

INSPECTION REPORT

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Grantham

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120608

Headteacher: Mrs Linda Heaver

Lead inspector: Paul Edwards

Dates of inspection: 13th – 15th June 2005

Inspection number: 268095

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 aided
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 200

School address: Sandon Road
Grantham
Lincolnshire
Postcode: NG31 9AX

Telephone number: 01476 562017
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body
Name of chair of Mrs Helen Pickering
governors:

Date of previous 1st February 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Mary's, a Catholic Primary School, has 200 pupils on roll, 113 boys and 87 girls. Almost all pupils are from a White British background. A very small number of pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs at fourteen percent is below the national average. Three pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Pupil mobility is quite high in some year groups. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Attainment on entry to the school is below average. The school gained Investor in People status in 2005.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------------|--|
| 21069 | Paul Edwards | Lead inspector | Mathematics, information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, physical education, special educational needs, English as an additional language |
| 32658 | Nicky Bolton | Lay inspector | |
| 32274 | Jane Haggitt | Team inspector | Foundation Stage, science, music, personal, social and health education |
| 23566 | John Iles | Team inspector | English, history, geography |

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REPORT CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--|-----------|
| PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT | 6 |
| PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS | |
| STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS | 8 |
| Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses | |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | |
| QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL | 11 |
| Teaching and learning | |
| The curriculum | |
| Care, guidance and support | |
| Partnership with parents, other schools and the community | |
| LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT | 15 |
| PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES | 17 |
| AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE | |
| SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2 | |
| PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS | 29 |

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is providing a **very good standard of education**. The leadership and management and the quality of teaching are very good. The pupils achieve very well throughout the school ensuring that, by the end of Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are well above average. Overall, the school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Throughout the school, pupils of all abilities achieve very well and by the end of Year 6 standards are well above average
- Excellent leadership by the headteacher has provided a very clear direction for the school
- Very good teaching provides the children with a very good education in the Foundation Stage and this is maintained throughout the school
- There is a rich and varied curriculum that stimulates pupils to learn
- The pupils have excellent attitudes to school and their behaviour is very good
- Pupils' handwriting and standards of presentation are not as high as they should be
- The very good links with parents and local schools

The school has made very good progress since it was last inspected. Standards in the core subjects of English and mathematics are better at the end of Year 6 and there have been significant improvements in standards in music and information and communication technology. The very good improvements in leadership and management have helped to raise the quality of teaching further.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The pupils' overall **achievement is very good**. The children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress and, by the end of reception, most are likely to attain the goals expected of them in each of the areas of learning. In 2004 National Curriculum test results for pupils in Year 2, standards were below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that standards are rising and in the current Year 2, are above average in English and mathematics. The difference between tests and inspection evidence is due in part to differences in cohorts and the relatively high mobility in some year groups. However, more importantly, the improved quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 has raised standards significantly.

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

*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 results in the above table relate to the pupils who were in Year 6 in 2004. These pupils achieved levels that were well above the national average in all three core subjects. Inspection evidence confirms well above average standards in English and mathematics is and above average standards in science. Standards in information and communication technology and music have improved significantly since the last inspection due to better

teaching and curriculum leadership. They are now above average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in history and art and design are also above average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.

Across the school, pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because they are provided with good support. The small number of pupils learning English as an additional language are provided with good support, enabling them to make progress in line with their peers. The school ensures that the gifted and talented pupils achieve well and they are appropriately challenged through a good range of strategies.

The pupils' **personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.** They have excellent attitudes to school and their behaviour is very good. Attendance levels have improved steadily over the past three years and are good and punctuality is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education, including the quality of teaching and learning, is very good throughout the school.** Procedures for assessing the pupils' work are very good overall, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The teachers mark the pupils' work well, ensuring that the pupils have a good understanding of what they have to do to improve. In all classes, there are high expectations of pupils' behaviour and of what they are capable of achieving and pupils regularly try to do their best. Teachers make very good use of assessment information to plan work that is matched well to the varying abilities of the pupils. This ensures that those pupils with special educational needs and the more able, including those who are gifted and talented, make very good progress. The small numbers of pupils learning English as an additional language make very good progress because of the provision of effective support. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to the pupils' learning and they provide very good support for pupils with learning difficulties.

All areas of the National Curriculum are taught in depth and this provides the pupils with a very good range of learning opportunities. A wide range of visits, visitors and learning activities, significantly enrich the curriculum and a very good range of clubs also enhance the pupils' experiences. The provision for the pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The **leadership and management of the school are very good.** The headteacher has been very effective in maintaining the very good achievement of the pupils. Her excellent leadership focuses on maintaining high standards and on providing a rich and stimulating curriculum. As a result of her strong management, staff work together very effectively, helping to create a very positive ethos where pupils are encouraged to succeed. Subject co-ordinators make a very good contribution to the high standards through their very effective monitoring of teaching and learning. There are very effective procedures in place for evaluating the quality of the school's work. The governance of the school is very good. The governors have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and they fulfil all of their statutory obligations.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents think very well of the school and believe that it provides an excellent education for their children. The pupils are also very positive about their school and say that they are treated fairly and are expected to work hard.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The pupils' achievement throughout the school is very good. By the end of Year 6, the pupils attain well above average standards in English and mathematics and above average standards in science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are high standards of speaking and listening, reading and writing skills throughout the school although handwriting and presentation are not as good as they should be
- The pupils develop very good numeracy skills
- Standards attained by the pupils in art and design, history, information and communication technology and music are above average
- Children make very good progress in the Foundation Stage

Commentary

1. Table 1 below shows that in the 2004 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils the standards in English, mathematics and science were well above the national average.

Table 1 Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 28.7 (29.1) | 26.9 (26.8) |
| Mathematics | 29.3 (28.8) | 27.0 (26.8) |
| Science | 30.1 (30.1) | 28.6 (28.6) |

There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Table 2 below shows that in the 2004 National Curriculum test for Year 6 pupils, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were below the national average.

