

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

Aston Springwood Primary School  
Aston, Sheffield

LEA area: Rotherham

Unique Reference Number: 106901  
Inspection Number: 182103

Headteacher: Mr Paul Moody

---

Reporting inspector: Mr Rob Crompton  
7230

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706846

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

© Crown Copyright 1999

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated. Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

Under the Education (Schools) Act 1992 and the Education Act 1993, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Infant and Junior
Type of control :	Community
Age range of pupils :	4 - 11
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Aughton Lane Aston Sheffield S26 2AL
Telephone number :	0114 287 2597
Fax number :	0114 287 9203
Appropriate authority :	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors :	Mr T F Wilson
Date of previous inspection :	29 <sup>th</sup> - 31 <sup>st</sup> January 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Rob Crompton, Registered Inspector	Mathematics, Design and technology, Geography, The education of the under fives.	Attainment and progress, Teaching, Leadership and management, Efficiency
Juliet Baxter, Lay inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development, Attendance, Support, guidance and pupils' welfare, Partnership with parents and the community,
Denise Parsons	Science, Art, Physical education, Religious education Special educational needs Equal opportunities	The Curriculum and assessment
Jeremy Royal	English, History Information technology Music	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

The inspection contractor was:

WES World-wide Education Service  
Canada House  
272 Field End Road  
Eastcote  
Middlesex  
HA4 9NA

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints which are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

### Paragraph

#### MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well  
Where the school has weaknesses  
How the school has improved since the last inspection  
Standards in subjects  
Quality of teaching  
Other aspects of the school  
The parents' views of the school

#### KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

#### INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school 1 - 5  
Key indicators 6

#### PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

##### Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

Attainment and progress 7 - 23  
Attitudes, behaviour and personal development 24 - 30  
Attendance 31 - 34

##### Quality of education provided

Teaching 35 - 43  
The curriculum and assessment 44 - 51  
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development 52 - 56  
Support, guidance and pupils' welfare 57 - 64  
Partnership with parents and the community 65 - 70

##### The management and efficiency of the school

Leadership and management 71 - 75  
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources 76 - 79  
The efficiency of the school 80 - 84

#### PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

Areas of learning for children under five 85 - 93

English, mathematics and science 94 - 128

Other subjects or courses 129 - 173

#### PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence 174

Data and indicators 175

## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- The school has an excellent ethos; relationships are exemplary, pupils behave very well and have very positive attitudes
- The quality of teaching is very good and results in good standards of attainment and progress
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the quality of support and guidance are major strengths
- There is a very strong partnership with parents and the local community
- The curriculum is enriched with a wide variety of extra activities
- Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, the school is very well managed and gives very good value for money

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Attainment in information technology at Key Stage 2 is below that expected of eleven-year-olds and progress is too slow.

**The school has more strengths than weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be tackled. The plan will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.**

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. Standards have risen considerably since 1996. In order to achieve this growth, the school successfully implemented all aspects of its action plan. Attainment in speaking has improved to the extent that standards in this aspect of English are now above average and information gained from assessment is now used systematically to decide what to teach next. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning have been maintained and the school has continued to provide a rich curriculum. Under the strong leadership of the headteacher and with the enthusiasm and commitment of staff, the school is well placed to improve further.

## Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools <sup>1</sup>	<b>Key</b> <i>Better than 95% of Schools</i> A* <i>well above average</i> A
English	D	C	
Mathematics	A	A	
Science	A	A*	

The overall picture is one of good standards. Most pupils achieve better than the national average and much better than pupils in similar schools. Standards in English, mathematics and science have risen considerably over the past four years. Current standards in English are broadly average and improving. Most pupils also attain good standards in religious education. When results are compared with those of similar schools, attainment is well above average overall and the school can be justifiably proud of its accomplishment. In contrast to results in these subjects, attainment in information technology is below that expected of eleven-year-olds and progress is too slow.

Most children have attended a nursery or playgroup before starting school and their attainment on entry is broadly average. They make good progress in the reception class and, by the age of five, most attain, or are close to attaining, the desirable outcomes recommended for children of this age in personal and social development, literacy and numeracy.

Pupils make good progress in most subjects, and do well in art, design and technology, geography. Progress in history, music and physical education is at least satisfactory or better.

## Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Very good	Very good	Very good
Mathematics	Very good	Very Good	Very good
Science		Good	Good
Information technology		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

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

The overall quality of teaching is very good. It is a major strength of the school and is the main reason why pupils achieve high standards. Eighteen per cent of lessons were excellent, 29 per cent were very good, 45 per cent were good and the remainder (8 per cent) were satisfactory.

