average by the end of Year 6 and all pupils achieve very well because of the strong, structured approach. Pupils in all year groups have reading and writing targets and these are used well to enable them to focus on any weak area and take steps to improve it. There is a strong phonetic approach and this is used well across the school and is particularly effective for younger pupils. The 'buddy' reading and spelling system used throughout the school has a positive impact and motivates pupils to improve. Parents are closely involved in the teaching of reading and give good support. Comprehensive reading diaries are used effectively for teachers, teaching assistants and parents to monitor and improve pupils' progress in reading. Although the school has no designated library area, there is a good range of reading books to support the curriculum. During lessons, pupils in both classes confidently use

the skills they have been taught as they read or closely follow the texts they have been given. By the end of Year 6, virtually all pupils are accomplished readers who have read and are able to discuss a wide range of traditional and modern authors, poets and playwrights.

47. The standard of pupils' written work is above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. Basic skills of writing are particularly well taught so that pupils know how to organise and develop their ideas. All pupils take a pride in their writing, work hard and achieve very well. The presentation of work and the standard of handwriting is particularly good throughout the school, because of consistent teaching and a strong emphasis on learning cursive writing right from the infants. Grammar and spelling are well taught and pupils are motivated to improve their spellings. Teachers plan work well to take account of the pupils' abilities. Pupils with special needs are well supported and this enables them to work through all activities. All pupils throughout the school have many opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes and for different audiences and writing is used across the curriculum. This link with many other areas of the curriculum is a particularly strong feature in the teaching of writing. For example, younger pupils write postcards as part of their work in geography and in history older pupils write newspaper reports about uprisings against the Romans. Much of this writing is attractively presented using ICT.
48. Leadership and management are very good. The school has a well planned programme in place, which involves all staff in evaluating and monitoring the teaching and learning of English and this is one of the reasons why standards have improved. There are good systems of regular and thorough assessments. Pupils' progress, in all aspects of the subject, is carefully tracked. Every pupil has agreed individual targets that often relate to areas of literacy.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

49. Literacy skills are used well across the curriculum. Much of the pupils' extended writing practice is carried out in other curriculum areas such as, history, geography and religious education. Science and design and technology lessons also provide a good context for writing, and are frequently used for writing plans, instructions and results of experiments and evaluations. ICT is used well to support literacy teaching and learning such as when pupils use word processing to present their work.

### **French**

50. A French teacher has been coming to the school since October and all pupils in Years 3 to 6 have had the opportunity to learn French from a native speaker. However, because no lessons could be observed, it is impossible to make any judgements about the teaching. From speaking to the pupils, it is evident that they have the confidence to respond in French and are beginning to be able to put together whole sentences. They introduce themselves with confidence, greet one another and respond to questions about their age, favourite animal and know the names for parts of the body, colours and can do simple sums in French. The pupils enjoy their lessons particularly the games they play where they have to find and match French words as well as learning some French songs.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **very good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in mathematics are high by the end of Year 6
- Teaching is very good and builds well on pupils' learning
- Pupils' attitudes to their work are generally extremely positive

## **Commentary**

51. Over the past three years standards have been high. Currently, standards in Year 2 are above average and Year 6 they are well above average. In the national tests in 2004, at the end of Year 6, all of the pupils reached the expected level and nearly half reached the higher level. High standards are being maintained and continuing improvement sought because the teaching is very good and provides a good degree of challenge for all pupils including the higher attaining pupils. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils used a spreadsheet to demonstrate and explain their methods of finding out how costs increase over time. In the lesson they showed how they could recognise patterns and extend increasingly complex sequences. Challenges of this kind were followed keenly by the pupils and created a productive working atmosphere in the class. Pupils' attitudes to their work are positive and they work well together when asked to work in pairs or groups.

52. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress and achieve very well because the curriculum is structured carefully and taught effectively. The teachers plan their work, taking the pupils' prior learning into consideration. The impact of this is evident in the way in which teachers support pupils with special educational needs by explaining and recapping instructions. This enables the pupils to make progress in their learning by ensuring that the work meets their needs. Across the school there is good development in the pupils' knowledge and understanding in all areas of mathematics.

53. Teaching is always at least good throughout the school and often it is very good. It has improved since the last inspection. The teachers use oral and mental introductions to set a good pace to the lesson and to keep the pupils alert and interested. Teachers' marking and oral responses are generally good but do not always make explicit reference to the pupils' targets. Not all of the pupils' work is marked in a manner that helps them to improve and they are not consistently given opportunities to correct or improve their work. Nevertheless, as a result of close monitoring, thorough assessment and high expectations the pupils make strong progress. For example, Year 1 pupils received a further careful explanation of the requirements of the task as they sorted shapes by their properties.