Table 2 Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | 15.3 (15.2) | 15.8 (15.7) |
| writing | 14.1 (14.3) | 14.6 (14.6) |
| mathematics | 15.9 (15.2) | 16.2 (16.3) |

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 6 standards are well above average in English and mathematics and above average by the end of Year 2. In science, they are above average by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. The pupils achieve very well in these key areas of the curriculum. Standards have improved since

the last inspection and the trend in improvement in Year 6 tests is above the national trend. It is below the national trend of improvement in Year 2 tests. There are variations in overall ability in different year groups and the lower results in Year 2 in the 2004 tests was because there were more pupils of lower ability in that class and mobility was high. Pupils with special educational needs and the small number who are learning English as an additional language make very good progress because of the very good support they receive.

4. The children in the Reception class achieve very well and most are likely to attain the expected standards for their ages in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, personal, social and emotional development and creative and physical development. The children's achievement is very good because the staff have a very clear understanding of the needs of young children and work together very effectively as a team, providing an interesting and lively learning environment. The curriculum is very well planned although the lack of a covered play area limits the opportunities for outdoor activities during inclement weather.
5. In English, speaking and listening skills are very good throughout the school. Pupils show very good skills during discussion activities. They ask and respond to questions sensibly and listen very well to other pupils and staff. The pupils' reading skills are very good. Pupils are confident and read very well using a good range of strategies to help them understand the text. Early reading skills are very well taught and there are very good opportunities for the pupils to use their reading skills in other subjects. The content of the pupils' writing is very good. They are provided with many opportunities to practise writing skills in other subjects. However, handwriting skills are not well developed and work is not presented as neatly as it should be. The overuse of worksheets restricts the opportunities for the pupils to improve their skills in presenting their work neatly and in different forms.
6. Achievement in mathematics is very good overall. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils develop a secure grasp of number and their mental arithmetic skills develop well as a result of the very good teaching. They use a good range of strategies to work out calculations in their heads. They measure accurately and compile accurate charts and graphs and use computers to occasionally aid this process. The overwhelming majority of pupils in Years 3 to 6 develop their knowledge and understanding very well and acquire a very good range of strategies to carry out calculations. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the very good support which enables them to make very good progress. Particularly gifted pupils are very well catered for; additional activities are provided for them at the local secondary schools as well as support during visits by secondary school staff. This contributes to the very good progress made by these pupils.
7. Standards in science are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve very well throughout the school. The subject is very well led and managed ensuring skills are progressively taught across the school and work planned to meet the varying ability levels of pupils. Standards in information and communication technology are above average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 and, despite outdated equipment, the pupils achieve well throughout the school. This is because the teachers take every opportunity to use computers to enhance learning in other subjects.
8. Standards in art and design are well above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The subject is taught very well and the staff make very effective use of the resources

to provide a rich and stimulating curriculum that is carefully planned across the school. Skills are very well taught, utilising the expertise of visiting artists and pupils enjoy the very good range of activities on offer. Standards in music are above average at the end of both key stages. The very good improvement since the last inspection is the result of the employment of a specialist music teacher. The pupils acquire a good level of understanding and a range of skills that enable them to perform for different audiences. Standards in history are above average at the end of both key stages.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have excellent attitudes towards school and each other, and their behaviour is consistently very good. The provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance is above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has very high expectations of its pupils and they respond exceptionally well, demonstrating outstanding enthusiasm to learn and to participate fully in the life of the school
- Behaviour is very good
- Relationships throughout the school are very good, contributing to very high levels of confidence and self-esteem among the pupils

Commentary

9. All pupils are very pleased to be at school. They are clearly proud of their school and of the contribution which they make to its development. The message of the 'whole school together', delivered in an assembly, is evidently very familiar to all pupils, even the very youngest. Pupils enjoy assuming positions of responsibility, whether as a 'buddy' to younger pupils, a reading partner, an ICT monitor or a representative on the school council. They are quick to offer help.
10. The very good provision for the social and moral development of the pupils and the strong role models provided by adults has a very positive impact on the pupils' behaviour. Pupils show excellent awareness of the difference between right and wrong. Any isolated instances of bullying or inappropriate behaviour which have occurred have been dealt with very effectively. Even during a wet break, when pupils had to eat their lunch and spend playtime in their classrooms, the atmosphere was calm and relaxed. The pupils are very polite and treat each other and adults with respect. They show maturity in seeking to understand the views and feelings of others. There have been no exclusions in recent times.
11. The strength of the relationships within the school contributes to the very high levels of confidence and self-esteem of the pupils. They feel sufficiently secure to take risks without fear of failure. This was evident throughout the school. A Year 6 art class responded with confidence when given a very open-ended challenge of creating abstract paintings of moving figures, and all pupils worked well independently. Reception pupils responded well to the class teacher's careful questioning and use of praise to settle straight in to the school day and learn about the days of the week, the

weather, and months of the year. In lessons, the teachers ask open-ended and thought-provoking questions, stimulating self-confidence and an enthusiasm for learning in their pupils.

12. The promotion of the spiritual, moral, and social development of the children is well-embedded and evident in much of the school's work. The school also works very hard to develop in pupils an understanding of their own and other cultures. This, again, is achieved throughout the school day and in all subjects of the curriculum as well as through dedicated initiatives such as the recent multi-cultural arts week. The pupils in Year 5, for example, learnt about and prepared some Mexican food and in Year 2 the pupils modelled clay to make Diva lamps as part of their study of Hinduism.
13. Attendance rates continue to be above average. Most pupils arrive at school on time in the morning, although the big distances travelled by some pupils coupled with local traffic congestion can occasionally cause some pupils to arrive a few minutes late.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2004/05 (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.7 | School data | 0.1 |
| 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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality of education. The teaching, learning and curriculum are very good and there are very good arrangements for securing the care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils. Links with parents are very good and there are good links with the local community. The school has established very good relationships with other schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good and there are good procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of literacy and numeracy and science is strong throughout the school
- The teachers provide the pupils with interesting and stimulating work
- The teaching assistants provide very good support
- Assessment information is used very effectively

Commentary

14. Taking account of the lessons seen, the pupils' previous work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers, the quality of teaching and learning is very good. This has a very positive impact on the pupils' achievement and the progress they make, particularly in English and mathematics.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 1 (3%) | 13 (42%) | 16 (52%) | 1 (3%) | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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.