<sup>1</sup> This is based on the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

## Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Behaviour in and around the school is very good indeed. Pupils behave well naturally and fully understand the school's rules and codes of conduct. They respond well to the high standards of behaviour that are expected of them by all school staff
Attendance	Good; above the national average for primary schools.
Ethos*	Excellent; relationships are exemplary, pupils behave very well and have very positive attitudes
Leadership and management	Very good; the headteacher provides excellent leadership and works in close partnership with the deputy head and the senior management team. Teachers with management responsibilities are empowered to carry out their roles. The governors are hard working and well informed.
Curriculum	Good; the curriculum is very broad and balanced, and relevant as preparation for life in the future. It is enriched by a wide variety of extra curricular activities
Pupils with special educational needs	Provision is good and pupils make good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good; provision has remained a strength of the school since the previous inspection.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good. Staff are experienced and well deployed. The school grounds provide a rich setting for learning and resources are of good quality.
Value for money	Very good

\* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

## The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
II. The school enables pupils to achieve high standards III. Children behave very well IV. All the teachers are very approachable V. Parents are given a clear picture of what is taught VI. Parents are happy with the work children are expected to do at home VII. The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons VIII. The school is held in high regard by the community and is a focal point for many community activities	No significant concerns.

The inspection fully endorsed the parents' views about the strengths of the school. At the parents' meeting before the inspection, there was a general consensus that this is a 'very good school', and positive comments were written on the questionnaires sent to every parent before the inspection. Three parents raised individual issues which were considered as part of the normal inspection process.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to further improve standards of attainment and progress, the school should raise standards in information technology at Key Stage 2 (paragraph 129 ) by:

- IX. improving planning so that pupils have more opportunities to develop their information technology capability within other subjects;
- X. extending teacher's expertise so that they are more aware of how information technology can be systematically included in day-to-day work;
- XI. acquiring appropriate software and other resources to enable control, modelling and monitoring to be taught throughout Key Stage 2;
- XII. keeping track of progress in this area to a similar extent as progress in other subjects is recorded;
- XIII. continuing to pursue the current drive to acquire more computers.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the school**

1 The school is situated in Aston-cum-Aughton on the outskirts of Rotherham, about six miles from the town centre. The 198 children on roll come mainly from the immediate neighbourhood. There is an almost equal number of boys and girls, and a very small number of children from ethnic minority families. About a quarter of the children are entitled to free school meals.

2 Children enter the reception class in the term they will become five. Most have attended a nursery or playgroup and their attainment on entry is broadly average. At the time of the inspection, six children were under five years old.

3 There are 35 pupils on the school's register of pupils with special educational needs, of whom 30 have individual education plans. Most pupils on the register have learning difficulties; there are also some pupils with emotional and physical needs. Three pupils have statements of special educational need.

4 The school aims to create an atmosphere conducive to schooling where pupils learn as much as they can. It wishes to promote respect for people and property and to equip children to contribute to society.

5 Specific targets for the current year are set out in the school development plan. They include the review of information and communication technology, improvement to attainment in writing and whole school issues such as improvements to the library facilities.

## 6 Key Indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>2</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1  
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	13	12	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above		9	12	12
		8	9	8
		17	21	20
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above		71 (81)	84 (84)	80 (90)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	9	12	10
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	18	21	19
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	72 (70)	84 (84)	76 (76)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

### Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>3</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2  
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	21	14	35

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	13	18	21
	Girls	9	11	14
	Total	22	29	35
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	63 (48)	83 (82)	100 (79)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	13	15	18
	Girls	8	11	11
	Total	21	26	29
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	60 (48)	74 (61)	83 (52)
	National	65 (63)	65 (62)	72 (69)

<sup>2</sup>

Percentages in parentheses refer to the results in 1998

<sup>3</sup>

Percentages in parentheses refer to the results in 1998

## Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year			%
	Authorised Absence	School	4.6
		National comparative data	5.6
	Unauthorised Absence	School	0.4
		National comparative data	0.5

## Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:			Number
	Fixed period		0
	Permanent		0

## Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :			%
	Very good or better		47
	Satisfactory or better		100
	Less than satisfactory		0

## PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

### EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

#### Attainment and progress

7 The overall picture is one of good standards. Most pupils achieve better than the national average and much better than pupils in similar schools. The school has worked hard to improve and this is reflected in the good progress made by the vast majority of pupils. Standards in English, mathematics and science have risen considerably over the past four years. As they leave the school, an above average number achieve the levels expected of eleven-year-olds in mathematics and science. Standards in English are broadly average and improving. Most pupils also attain good standards in religious education. Considering that a quarter of the pupils are identified as having special educational needs this is a considerable achievement. When results are compared with those of <sup>4</sup>similar schools, attainment is well above average overall and the school can be justifiably proud of its accomplishment. In contrast to results in these subjects, attainment in information technology is below that expected of eleven-year-olds and progress is too slow.

8 Most children have attended a nursery or playgroup before starting school and their attainment on entry is broadly average. They make good progress in the reception class and, by the age of five, most attain, or are close to attaining, the desirable outcomes recommended for children of this age in personal and social development, literacy and numeracy.