54. Relationships between teachers and pupils are extremely good. Good humoured teaching coupled with high expectations creates a very positive working atmosphere in classrooms. Opportunities for paired work and the sharing of ideas have a positive impact on the pupils' achievement.

55. Resources are satisfactory. Good use is made of the interactive whiteboard in Years 3 to 6 to provide high quality interaction which, coupled with effective teaching, enables pupils to focus their interest and achieve very well. The subject is well managed so that the teachers utilise their expertise and the very good provision for the pupils is maintained.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

56. There are appropriate opportunities for the pupils to use their numeracy skills across the curriculum. For example, they measure length in design and technology, estimate distances in geography and interpret graphs in science.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision for science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well above average by Year 6
- Teaching and learning are very good
- Investigative approaches are strongly promoted

### **Commentary**

57. Standards of work are currently above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. The pupils' progress in developing the skills of investigation is particularly good; they are being well developed as they move through the school. Their work shows very good use is made of the pupils' observation skills and good opportunities are provided for them to record their results both in the form of tables and through written accounts. Most pupils achieve very well in developing their knowledge and understanding of all aspects of science.

58. Although no lessons were taught in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection, scrutiny of the pupils' current work shows that standards are better than average. There are good examples in their work of pupils recording their observations and communicating their findings, in both pictures and words. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils complete a good range of work that illustrates well the opportunities they have to investigate and carry out experiments in which they make predictions and draw conclusions from their findings. In the one lesson seen the teaching was very good and made a strong contribution to the pupil's understanding of the need for a healthy lifestyle as well as extending their scientific knowledge of food types and combinations of carbohydrates, fats, proteins and vitamins needed for a balanced diet. The pupils listen carefully to what the teachers have to say and listen well to each other's comments. The teachers reflect the high expectations of achievement that form the school's drive for high standards.

59. The excellent results of the 2004 tests at the end of Year 6 provide strong evidence that the pupils are doing well because all of the pupils reached the expected level and over half reached the higher level.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above average by Year 6
- The pupils enjoy using ICT and achieve well
- In Years 3 to 6 the teachers make extensive use of ICT to support learning

## Commentary

60. The use of ICT was not observed in Years 1 and 2 but in Years 3 to 6 the stimulating approaches to learning and teaching being promoted are effectively utilising a range of software and extending the pupils' competencies. The absence of a fast internet connection is a limiting factor in the school's provision.
61. In Years 3 to 6 the pupils have used 'dance' software to create a CD of their own compositions. In order to do this they have combined their good knowledge of music and their ability to use ICT to sequence and overlay up to eighteen tracks with impressive results. In lessons they use CDRoms, in the absence of a good internet connection, to find information. The pupils display good skill levels, locate files and folders and use conventions to name and save their work. In a mathematics lesson the pupils were taught how to use a formula in a spreadsheet through investigations into number patterns. This was effectively extended to challenge the pupils to calculate the costs of, for example, eating one packet of crisps per day for a week, a month, a year, five and ten years.
62. Discussions with pupils show they know how to use LOGO to draw shapes using simple procedures and in their work there are flow diagrams which show they are able to construct a system using inputs and outputs to create, for example, a simple burglar alarm.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63. The use of ICT across the curriculum is extensive in some, but not all, parts of the school. The interactive whiteboard is a very beneficial teaching aid which is used to good effect in Years 3 to 6. Many older pupils readily turn to the technology to both research and communicate their work.

## HUMANITIES

64. As no lessons were observed in geography and history, insufficient evidence was gathered to make judgements about the quality of provision in these subjects. In both subjects, discussions were held with the co-ordinator and groups of pupils, teachers' planning was examined and pupils' workbooks were inspected. The standards in **history** and **geography** are at least in line with national expectations in both subjects by the end of Year 6. Good use is made of the local environment and visits to places of interest to enrich the curriculum. With the help of members of the local community the pupils in Year 1 and 2 gained a good understanding of what toys were like fifty years ago and learned how to play 'Blow Football'. They examine and compare teddy bears of various ages and other toys from the recent past. They visit Skegness and compare how a seaside location is different from where they live and make simple large-scale maps of the village and orientate and plot the localities of various features.
65. The work of the pupils in Years 3 to 6 is of high quality and is carried out over a four-year cycle. In geography they are successfully introduced to environmental issues and they have a good understanding of the major physical features of the world. As part of their local studies, they learn about the River Witham and trace its course using a variety

of maps including aerial photos and an IT mapping program. In history they use the local area to look for the location of plane crashes during World War Two and make studies of the Roman Lincoln. History workbooks show detailed and well researched work on Ancient Greeks, Romans, Vikings and Saxons and there are good links with literacy when they write reports on Roman battles and recount the crimes of Hrothgar as part of their work on the Legend of Beowulf. They use the school logbooks to gather first hand evidence of how employment and lifestyle in the local area has changed over time.