15. The children's attainment when they first join Reception covers a broad range, but is below average overall. The very good teaching and the wide and varied curriculum mean that the children make very good gains in their learning and are achieving very well. The teachers' planning is very good and ensures that all areas of the curriculum are given appropriate coverage and that the work is well matched to the children's level of ability and maturity. Most of the children are well on course to attain the goals expected of them by the end of Reception in each of the areas of learning.
16. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is very good because the school has a very clear focus on raising standards in these areas and a very clear action plan identifying what teachers need to do to raise standards. English and mathematics are very well organised by the co-ordinators, who have identified areas for improvement and, with the support of the headteacher, they keep a very close check on the teaching and learning to monitor the developments. The staff have responded very well. There has been a very determined effort to ensure that pupils of all abilities fulfil their potential. The teachers have a very good understanding of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and the work is presented in a very lively way that quickly captures the pupils' attention. There are good opportunities for them to discuss their work, at the beginning and end of lessons and as they work. The teachers are particularly good at sharing the purpose of lessons with pupils and in questioning them to determine what they know and have learned. As a result, most pupils learn and achieve very well.
17. All pupils benefit from the work of skilled teaching assistants who provide very good additional help in lessons particularly for those pupils with special educational needs. Where it is appropriate, pupils are withdrawn from lessons to receive additional support from teaching assistants in small groups, for example when working on information and communication technology activities. Good use is also made of support provided by the local education authority. This combination of approaches ensures pupils make good or very good progress. The targets contained in the pupils' individual education plans are very clear and concise. The teachers and teaching assistants use the individual education plans well when planning their lessons and this ensures work is effectively matched to the pupils' individual needs. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and a combination of approaches, including pupils taking lessons at feeder secondary schools and secondary staff working with the pupils in school, ensure that these pupils make significant progress.
18. The employment of a specialist teacher has enabled the school to provide the pupils with a rich and stimulating music curriculum. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' learning in the subject was unsatisfactory but they now make good progress and enjoy a wide variety of musical experiences that add significantly to their cultural experiences. Teachers work hard to ensure other areas of the curriculum are equally interesting. Lessons observed in art and design and history provided evidence of their success.

19. The staff have worked hard, and successfully since the last inspection, to improve the systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress. The procedures in English and mathematics are very thorough. Day-to-day procedures, founded on very good questioning techniques that highlight any misunderstandings, and an improved approach to marking, help to provide information for setting learning targets for individual pupils. The teachers keep a close track on their progress. The information from assessments and the analyses of test results are very well used to identify strengths and weaknesses and to plan the next stages in learning. Assessment in other subjects is also used effectively to monitor progress and learning.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is very good and is enriched by a very good range of visits and visitors. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curricular provision is very good
- Leadership and management are rigorous in evaluating the curriculum and effective action is taken to bring about improvements
- The support for the pupils with special educational needs is very good
- Innovation and imaginative cross curricular links enhance pupils' learning

Commentary

20. The organisation and planning of the curriculum is good throughout the school. There is equality of opportunity with all pupils involved in all that the school has to offer. Pupils that are gifted and talented, those with special educational needs and those at an early stage of learning English are all well supported. There is early identification, appropriate support and challenge, and intervention. The pupils' progress has been accelerated by innovation and development of cross-curricular links. Imaginative cross curricular links enhance the children's learning particularly in information and communication technology, music, art, science, design technology, history and geography.
21. The extra-curricular activities for the pupils offered by the school are very good. Good use is made of visits to Leicester Space Centre, Conkers Environmental Centre, the Magistrates Courts, Nottingham Castle, and Lincoln Dance and Music Festivals. Residential trips, sports, arts and music activities add interest and enrich pupil's learning both during and outside the school day.
22. The curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. There are well-planned activities that cover all of the six areas of learning. They meet the pupils' individual needs very well and are very motivating. The balance between direct teaching and opportunities for children to explore and learn by themselves is appropriate and very effective. High expectations, good modelling, praise and support ensure children feel supported and successful. This allows children to make very good progress throughout their first year at school.
23. There are sufficient teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. The accommodation allows the curriculum to be taught effectively and plans are in place to improve the toilet facilities for Year 6 pupils and to provide a new computer suite with up to date equipment. The outside area for the reception class is small but

has been creatively resourced to create a good outdoor classroom that increases children's physical and creative development. This area is soon to be enhanced by a covered area to accommodate wet weather use.

Care, guidance and support

All pupils are very well cared for in this school. The staff know the pupils very well and are able to provide very good support, advice and guidance. The pupils feel very involved in the life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works very effectively to cater for the individual needs, both academic and personal, of all its pupils
- The school council empowers pupils to make a real contribution to the life of the school
- Provision for the protection of children is very good
- Health and safety procedures and practices are very good

Commentary

24. The school places great emphasis on caring for all its pupils. Pupils are settled into the school very well, whether they join in the Foundation stage or elsewhere in the school, and great care is taken in assessing their individual needs. The quality of the relationships between adults and children in the school and the very thorough assessment of their academic progress means that the levels of personal guidance offered are very good. Pupils feel confident they have an adult they can turn to if they need help. They are enthusiastic about a new system of 'worry boxes' in the classroom, which they can use if they wish to draw their teacher's attention to any worries they might have.
25. Child protection procedures are very thorough and well-established; the school draws effectively on specialist expertise, and enjoys good working relationships with other agencies involved in child protection matters. The school pays very good attention to the health, safety and security of its pupils. It is part of the Promoting Healthy Schools initiative and makes good use of external visitors to develop pupils' awareness of how to safeguard their own health and safety.
26. The pupils feel very involved in the life of the school and consider that they make a valuable contribution to the way it is run. The management of the school council is very good. Pupils have used it to resolve problems, coming up with the proposal to install a referee at playtime football matches, for example, in order to resolve disputes. The head teacher also values the school council as a sounding board. As a result of the regular meetings between pupils, school council representatives and the head teacher, pupils develop confidence in their own views and feel empowered to manage their own environment.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a very good partnership with parents and with other schools. It enjoys good links with the local community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive of the school and value its work
- Pupils benefit educationally from very strong links with other schools
- Information provided to parents is very good