9 In the 1999 National Curriculum tests in **English** for seven-year-old pupils, 70 per cent of pupils achieved the expected Level 2 in reading. No pupils achieved the higher level 3. These results were below the national average and those of similar schools. In writing, 84 per cent of pupils achieved the national average level 2, above average for similar schools. A below average proportion of pupils achieved the higher level 3.

10 The results of eleven-year-olds in **English** were below the national average but in line with similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was below the national average. There was no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. These results were an improvement on the previous year. Current standards show a further improvement. Work seen by the pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 was broadly in line with that expected of most pupils in reading and writing at these stages. Standards of speaking and listening were generally above those found in most schools, with some pupils achieving well in these aspects of English. Overall standards in English are broadly average

11 Attainment in **mathematics** is above average at Key Stage 1 and well above average at Key Stage 2. The proportion of seven-year-olds achieving the expected Level 2 in the 1999 National Curriculum tests was broadly in line with the national average. When compared with those of similar schools, the results were above average. The results of the national tests for eleven-year-olds were well above the national average and also well above those found in similar schools

12 Results have fluctuated a little over recent years, but the school's results, which were below average in 1996, have been consistently above average since then.

---

<sup>4</sup> Comparisons are based on the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Attainment in the current Year 2, is generally better than that expected at this stage of the year. Similarly, the work in Year 6 reflects standards which are well above those found in most schools.

13 In **science**, most pupils attain the national expectations and a substantial minority attains the higher level. The trend is one of sustained improvement.

14 In the tests for seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds in 1998, attainment was broadly in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level was also close to the national average. In the 1999 tests, eleven-year-old pupils reached standards well above the national average, with 100 per cent at level 4 or above. These high standards were evident during the inspection.

15 Standards in **religious education** are good across the school and pupils make good progress towards the recommendations described in the locally agreed syllabus. The subject makes a significant contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and to the overall ethos of the school

16 Attainment in **information technology** just meets the standard expected of seven-year-olds, but progress is not maintained through Key Stage 2 and standards fall below those expected of eleven-year-olds. The school has the bare minimum number of computers and does not have the complete range of resources to enable the subject to be fully covered.

## Progress

17 Overall, progress through the school is good. The current emphasis on **literacy** and **numeracy** is proving successful. Both subjects benefit from highly effective management, consistently good teaching and the successful implementation of national initiatives. Progress in **science** and **religious education** is good throughout the school. In contrast, progress in **information technology** is just satisfactory at Key Stage 1 but too slow at Key Stage 2.

18 The school is successful in enabling most pupils to make progress. All pupils receive dedicated and effective support. Classroom teachers cater very well for the wide range of children and are aided by support staff. Pupils with **special educational needs** make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans, because of the early identification of individual needs, and the quality of the subsequent teaching, assessment and monitoring.

19 Progress in **art** is good. Pupils handle tools, paint and materials with care. They experiment and learn from their experiences. In **design and technology**, pupils make good progress, learning to refine their designs and solve emerging construction problems as they move through the school. Satisfactory progress is made in **history** as pupils develop an understanding of change over time and learn about specific event of the past. There is less emphasis on the development of key historical skills.

20 Pupils make good progress in **geography** and develop a good range of geographical skills. They read maps well, measure and interpret weather records, and deepen their knowledge of other countries.

21 In **music**, the quality of pupils' singing develops well through the school. Most pupils learn to play the recorder. They develop a good knowledge of music from different cultures. Overall progress is sound.

22 Progress in **physical education** is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. From year to year, pupils make good progress in developing a complete range of physical education skills. By the time they leave the school, most pupils can swim.

## Trends and targets

23 In recent years, standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 have risen dramatically. At Key Stage 1, attainment has also shown an upward trend. In conjunction with the local authority, the school has set realistic targets for overall improvement in English and mathematics. In the current positive climate, the school is well placed to meet these targets and to further improve attainment and progress.

## Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

24 Over three years ago the first inspection report judged pupils' behaviour to be very good. Behaviour in and around the school remains very good indeed. Pupils behave well naturally and fully understand the school's rules and codes of conduct. They respond well to the high standards of behaviour that are expected of them by all school staff. They are open, warm, friendly to talk with, and display good manners throughout the school day. Bullying is not perceived to be a problem in the school by pupils, parents or staff and no incidents of this nature were observed during the inspection when the atmosphere in the school was one of purposeful activity and good will. There has only ever been one exclusion, a number of years ago, and the exclusion rate remains static.

25 The majority of children joining the reception class have spent a considerable amount of their pre-school time in the nursery run by the Home School Association, which operates in the school building, so they are already familiar with the surroundings when it is time for them to move into full school life. The sensitive and thorough induction procedures put in place by the school for this transfer ensure that they soon settle and become familiar with routines and procedures. They start to make new friends, develop good relationships with staff and quickly become an integral part of the school. They respond well to what is expected of them and make good progress in the early days of their school life.