66. Although no lessons could be observed in **religious education** there is ample evidence from conversations with the pupils and displays and photographs around the school that the locally agreed syllabus is well taught and that the pupils have good knowledge of the world's major religions, especially Christianity. A well-planned scheme of work based on the locally agreed syllabus systematically develops the pupils' learning as they move through the school. There are good links with the local church for school events, productions and to support the humanities curriculum. Because of the school's close involvement with the local church, the pupils have a good understanding of the Christian calendar. They know many of the New Testament stories and give good explanations of what happened at the Last Supper and how Peter denied that he knew Jesus. The pupils speak enthusiastically and knowledgeably about their visit to a Hindu Temple and a Sikh gurdwara. They have a very good knowledge of the various Hindu Gods. They know and understand that all religions worship a deity in various ways, have sacred symbols and can identify these in the five major religions.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

67. Two physical education lessons and one music lesson were seen. No art and design or design and technology lessons were taught during the inspection.
68. In **art and design** the pupils have completed a reasonable range of work and make appropriate use of sketch books to experiment with, for example, tone and shade. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 have made good use of natural objects as a basis for observational drawing. The older pupils have looked at relationships in art and produced paintings based on a range of stimuli. The pupils learn about artists and craftspeople and have a close association with 'Chainsaw Mick' a local sculptor who has created a sculpture of an owl which now sits proudly in the school garden.
69. Discussion with older pupils shows that they enjoy the research, planning and making of products in **design and technology**. They have a good knowledge of these processes. In their current project they are using cams to make a moving toy and have based their design on examples they disassembled. In their previous work which includes designs for hats, bags and a bus shelter the pupils use annotated diagrams to good effect and evaluate what has worked well and what they can improve. Their evaluations indicate where, for example, stronger stitching or better colour co-ordination is needed. The pupils' designs for a bus shelter resulted in a presentation which was assessed by the teacher creating an opportunity to add to the pupils speaking and communication skills.
70. The school places a strong emphasis on enjoying and performing **music** and the pupils have many opportunities to perform in a whole variety of productions and musical events. The standard of singing observed in assemblies and hymn practices, is well above average. Pupils sing tunefully and expressively. At times the sensitive way pupils interpret the lyrics is moving. The pupils have a good understanding of pitch, rhythm and dynamics. When required to sing a song with more than one part, the pupils keep

good time and successfully create the intended effect. Many pupils play recorders and can read music well. There are good links to understanding the music of other cultures and pupils play African drums with great skill maintaining rhythm and beat. They also have access to specialist music tuition in a range of instruments. Standards in musical composition appear to be well above average and there are very good links between ICT and music. For example, older pupils have used a computer program to synthesize and manipulate sounds to produce their own composition. The CD they have compiled is now on sale. The headteacher has a very high level of personal skill and great enthusiasm for the subject, which is reflected in the subject's high profile throughout the school.

71. As in many small schools the provision of a comprehensive **physical education** curriculum is problematic. However, the school ensures the pupils have a good range of experiences. All age groups have a weekly swimming lesson and as a result the school does well in the local schools' gala. A new initiative to develop volleyball in schools is proving successful. In one lesson seen the older pupils were developing their throwing, catching and striking skills well to use in a modified game of volleyball. In another lesson the younger pupils developed their balancing, directional and movement skills well in an effective lesson which made good use of the playground space. Through developing links with the local sports college there are advanced plans to provide every child with an additional sporting opportunity each week during the next academic year.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

72. The PHSE programme makes a very good contribution to pupils' moral and social development. Circle time is particularly effective in the pupils' excellent social development. In the circle time which was observed the teachers provided the pupils with an outstanding opportunity to share any concerns or positive views they may have. One pupil recounted an incident in which he had been treated unacceptably by an older pupil. Others who were present gave very open, honest and mature views on the incident. The older pupil apologised and the matter was resolved. The oldest pupils were encouraged to speak about their impending move to secondary school. Health education is interwoven into the science curriculum where pupils learn, for example, about the dangers of substance abuse.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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