Commentary

27. The school provides very good information to parents about the school through newsletters, the school website, prospectus and the new school profile. Parents are also given very good information about the progress of their children. There are two very well attended parent evenings each year, plus one open day. Parents are also provided with clear annual reports, most of which contain simple targets explaining how their child can improve. The newsletters and websites contain useful information regarding the curriculum for each year group. The head teacher and class teachers are readily available at the start and end of each day if parents wish to see them. Parents are very supportive of the school, as shown in their very positive responses in the recent questionnaire. They are active in fundraising for the school, and some parents are enthusiastic helpers.
28. Links with the community are good. The school has extensive links with the parish of St Mary's. The services of the local police and fire-fighters are used to teach pupils about personal safety. Local residents come in to listen to pupils read. Local artists visit to talk to the pupils about their work with watercolours, and another has helped them create a textile wall hanging of the Creation. The school has participated successfully in local music and dance festivals and has links with Lincoln Football Club. All of these activities contribute to learning and the pupils' personal development.
29. Pupils benefit from very good links with other schools in the area. Curriculum development has been a feature of collaboration with a cluster of primary and infant schools and the local special school. Links with the local secondary schools are also extensive, with gifted and talented pupils in particular benefiting from extra mathematics and science lessons held at the two grammar schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. Governance is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very clear educational direction for the work of the school
- The governors fulfil their statutory duties very effectively and actively support school improvement
- Staff understand their roles and responsibilities and work as a committed team to improve the school
- Arrangements for induction, staff recruitment and the professional development of staff are very good
- Financial monitoring procedures and day to day routines are very well managed

Commentary

33. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Her work has successfully focused on raising standards, particularly in literacy, numeracy and science. Her leadership and management of the school are now excellent and this is a significant improvement from the last inspection when it was described as satisfactory.
34. Monitoring of teaching and learning is linked to teachers' performance management and is excellent. Subject coordinators analyse test results for strengths and areas for improvement. Weaknesses are addressed in subject action plans that indicate clearly the next steps to be taken to improve learning. Lesson observations and assessments are carried out to establish the success of the actions taken. The capacity for further improvement is very good.
35. The school has a very clear view of how it should develop in the future. A five year strategic plan and a very good quality annual school development plan identifies the long and short term improvement strategies. The plans are implemented rigorously and carefully costed and evaluated.
36. The headteacher provides very good pastoral leadership that is reflected in a caring ethos underpinned by Christian beliefs. She is a very effective leader. Her high expectations and broad view of ways to support pupils and their families contribute significantly to the school's success. Very good attention is given to the induction of staff and this enables the vision of the school to be maintained. All staff are committed to raising the achievement for all groups of pupils through broadening their experiences and heightening awareness of opportunities.
37. The staff work very hard and share their skills. Performance management procedures are very good with all staff receiving training to carry out their responsibilities. Work with partner institutions has supported staff development and smooth transition when pupils move to a secondary school. Teaching assistants are highly valued and good attention is given to their professional development. A measure of this success is the achievement of a teaching assistant who will soon attain qualified teacher status, after completing a degree course while serving at the school.
38. The governance of the school is very good. The governing body is closely involved in the running of the school. Through close links to the subject co-ordinators, the

governing body has a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Individual governors, for example, come into school on a regular basis to support the school as well as gain a first hand overview of its work. The committee structure within the governing body is very effective and enables governors to use their collective and individual expertise very well. The financial management of the budget is very good and the school provides very good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 506,240 |
| Total expenditure | 477,705 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,388 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance from previous year | 30,910 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 29,470 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

39. Provision for the Foundation Stage is very good and has improved since the last inspection. Children join the Reception class in the September of the year in which they are five. Teacher assessments at this stage indicate that for many pupils achievement is below average in speaking and listening, early literacy skills and mathematical development. The carefully planned induction programme ensures children receive a good start to their education and they make very good progress due to the good quality teaching in all areas of learning. As a result, most children achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1.
40. The quality of the teaching for the Reception children is very good. The way in which the two teachers and the learning support assistants work together as a team to support the children is strong feature of the teaching. They share consistent high expectations for children's learning and behaviour. Both make good use of assessments to set targets for improvement and they track children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals.
41. The staff are very caring and manage the children well creating a secure and happy atmosphere. Children with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented are identified early and well supported and challenged. This early intervention helps the children with learning difficulties to participate more fully and to learn effectively. A well-planned curriculum covering the six areas of learning ensures good experiences for the children. There is a good balance of child initiated and teacher-directed activities.
42. Good links with parents are established through an induction programme that includes a pre-school visit and continues with a well-used home/school diary arrangement that ensures information is shared. The Foundation Stage team is well led and managed by both Reception class teachers, with a monitoring input from the headteacher.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The promotion of the children's personal, social and emotional development permeates all activities
- The children respond very well to the teachers' high expectations of good behaviour and they co-operate well with each other
- Relationships between staff, children and the home are good
- Children achieve well in this area and co-operate successfully with each other

Commentary

43. Children enjoy coming to school and are eager to learn. They have below average personal and social skills on entry which rapidly improve as skilled staff encourage them to talk and to relate well to each other. The children are provided with many opportunities to develop their independence and confidence. They learn to 'clean up

their own mess' by washing up their paint brushes and putting them away and they readily help each other to put on painting aprons and placing their work on drying racks. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and children are taught to be polite and kind to each other and to reflect on their feelings, actions and experiences.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are taught early reading strategies and staff systematically introduce children to letter names and initial sounds
 - Writing is taught in progressive steps and children are encouraged to become independent writers
 - Speaking and listening is an important focus throughout the whole Foundation Stage curriculum
44. Staff use every opportunity to develop language and literacy skills through the sharing of books, stories and rhymes. Early reading skills are promoted well and most children benefit from the support of parents in practising these skills at home. Literacy lessons are linked to other areas such as PSED giving children a good context for learning. In one literacy lesson observed children shared a story about feelings and then after discussion and reflection went on to carry out a varied selection of activities that encouraged creative and physical skills through painting, cutting out, using play dough. As they worked they talked about their own feelings, what made them happy and sad and the teacher assessed their understanding of this as well as their reading skills. Good progress was made as activities were matched to children's interest and ability. From children's work it can be seen that there is progressive teaching of phonics ranging from work for children who are just beginning to recognise initial letters through to provision for those who can identify sounds and letters at the ends of words. Chances for children to practise and extend their reading, writing and communication skills through imaginative play, are extended by the role-play area and the outdoor classroom.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Early counting skills are reinforced well and provide a good foundation for developing the children's numeracy skills
- Regular whole class and small group teaching enables the children to learn effectively about numbers, shapes and money
- Mental agility and the manipulation of numbers is encouraged by 'challenges' set by the teachers