26 Throughout the school, nearly all pupils have very good and positive attitudes towards their studies and social life. They listen attentively to their teachers and are interested in lessons. They contribute very positively to plenary sessions and discussions. It is not unusual to observe lessons where every pupil in the class raises his or her hand to answer a question or make a significant comment. Most pupils work well independently and concentrate on the task in hand. When asked to work in pairs or larger groups they do so sensibly and enjoy this aspect of group co-operation. A very small number of pupils in Year 3 sometimes find it difficult to settle or concentrate for any length of time despite the firm and appropriate handling of their teacher.

27 Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils display a warm affection for all the adults in the school who work with them. Friendships with peers are fulfilling and enjoyable; one illustration of that is the way pupils appreciate and applaud the efforts of others when they do well. The way in which pupils value and respect the beliefs of others is a significant strength within the school. One particularly notable example during the inspection week was the manner in which every Year 5 pupil took an enthusiastic and enjoyable part in the enactment of the Passover Feast as part of the week's whole-school study of Judaism. Likewise, at each daily assembly all pupils took an active interest in this study and gained a detailed knowledge and understanding of the faith by the end of the week.

28 The personal development of pupils is good. A range of helpful tasks such as various monitoring duties and showing prospective parents around the school provides opportunities for personal growth and increased self-esteem. An example of pupils taking initiative was observed during the inspection when two pupils approached the headteacher

very early on the morning after the Blue Peter Appeal for 1999 had been announced the previous afternoon. They wasted no time in asking if they could run a Bring and Buy sale to raise funds for the appeal, confident that their initiative would receive help and a positive response from the headteacher and all staff. The maturity exhibited by most pupils is such that they would respond very well if they were given even more opportunities to show their ingenuity and exercise responsibility for more extensive tasks around the school. Their personal development would also be stronger if the school were able to devise measures to develop the school library so that their independent learning and research skills could be enhanced and encouraged.

29 Interesting and exciting residential visits for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils make a significant contribution to their personal growth and confidence. Pupils are also developing a strong awareness of the importance of good citizenship by, for example, welcoming and entertaining senior citizens to the school. They also take part in the 'Crucial Crew' project organised by the community police officer where they learn about the roles and responsibilities of the emergency and other community services.

30 Pupils' naturally very good behaviour, which has been maintained and strengthened during the period since the last inspection, makes a strong contribution to their standards of attainment and the good progress they make.

### **Attendance**

31 The school's attendance rate has shown a steady rise since the last inspection when it was deemed to be satisfactory. The rate for the required reporting year is nearly four percent higher than at the time of the 1996 inspection and one percent higher than the previous reporting year. This is good and above the national average for primary schools.

32 Parents are aware that the practice of taking pupils on holiday during the school term period is discouraged. However, scrutiny of the school registers indicates that a small number of pupils are removed from school for this purpose at various times during the year.

33 Most pupils' arrival at school each morning is prompt and vigorous. They come to school enthusiastically and make a purposeful start to their day. Only a very small number of pupils were observed to arrive at the last minute.

34 The increased rate of regular and punctual attendance over the last three years has had a significant impact on pupils' attainment and progress.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

#### **Teaching**

35 The overall quality of teaching is very good. It is a major strength of the school and is the main reason why pupils achieve high standards. About half of the lessons observed were very good or better, one in five being excellent. There were no unsatisfactory lessons.

36 Teaching of the small number of under fives in the reception class is consistently of good quality. The teacher takes every opportunity to build on the children's first hand experiences, such as when language and creative activities revolved round preparing for a party. The teacher has a good knowledge of the under five curriculum and provides rich learning experiences in a warm, secure and purposeful environment.

37 The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is consistently very good across a wide

range of subjects. Outstanding lessons were observed in literacy, numeracy and science, and no lessons were less than good. Both teachers have established attractive and highly stimulating classrooms. Underpinned by their excellent relationships with the children, the teachers approach all lessons with imagination and flair. They provide tasks which are challenging to pupils of various abilities and produce resources which have an immediate appeal. In a year 1 literacy lesson, following a whole-class session with a 'big book', the pupils were eager to invent their own 'aliens'; they were learning about adjectives in a most interesting and enjoyable way. Similarly in a Year 2 numeracy lesson, the pupils were keen to wear a 'number crown' and ask their classmates questions which helped them identify what was written on it. This variety of approaches draws an enthusiastic response from the pupils, most of whom make good or very good progress. The purposeful atmosphere which permeates teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is illustrated by the frequent exchange between the Year 1 teacher - "*Izzy Whizzy!*" and the pupils - "*Let's get busy!*"

38 Many of these positive characteristics are also evident at Key Stage 2. Again, the teaching is very good overall. Teachers are well organised and use questioning skilfully to move children's learning forward; they achieve a good balance between whole-class, small group and individual teaching. There is a very purposeful atmosphere, which means that teachers do not have to spend time on managing behaviour, but can concentrate on the learning objectives. Time is set aside at the end of many lessons for teachers to summarise and for pupils to reflect on what they have learned. This approach was a feature of the excellent lessons observed in literacy, numeracy, science and religious education.

39 A strong element of many lessons across the school is the teacher's own subject knowledge. This was frequently illustrated in the Year 6 class, such as in a science lesson when the teacher's wealth of knowledge meant she could respond to any questions. At times her graphic explanations held the pupils spellbound. In a Year 5 religious education lesson, the teacher had researched the subject very well and provided excellent resources including matzo bread and 'wine'. The pupils were thoroughly absorbed in the Passover meal and learnt a great deal about the Jewish faith. During an excellent lesson on numeracy, the Year 4 teacher skilfully drew on the pupils' existing knowledge of the multiples of 10 to help them double and half two and three-digit numbers. Owing to her skill in motivating and building up their confidence, the pupils made very good progress during the lesson. The impact of the teachers' breadth of subject expertise was also illustrated in a Year 3 art lesson where the teacher's own skills in art enabled her to explain and demonstrate a variety of techniques for obtaining various shade and tones through colour mixing.

40 All teachers are good at teaching literacy and numeracy: very good and excellent lessons were observed in these subjects. An example of this was observed in a Year 5 literacy lesson. The teacher had planned the lesson in fine detail, keeping to the recommended format. After they had read descriptions of a variety of places and settings, the pupils responded well to drawing up their own list of adjectives. As there were several levels of challenge, all pupils were able to succeed and were justifiably proud of their achievements at the end of the lesson.

41 Individual teachers have particular expertise in subjects such as art, design and technology history, geography, science, music and physical education and religious education. There is a general lack of expertise in teaching information technology. With this exception, there are no major weaknesses in teaching. Occasionally, the balance between the teacher's input and the pupils' activities is not quite right and sometimes the work set is not demanding enough for all pupils. Pupils are not often asked to draw on their own resources to find things out; there are limited opportunities to practise their research skills

independently. These areas for improvement do not detract from the overall high quality of the teaching

42 All staff are aware of the need to provide suitable work for pupils with special educational needs. This happens in most lessons and is particularly successful in mathematics and English. A visiting specialist provides highly focused and effective support in literacy for one morning each week.

43 The previous inspection judged the teaching to be sound or better in most of the lessons seen. From this solid base, the quality of teaching has improved very significantly. The proportion of very good and excellent lessons has risen dramatically. This is the result of the commitment of the school management to raising standards and to the hard work, dedication and commitment of the staff. They have enthusiastically risen to the challenges associated with recent initiatives. The introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies has not only benefited these subjects, but has made an impact in other subjects, where a similar lesson format has been adopted. With the exception of teachers' expertise in information technology, which is still not sufficient, the minor weaknesses identified in the previous report are no longer evident. The school is justifiably proud of the quality of its teaching and support staff.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

44 There has been an improvement in the quality of the curriculum since the last inspection. Planning, assessment, monitoring and recording procedures have been effectively co-ordinated and are beginning to make an impact on standards across the curriculum. The school has policies and schemes of work for all subjects of the National Curriculum which contribute effectively to overall continuity and progression in teaching and learning.

45 The curriculum is very broad and balanced, and relevant as preparation for life in the future. It is enriched by a wide variety of extra-curricular activities and extra music tuition for older pupils, and a programme on citizenship which effectively broadens the curriculum. Religious education follows the Rotherham agreed syllabus; it is enlivened with visits and visitors and has a strong influence on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A generous amount of time given to the core subjects including numeracy and literacy and this is having an impact on the progress being made and the levels of attainment being achieved. Nevertheless, the school is mindful of a balanced curriculum, giving sufficient weight to the planning and development of the other subjects. There is equality of access for all pupils to all subjects of the curriculum, and pupils with special educational needs receive support which is appropriate to their requirements. The school's health education programme includes sex education and the dangers of drug abuse, strengthened by the citizenship programme which emphasises safe behaviour and the importance of an active healthy lifestyle.

46 Children under five are well prepared to start work on the National Curriculum. The majority of children attend the community nursery which is adjacent to the infant department. Children are admitted to the reception class at the beginning of the term of their fifth birthday and are assessed against the recommended areas of learning as they become five.

47 There is a manager for each subject except history, for which the headteacher is acting as co-ordinator. Subject managers keep well informed by monitoring planning and teaching, and successfully drive developments. Governors take an interest in the curriculum, recently being involved in training for the National Literacy strategy. There are

detailed schemes of work for all subjects, some of which need updating to reflect recent curriculum changes. Long, medium and short term planning is good and helps teachers to provide appropriate work for each class. This is especially effective in English, mathematics and science. Plans identify which work will be assessed and teachers' records show that this system is consistently used throughout the school. Some teachers' lesson plans are exceptionally well planned and all have clear learning objectives.