Commentary

45. The teachers are skilled in devising games, activities and challenges that promote the children's understanding of numbers, shapes and measures. They build on their skills through a wide range of teacher-directed and self-chosen tasks. The children become familiar with mathematical language through stories, rhymes, discussions and activities. They are able to count up to and back from 20 and some are able to do this in 2's. Children responded readily to challenges such as '2 more than 9 is....' And '2 less than 18 is..' They are encouraged to explain how they work the calculations out and many are keen to record numbers on whiteboards. The teachers' good use of assessment to target individual children is a strength, as is their enthusiasm and commitment.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Interesting activities are planned that make learning enjoyable and rewarding for the children both indoors and in the outdoor classroom
- The activities are effective in improving the children's observational skills, curiosity and enthusiasm
- The use of the computer, listening centre, interactive toys and digital camera help the children's early understanding of new technology

Commentary

46. The teachers and the learning assistant have a very good understanding of the range of experiences children need to develop and plan learning around a range of themes over the school year. The children's awareness of the natural world is developed well as they learn about growth and mini-beasts. Adults support the children well in their practical activities. They ask pertinent questions and make good links with what the children have done before in order to extend and reinforce learning and to encourage the children to talk about what they are doing. Children were able to talk about research they had done "I found out that ladybirds eat green fly and have wings but are really beetles" "We found out that ants have nests on the ground and they all have to get food." The children enjoy using technology and can use a digital camera to take each other's photographs. The children are eager and enthusiastic learners and their developing language skills enable them to explain and discuss what they are learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good indoor and outdoor opportunities are planned for the children to improve their physical skills
- Good use is made of resources for outdoor play
- Children have good opportunities to practise body control and co-ordinate their movements during physical education sessions

Commentary

47. Children are becoming confident in their use of tools such as scissors, pencils, crayons and paintbrushes showing good control. Since the previous inspection the school has developed a more imaginative and attractive outdoor classroom environment for the children. Carefully structured activities and a good range of resources help the children to achieve well in this area of learning. There are opportunities for regular outdoor and indoor activities when the children can develop confidence and independence in movement. A good feature of the outdoor provision is the way in which the teachers ensure that other aspects of learning are introduced such as literacy work with children playing action phonic games. The teachers also initiate several sessions of 'Brain Gym' each day when the children go outside for five minute activities that increase their oxygen supply and stimulate learning and thinking skills. Such use of the outdoor provision as an extension of the classroom provides valuable opportunities for children to gain the benefits of working in the fresh air.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children have opportunities to paint, print, cut out, create collage and to draw in directed and free choice activities
- Opportunities for role play are planned for in activities linked to other areas of learning

Commentary

48. Children have frequent opportunities to develop creative skills through painting and drawing, making music, making models, imaginative role-play and singing songs. Resources are well prepared, appropriate and of interest to the children. Sand, water, crayons, paints, play dough and collage materials are available for the children to work with on a regular basis and they make good use of these to develop their senses and to investigate colour and texture. Each child can confidently play a percussion instrument creating their own music as well as playing along to recorded music. The teaching is energetic and enthusiastic which makes children eager to learn. Individual targeting of pupils for gifted and talented and children with special educational needs ensures maximum progress is achieved. Good classroom organisation and preparation of resources ensures children are able to focus on the planned learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

The provision for English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in speaking, listening, reading and writing by the end of Year 2 and very well by the end of Year 6
- Teaching is very good across the school, with excellent examples in Year 6
- The subject co-ordinator provides excellent leadership
- The links between literacy and other subjects are very good

Commentary

49. There has been a good improvement in English since the previous inspection. Pupils make a good start in the foundation stage developing their communication, language and literacy skills and this is built on very effectively in Years 1 and 2. Teaching is very good and staff plan very well, ensuring work is very well matched to the pupils' differing abilities. By the end of Year 2 standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing are above average and all groups of pupils achieve well.
50. Results in the 2004 national tests showed standards by the end of Year 6 to be well above average and inspection evidence confirms that these standards have been maintained and pupils achieve very well. Thorough analysis of test results and the needs of individual pupils have led to improvements in teaching and learning. Cross-curricular links are firmly established and pupils successfully apply their skills and knowledge independently. A creative approach to language that develops reading and writing through meaningful contexts is very effectively raising standards.
51. The quality of speaking and listening throughout the school is very good. Language skills have a high priority and are supported through very good modelling by adults. Pupils enjoy sharing their opinions and quickly develop the conventions of well-disciplined and good mannered discussion. They listen respectfully to the views of others and use a broad range of descriptive language when talking to audiences. Pupils in Year 6 debated the merits of brochures encouraging cruising holidays and the use of persuasive language to influence decision making. They used previous learning and knowledge to support and extend their opinions.
52. Features of very good teaching include well-planned challenge for different groups in lessons. Activities are relevant and maintain interest. The quality of homework is good and promotes learning. In Year 5, pupils were asked to write a balanced report in response to an article discussing the payments made to footballers. Pupils looked forward to this task and this reflects their enthusiasm when confronted with work that is valued. Teachers build on pupils' good speaking skills and their good knowledge of grammar to develop their writing. These links are very important to enable pupils to understand the relationships between different skills in language and this enhances learning.
53. The school has a very good reputation for promoting reading and a love of books. For example, a group of pupils are part of a panel to review books for the Lincolnshire Children's Book award. During the inspection these pupils visited the local library and met and questioned an author about his work. Gifted and talented pupils' reading requirements are addressed well. A Bookworm Club, set up in conjunction with the local library, provides sets of new books written for older pupils. Pupils read the books and discuss their strengths and weaknesses in fortnightly meetings. The local librarian is a regular visitor to the school.
54. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors, for example Anthony Horowitz and Michael Morpurgo, and quote from texts to reinforce their arguments. A lively discussion took place about the merits of reading books compared with film and television productions. The quality of language and maturity of debate was well above that expected from pupils of this age.