48 The single age classes are effective in enabling work to be matched to different abilities and the setting for mathematics is successfully raising standards. Work is planned around topics and progression can be clearly seen from one year to the next; with earlier work being consolidated and extended.

49 The basic curriculum is enhanced by a number of influences. The spiritual moral, social and cultural aspects of the curriculum are reinforced by a well-planned religious education programme which, together with assemblies and visits, promotes the schools aims, emphasising that learning is valued and people are respected. The curriculum is widely extended with after school clubs which are very well attended. The art club is oversubscribed and makes a valuable contribution to the high quality displays in all curriculum areas throughout the school. The French club is very popular, the gardening club is well attended and the school choir takes part in concerts and competitions. The provision of after school sport is a strength of the school with opportunities to take part in rugby, netball, matball and football. Roller hockey and fun fitness is also provided for younger pupils. Sport is further enhanced by visits from the rugby sports development officer and a soccer coach. All the activities are very well supported by the teaching staff. Further enrichment is provided by visits out of school to places of interest with links to almost all areas of the curriculum but especially to science, history and geography. All the visits have been carefully recorded in photographs, and pupils' drawings and paintings reflect the success of these visits as an integral part of the very rich art curriculum.

50 Assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science are thorough and systematic. The school has a clearly defined policy and the statutory requirements are met. Apart from the statutory assessment at the end of each key stage, the new effectiveness policy is linking planning to assessment in all areas. The short, medium and long term plans have clear links to assessment which informs planning in English and mathematics. Science has recently adopted the nationally recommended framework and assessment tasks are set after each block of work. All teachers have records that show that they regularly assess and set targets in the core subjects. In line with the code of practice for special educational needs, teachers set targets for the individual education plans of pupils with special needs in their own classes. Information is held in a common format throughout the school and individual records of achievement begun in the reception class contain useful information which builds a profile to accompany pupils to the next phase of education.

51 The rich curriculum and the effective assessment procedures have a very positive effect on attainment and progress.

### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

52 The provision for pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural is very good and has remained a strength of the school since the previous inspection.

53 The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Pupils are given the opportunity to appreciate other religions in religious education, in lessons and in assemblies. The school takes advantage of visitors to enhance pupils' spiritual awareness;

these include visits from representatives from local churches to celebrate Christian festivals and those of other faiths. Daily assemblies are planned on a two-year cycle covering moral issues and other religions, including the Muslim faith and Judaism. These assemblies are well supported with colourful religious artefacts and accompanied with appropriate songs. They contribute well to pupils' spiritual development. Music is played on entry to assembly and pupils are asked to reflect on the quality of the music.

54 The provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school has a well-established framework to regulate the behaviour of pupils. In addition, class rules, set up by the pupils, are prominently displayed in each classroom. Pupils demonstrate that they know the difference between right and wrong, the consequences of unacceptable behaviour and the necessity to treat each other with respect. The school's reward system encourages good behaviour and academic achievement, which are acknowledged in the 'special mention' assemblies. Both teaching and support staff deal with the isolated instances of mis-behaviour quietly and efficiently. Parents comment favourably about the standards of behaviour and express the view that this contributes positively to pupils' learning. Speakers visit the school to talk to pupils about moral issues. These include the community policeman who talks to pupils about 'stranger danger' and drug issues, and visits from the school nurse who discusses issues relating to health. Teachers and support staff provide very good role models for pupils.

55 The school makes good provision for pupils' social development. Social skills, such as sharing, are promoted from an early age and pupils are encouraged to take part in class activities. This provides a good basis for pupils' social development as they progress through the school. Good relationships are illustrated by the sensible way that pupils use the playground area and their caring attitudes towards younger pupils. There are opportunities for pupils to participate in residential visits where they experience a variety of activities that promote their personal development and social skills. Older pupils undertake responsibilities and act as monitors and helpers for the morning assembly, library assistants and escort visitors around the school. The wide selection of extra-curricular activities contributes well to pupils' social development. Pupils are encouraged to support charities and many fund raising activities are instigated by the pupils.

56 The development of pupils' cultural awareness and experience is very good. Opportunities are provided for pupils to appreciate their own and other cultures in areas of the curriculum, such as the study of the Aztecs in history, work on contrasting places in geography and the study of western artists in art. Visits from representatives of other cultures and religions also contribute to pupils' cultural development. There are many references to other cultures and religions throughout the school and high quality artefacts are used to extend pupils' multicultural awareness. In music pupils are given the opportunity to learn an instrument and to take part in the choir that performs for school concerts and participates in the Hallelujah Concert at the Sheffield Arena. Pupils listen to a range of music in lessons and assemblies and attend concerts by the Rotherham Music Service. A poetry competition also enhances pupils' cultural awareness.

### **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

57 Parents continue to value the high quality support and care afforded their children, which was reported at the time of the last inspection. The school's strong pastoral care means that pupils enjoy a safe and secure school day which enables them to relax and concentrate on their work and play.

58 Pupils' academic progress, behaviour, personal development and attendance are monitored through the very clear and detailed records kept by all teachers in respect of

every pupil in their classes. These, together with the very good knowledge all staff have of pupils, ensure that every aspect of pupils' work and development is thoroughly and consistently monitored.

59 The school's clear and seamless strategies to promote discipline and eliminate bullying are extremely effective, as demonstrated by the positive outcomes observed during the inspection. Staff have the highest expectations of pupils' behaviour and seldom need to do more than utter a firm, quiet word in order to effect an instant response.

60 Child protection procedures are effective and appropriate. Staff training on pupils' care and welfare is updated annually by the headteacher, who is the designated officer for child protection within the school.

61 The programme for pupils' personal, social and health education is implemented mainly through science and religious education lessons. Staff make good use of registration periods and assemblies to reinforce this important aspect of pupils' daily lives.

62 Due regard is paid to the health and safety of all pupils in the school. The headteacher and caretaker regularly undertake appropriate health and safety risk assessments. They both hold up-to-date certificates in first aid training and all staff have undertaken the basic training in emergency first aid.

63 Sensitive and thorough induction procedures are in place for children who come from the HSA nursery and other nurseries into the reception class. They are familiar with the school building; also, they make visits to the reception class with their parents before joining the school and the headteacher or deputy headteacher visit every prospective pupil in their home. A very positive and close relationship between the school and the liaison teacher for Year 7 at the local comprehensive school to which all pupils move ensures that they are extremely well supported and received when they make the transition from Year 6 at Aston Springwood to the next phase of their school lives.

64 Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, not only by all the school's staff but by a range of visiting professionals from other agencies who work closely with the school and its families.

### **Partnership with parents and the community**

65 A strong partnership exists with parents, who appreciate what the school does for their children and who support its efforts and activities. Communication with parents is very good and regular newsletters are sent home to keep them informed about forthcoming events. The school holds two consultation evenings a term. In the autumn term these are held to discuss the manner in which pupils have settled into their new classes; in the spring, discussion centres on pupils' attainment and progress and the two open days in the summer have as their focus discussion of pupils' annual reports. These reports are of good quality. They inform parents what their children know, understand and can do, and contain clear targets in the core subjects. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in annual reviews and individual education plans.

66 Staff are always accessible and available to parents, whose opinions and contributions are valued. A number of parents help in the classrooms and on school outings and trips. Parents support their children's learning at home and there is a good dialogue between staff and parents with regard to homework, through reading and homework diaries. The home/school contract clearly sets out what is expected of the school, parents and pupils, and provides a good basis for the flourishing partnership which exists between

home and school.

67 The links with the community and the resources the school offers that community are outstanding. Much is effected through the activities of the Home School Association under its charitable status. A small number of parents, governors and staff form the charity's Board of Trustees. It has been extremely successful in raising large sums of money from outside organisations to provide funding for both the after-school care club which runs in a building on the school site and the community nursery which operates in one of the classrooms. The Board's vision for the future development of these two facilities and its aims to attract further substantial funding from commercial and industrial concerns are immense. School social and fund-raising events are arranged by small groups of willing parents and are well supported by all parents in the school.

68 Visitors to the school are numerous and include the community police officer, visiting speakers from a variety of faiths and beliefs, drama and concert groups, work experience students and trainee teachers. Local elderly citizens are regular visitors who enjoy the school's seasonal presentations and hospitality.

69 The local cluster group of schools is strong and Aston Springwood plays its part in the activities and projects promoted by the group, including inter-school sporting competitions.

70 It would be difficult for pupils not to develop a strong sense of the importance of their local and the wider community given the examples that they encounter in the school each day. The school's sensible use of its community facilities, and its considerable offerings as a resource in return, add considerable enrichment to pupils' lives which enhances their attainment and progress.

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Leadership and management**

71 The headteacher provides excellent leadership. Working in close partnership with the deputy head and the senior management team, he provides strong and clear direction. Teachers with management responsibilities are empowered to carry out their roles. The support they give colleagues leads to better standards, particularly in the core subjects of English and mathematics, science and religious education.

72 The governors are hard working and well informed. They are aware of the school's priorities and are committed to moving towards these with a sense of common purpose. Statutory requirements are met with the exception of some minor omissions from the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents.

73 The school's aims and values encompass all aspects of its work and are enacted in its daily life. It has an excellent ethos, which is reflected by its success in achieving a stimulating and caring environment. The school has a clearly perceptible atmosphere of harmony in which all concerned strive to improve standards.