55. Pupils have very good knowledge of phonics and describe strategies they use when confronted with words they do not recognise. They enjoy reading aloud and this was demonstrated by very high quality reading in Year 6. Their efforts were full of expression and represented their genuine high interest in contemporary children's literature.
56. Pupils are pleased to discuss their writing. They clearly understand the wide range of styles of writing and the implications of meeting the needs of different audiences. They link their experiences of writing with their reading and are aware of strategies used by authors to stimulate the reader. Higher achieving pupils eagerly model the techniques of professional writers whose work they are familiar with. Examples of pupils' poetry are displayed proudly in the school. Pupils enjoy 'adventuring' with words through poetry and very good quality work is shared with visitors. However, handwriting and general presentation of work are weaknesses. The handwriting policy is not implemented effectively enough through a consistent approach that ensures very good quality work is not marred by insufficient care in presentation.
57. Pupils with special educational needs and the small number learning English as an additional language are well supported and achieve very well. There is no difference between the achievement of boys and girls.
58. The subject leaders provide excellent leadership and manage developments in English very effectively. They provide role models of high quality through their personal practice and thorough subject knowledge. Expectations are very high and systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching, learning and pupils' work ensure consistency across all age groups. Assessment arrangements are very good and pupils know what they have to do to improve further. This promotes pupils' understanding of their own progress.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. There are very good examples of pupils' writing across the curriculum. In history pupils wrote good accounts comparing Roman and modern towns. In design and technology pupils describe their designs, and evaluate their success, giving reasons why they would make changes if repeating their projects. In geography, pupils used the Internet to research rain forests. There are very good examples of pupils' use of word processing for final display. Opportunities for speaking and listening are planned in all subjects across the curriculum and this makes a significant contribution to maintaining high standards.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good** overall.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well throughout the school
- Teachers keep a close check on how well the pupils are progressing
- The pupils are very keen to learn because teachers make lessons interesting
- The presentation of work is not as good as it should be

Commentary

60. On the basis of the 2004 National Curriculum tests pupils' attainment is well above the national average at the end of Year 6 and below average at the end of Year 2. Inspection evidence confirms the findings of the National Curriculum test results for Key Stage 2 but show that standards are above average in Key Stage 1. This is due partly to differences in cohorts and relatively high mobility, but also because provision continues to improve. Over time, the school has been successful in attaining standards that have been above the national trend at Key Stage 2. Since the last inspection, the school has made good overall improvement to the curriculum and standards have risen. Teaching is very good enabling the pupils to achieve particularly well throughout the school. Lessons are very well planned and good use is made of the resources. Useful supplementary computer programs support pupils' learning when practising skills in small groups.
61. Lessons are very well planned. The planning takes very good account of the pupils' different needs and the teaching assistants are very well used to provide support. This benefits all of the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those capable of reaching higher levels. As a result, pupils of all abilities achieve very well. The teachers have very high expectations of the pupils' capabilities and how they should behave. More able pupils are provided with harder work that challenges and stimulates them. Those with special education needs make very good progress towards their particular targets. The pupils respond well and have very positive attitudes to mathematics. They settle very quickly to tasks and persevere when faced with difficulty. Although the pupils work hard to complete tasks, the presentation of their work is a weakness and this is because there is no common approach as to how work should be presented. Occasionally, some lessons are too long taking a whole hour when they could be effectively completed in less time and provide opportunities for other work.
62. There are very good arrangements in place for assessing and recording the progress pupils make. Information is used effectively to analyse individual's improvement on a half termly basis and new targets are set, helping to improve skills. Teachers and assistants work very well together providing additional good support for pupils. In particular, pupils with special educational needs are well supported and this helps them to achieve as well as other pupils. Older pupils who are particularly able are identified and provided with work that is challenging. This is done in conjunction with two of the feeder secondary schools, staff providing expertise and time to ensure these pupils do as well as they possibly can.
63. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and is supported very well by the headteacher. A close check is kept on the teaching and learning. Very good procedures have been introduced to assess and track the pupils' progress. On a day-to-day basis, the teachers have very good questioning skills, which they use to assess the pupils' understanding, and they provide many opportunities for the pupils to explain the strategies they use. As a result, the teachers are able to keep an eye on the progress of individual pupils. The marking focuses on what the pupils are expected to learn in the lessons and the best lessons provides them with good information about how well they are doing and how they might improve their work. Targets, relating to these objectives and linked to National Curriculum levels, are agreed with individual pupils and shared with their parents. The information collected by teachers enables them to track the pupils' progress as they move through the school. The co-ordinator ensures that this information, together with the analysis of test results, is very well used to identify strengths and areas for development. These are addressed systematically and successfully.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. There are regular and good opportunities for the pupils to use mathematics in other subjects. This has a positive impact on their achievement in mathematics and their understanding of the work covered in other subjects. For example when recording measurements during science activities and calculating measurements during design and technology activities. Although the

quality of hardware is only just adequate, computers are well used for a range of mathematical activities. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 were observed using computers to improve their computation skills and older pupils have good experience of using spread sheets to determine costs, for example when identifying the costs involved in running a zoo. Pupils in Year 5 have recorded the temperature in school over a week using sensors. Work is often recorded in graphs and tables.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well as a result of very good teaching
- Assessment is used to inform planning which ensures pupils' needs are met
- Resources and equipment are well used by staff and pupils
- The subject is very well led and managed

Commentary

65. Standards are above average by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 and the pupils achieve well throughout the school. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
66. Teaching overall is very good and lessons were seen in almost all years during the inspection. Teachers' planning clearly identifies what the pupils are to learn in the lesson and these targets, together with success criteria, are shared with pupils. This enables them to have a clear focus on what they are about to learn and to know if they had achieved it. Lively teaching, good use of interesting resources, such as sunflower plants that the pupils had grown, and skilful management of activities, ensure that the pupils maintain interest and achieve success. Good questioning with time to reflect before answering is a common feature of teaching. It challenges the pupils in their thinking but allows time to answer.
67. Lessons are well managed and include practical investigations where pupils make predictions and explore their own ideas. Pupils are able to collaborate, discuss possibilities, and come to their own their own conclusions, which are skills that raise their levels of attainment in scientific enquiry. In some lessons teachers structure the recording with prepared worksheets to emphasise the need to make simple notes or diagrams of observations and findings as work progresses and this makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' writing skills.
68. There is a very good emphasis on the development of pupils' language skills and in using the correct scientific vocabulary. For example, in a Year 6 lesson pupils were able to express their findings about factors that may affect the size and position of a shadow. They investigated in a clear and logical way and achieved well. They used appropriate scientific vocabulary when explaining their findings, such as, 'light source' and 'projected image'. They clearly understood the principles of fair testing and planned this into their group investigations. The teacher added another dimension by linking the science to the world of television and film where knowledge of light projection impacts on special effects in entertaining and creative ways. This motivated pupils to discuss such shadow effects in films such as *The Lord of The Rings*.

69. The pupils have very positive attitudes towards science. Discussion with Year 6 pupils revealed their enjoyment of science and several spoke enthusiastically about the weekly sessions at the high school when Key Stage 3 staff “help us learn new techniques and ways to tackle problems”.
70. The leadership and management of science are very good. The co-ordinator has devised and implemented a recording and assessment system from Year 1 to Year 6. It provides very clear information for teachers when planning lessons. It is also used very effectively to monitor the progress of individuals and groups of pupils and to identify areas of teaching and learning where improvement is required. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge, provides good support to other staff and has maintained very good links with the secondary school science department.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in ICT have improved significantly since the last inspection and the pupils achieve well
- The pupils share resources and work together well
- Staff confidence has improved as a result of the good leadership
- The subject is used effectively to promote learning in other subjects

Commentary

71. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now above average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 despite resources being barely adequate. The school has worked hard to improve provision and a new computer suite, with improved Internet access and up to date equipment, was at an advanced stage of completion during the inspection.
72. The wide variety of work on display and seen in photographs and portfolios of work shows that pupils are offered good levels of challenge to develop their skills. They concentrate well on their work and pupils in Years 1-6 demonstrate good skills in many aspects of the subject. Teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs very well, particularly with literacy and numeracy activities, and this helps these pupils to keep pace with their classmates. Although pupils tend to work by themselves on many activities there are good opportunities for them to share their understanding with each other and to offer their ideas to others.
73. Although only in post a short time, the subject leader demonstrates a very good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She has been provided with good support by the headteacher and colleagues and the school is now in a good position to build on the progress made. The staff are confident and embrace new technology willingly, following the scheme of work diligently to ensure lessons build systematically on what the pupils already know. The computers currently in use are dated, but this situation will be rectified when the new computer suite opens in September. Regular monitoring of teaching and learning by the co-ordinator and the headteacher, together with good assessment procedures has helped to raise standards. The improvements made in the subject and the standards achieved by the pupils have been recognised by an award from a national body.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. Skills in information and communication technology are taught effectively and used very well to promote learning in other subjects. Pupils use data-handling skills to record mathematical information and the results of scientific experiments. Older pupils use computers to give presentations about themselves and they demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge of how to use spreadsheets for costing the running of a zoo. Particularly good use is made of computers to enhance the pupils' artwork, for example by manipulating digital photographs and also through researching the work of different artists on the Internet.

HUMANITIES

Standards were not judged in **geography** because only one lesson was seen during the inspection. However, discussions with staff and pupils and sampling of planning and pupils' work show attitudes to the subject are positive and there is good coverage of the curriculum. In discussions pupils in Year 6 talked enthusiastically about the subject. They are interested in comparing life in their own community with life in other parts of the world. Teachers take pupils on educational visits to enable them to have experience of their environment. Pupils recalled very good learning when they described how they measured the speed of the flow of the River Witham. They expressed concern about another study concerning pollution and its effect upon the environment. A good quality portfolio of work reflects good curriculum coverage across subjects. In the one lesson observed very good links were established with design and technology when the food of Mexico was the focus of pupils' studies. Subject leadership is very good.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of work seen in Years 2 and 6 are above average
- The teaching is good
- The leadership and management of history is very good
- There are very good links with literacy

Commentary

75. Good improvements have been made since the previous inspection. A good quality curriculum promotes pupils' interest and curiosity to find out more about their community and how events further afield affect the lives of people in Grantham. Good emphasis is placed on an investigative approach to learning. Pupils visit places of historical interest and are encouraged to recognise important features of prominent buildings in the town. They compare how the town has changed over time through careful analysis of old photographs. In discussion pupils in Year 6 have good understanding of the links between history and geography and give good examples of how land forms and their positions influence events. The implications for Great Britain as an island were considered and pupils gave clear indications that our position made wartime invasion more difficult. Some pupils traced this feature across different periods of history. Pupils value history for the contribution it makes to our understanding of how the past can help shape the future. Very good support is given to pupils with special educational needs to enable them to be fully included in all activities.

76. Features of good teaching include focused questioning that stimulates ideas and encourages pupils to research areas of interest using the school's library and Internet facilities. Many pupils enjoy working at home to extend their knowledge. Teachers encourage pupils to consider how well pictures of the past help them to understand how living conditions change. Pupils' very good language skills are important tools for learning. They are encouraged to discuss similarities and differences in buildings and wider life styles and this helps them to refine their ideas before writing about their investigations. Teachers' good subject knowledge guides learning. There are good links with other subjects; for example, opportunities for speaking and listening are essential parts of lessons. Model making, for example making nets for Pandora's Box, link history with design and technology and measuring in mathematics.
77. The subject is very well led. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and gives good guidance to teachers. She monitors and evaluates standards effectively and has prepared a very good portfolio of work that clearly shows the areas of study covered across different year groups. The library has a good selection of history books to support learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about physical education and design and technology as too few lessons were observed. However, from the photographic evidence and discussions with staff and pupils, inspection evidence shows that all aspects of **physical education** are taught and that there is a good range of out of school activities that enhance the curriculum. For example, netball, football, cricket and cross-country running provide the pupils with a range of enrichment activities. Curriculum planning shows that in **design and technology** the pupils are taught to use a range of tools and to design and evaluate the products that they make.

Art and design

Provision for art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is very good
- There are good links with other subjects
- There is a good range of enrichment activities
- The subject is well led and managed

Commentary

78. Standards in art and design in both infant and junior parts of the school are above average. This indicates that the improvement shown at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained. Judgements are based on the lessons seen during the inspection, on discussions with teachers and pupils and on the many examples of pupils' work in classrooms, corridors and in the portfolio of pupils' work. Effective leadership and management have ensured that the subject maintains a significant place in the curriculum and provide the pupils with rich experiences.
79. Teachers follow national guidelines to support their planning and this ensures that all aspects of the subject are taught and are appropriate for the age and ability of the pupils. Work builds very effectively on previous teaching and pupils make good progress. The school has a good range of resources that are very well used by

teachers. As a result, pupils learn to develop skills and interpret their ideas in a range of media. Pupils behave well in practical lessons and work successfully both individually and collaboratively. Teachers communicate their enthusiasm for the subject. For example, in a good lesson seen in Year 2 pupils clearly enjoyed working with clay to produce a Diva lamp as part of work in religious education when studying other faiths. The teacher's good subject knowledge enabled her to communicate confidently and enthusiastically how to shape the pot and how to rectify mistakes and problems.

80. Art themes very effectively take their inspiration from other subjects. For example, junior pupils weaved designs and painted patterns as part of their work on the Aztecs and Mexico. The pupils' multi-cultural awareness is enhanced through paintings in the style of Aboriginal artwork and using chalks and pastels to produce masks and shields when studying African artwork. Year 5 pupils produced some very attractive designs based on *The Great Wave* by Katsushika Hokusai.
81. The Internet is used to enable the pupils to research the life and times of some artists, for example that of Claude Monet. A particular strength of the art curriculum is the wide range of artists studied, providing the pupils with a very good awareness of different styles from classical art to the modern works of Picasso. The school makes very effective use of visitors to develop the pupils' skills. Two local artists have visited recently and demonstrated techniques of water colour painting and teaching skills that would otherwise be difficult to acquire. Creative arts weeks are used to provide the pupils with opportunities to have a go at a wide range of activities.

MUSIC

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good innovative teaching ensures pupils are enthusiastic and motivated learners
- Good technical teaching for composition and performance ensures pupils aspire to and achieve good standards
- Considerable imagination is used to provide pupils with musical experiences
- Very good links are made to other subjects
- The subject is very well led and managed

Commentary

82. Significant improvements have been made in music since the last inspection and, by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, standards are above national expectations.
83. Teaching is consistently very good. Throughout the school, teaching is taught by a specialist whose expert subject knowledge ensures that the pupils make rapid progress and that learning builds very effectively on what the pupils already know. The teacher provides considerable guidance and support for staff, enabling pupils to perform in assemblies and concerts with considerable confidence. The lively teaching ensure lessons move at a swift pace, and pupils are well managed to ensure all opportunities to actively make or listen to music are explored. The pupils develop confidence with performance and composition working alone and in groups.

84. The teacher maximises opportunities to link other subjects. For example, when studying coastlines in geography, pupils made 'wave machines' in design and technology and then they composed music and played and recorded on a compact disc using a computer. The teacher increases pupils' musical opportunities by encouraging them to take part in local festivals. The use of materials such as upturned flower buckets and car tyres to make drums and car tyres is creative and the teacher used them imaginatively to introduce pupils to music from other cultures. Year 6 pupils can confidently compare the styles of music from the 1930's, 40's, 60's and 70's and have some understanding of how modern music is digitally enhanced to improve quality of sound. They talked about the
85. The subject leader has written the scheme of work, supports staff and monitors and assesses pupils' progress across the school. Her considerable expertise in matching the work to the pupils' abilities and providing them with a rich and stimulating curriculum has helped to raise standards significantly.
86. The pupils are provided with opportunities to learn a range of instruments and, importantly, have regular opportunities to demonstrate their skills to their schoolmates and to parents. The choir has performed at a number of venues in the town and all pupils in Years 3-6 are to take part in a forthcoming musical to be performed at the local school of performing arts.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

87. Raising self-esteem, nurturing confidence and encouraging an awareness of the need to act responsibly is a priority of the school and is promoted very successfully. Supportive adults including a senior teaching assistant pupils to resolve conflict. Teachers use class discussions and circle time effectively to encourage the pupils to listen to the views of others and to appreciate that these may be different from their own.
88. The teachers develop the pupils' confidence and responsibility by providing good opportunities for them to think about their own actions and to learn from their own and others' experiences. The school is preparing work for the Healthy Schools Award and consequently all aspects of healthy living are woven throughout the curriculum. Health education, which includes learning about relationships and the positive and harmful effects of drugs, is taught sensitively to the older pupils.
89. The school has a comprehensive scheme of work for personal, social and health education that links closely with the RE scheme. Pupils are encouraged to become mature and self-confident and readily discuss how anti-social behaviour affects others. Adults in school encourage the pupils to resolve differences by looking at alternatives, making decisions and explaining choices. This is underpinned by the very good relationships between staff and pupils that inspire confidence and self-assurance. Serving as members of the school council shows the pupils how their views can be represented and acted upon and further develops their awareness and ideas of citizenship. The school council is very positive and productive and makes decisions that improve the school such as the refurbishment of the toilets, the redesign of the pond and environmental area and the design of the new ICT suite. They also raise funds for their school and charities such as the Tsunami disaster fund.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>Inspection judgement</i> | <i>Grade</i> |
|--|--------------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 2 |
| How inclusive the school is | 2 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 2 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 2 |
| Overall standards achieved | 2 |
| Pupils' achievement | 2 |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | 2 |
| Attendance | 3 |
| Attitudes | 1 |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions | 2 |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The quality of education provided by the school | 2 |
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| How well pupils learn | 2 |
| The quality of assessment | 2 |
| 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 | 3 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 2 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 2 |
| The governance of the school | 2 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 1 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 2 |
| 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).