74 The school promotes equality of opportunity very successfully and the provision for children with special educational needs is well managed.

75 The quality of management has enabled the school to improve since the last inspection and to develop the capacity to move forward in the future. The key issues and minor weaknesses identified by the previous inspection have been addressed rigorously

and are no longer issues for attention. Indeed, most areas which were criticised are now strengths; attainment in speaking is now above average rather than below, and assessment is used effectively to decide what to teach next.

### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

76 The school is well staffed with a blend of experienced and newly appointed teachers who are all well qualified to meet the demands of the curriculum, religious education, pupils with special needs and children under five. With the exception of history, there are curriculum managers for all subjects, who have the appropriate expertise to lead their areas of responsibility. Support staff are appropriately experienced and contribute effectively to the smooth day-to-day running of the school. There is sufficient additional support for the pupils with statements of special educational needs.

77 The programme of training for teaching staff effectively meets the needs of the school and of individual teachers. Staff have attended a range of courses which include literacy, numeracy and courses for the development of information technology. The cycle of staff appraisal is well established and provides good support for staff development. Recently qualified teachers receive good support from the school and the local education authority to help them settle in. The school benefits from a number of volunteer parents who provide good support for teachers. The school caretaker works hard to keep the school clean and well maintained and the secretary provides highly efficient administrative support.

78 Overall, the accommodation is good. The accommodation for the younger pupils is spacious with ample room for storage. Although the reception class has not got an immediate area for structured play, the school is able to use apparatus belonging to the HSA nursery. All other classrooms are of sufficient size to accommodate the pupils comfortably and allow a range of teaching styles. Teachers have worked hard on displays and have produced an exceptionally lively and stimulating learning environment to celebrate pupils' achievement. The school hall that doubles as a dining area and a gymnasium is an adequate area for physical education and assemblies. The school grounds are spacious, with a large field that facilitates a good range of sporting activities. The garden areas of the school are well maintained by the pupils with the additional support of the local horticultural society. The hard surface play area is well marked out and is used to good effect. The security arrangements have been improved since the previous inspection but the route from the vehicular access to the school entrance is uneven and a potential safety hazard.

79 With the exception of large apparatus for physical education and computers, the school has a good range of resources and artefacts to support areas of the curriculum. Resources have been improved in the areas that were highlighted in the previous report. Class-based literacy resources are good and include a range of fiction books. The 'big books' used in literacy lessons are of a good quality and contribute to pupils' progress in reading. Although new books have been purchased for the library, it is still under-resourced and does not adequately support the development of pupils' independent research skills. The resources available for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. The school makes good use of the local sporting and leisure facilities.

### **The efficiency of the school**

80 The school manages its available funds with great care in order to achieve the most efficient use of resources. Money allocated centrally for staff development and to provide support for pupils with special educational needs is used effectively. Teachers have

benefited from in-service training, particularly the recent courses on literacy and numeracy, and this is having a positive effect on standards. New teachers have settled well into the school and there is a strong sense of teamwork. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported both in classrooms and by extra lessons.

81 All teachers and learning assistants are carefully deployed to provide high quality support in classes throughout the school. The school uses its accommodation to good effect and the plentiful and good quality learning resources are used well and without waste.

82 The financial administrator, who works in close consultation with the chairman of the finance committee and the headteacher, efficiently undertakes the day-to-day management of the school's finances.

83 The governors and headteacher, in consultation with staff, have established priorities for the long term and the more immediate future and there is a comprehensive development plan. Money is earmarked for various current and future projects and spending is carefully monitored. The school development plan is in the form of a file and is not very user-friendly. The governors should consider publishing a simpler outline plan to enable all concerned with the school to identify the major priorities and to understand the timeframe within which the targets are scheduled to be met.

84 Taking into account the consistent high quality of teaching, the rate of pupils' progress and the above average results they achieve, the productive relationship with the wider community and the efficient use of funds, the school provides very good value for money.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

85 Provision for children under five is good. The reception class provides full-time education for all children from the term in which they are five. At the time of the inspection, six children were under five. The reception teacher has created a secure and caring environment where daily routines are firmly established and relationships with parents ensure a confident start to children's education. The programme of activities is planned to take account of the National Curriculum including the literacy and numeracy strategies and also the recommended areas of learning for this age, and fully supports the children's intellectual, physical and social development. Good joint planning with the Key Stage 1 teachers ensures a well-balanced curriculum which is linked to the National Curriculum schemes of work.

86 Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. Children make good progress in all areas of learning and acquire a secure foundation in skills, knowledge and understanding. By the time they reach statutory school age the children are well prepared to start on the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for Key Stage 1. Those children with special educational needs also make good progress, particularly in their social and communication skills.

87 The children are interested and responsive, taking part in all activities provided for them with enjoyment. They demonstrate independence in selecting an activity and work with concentration for sustained periods. They work and play well together as part of a group, even when they are not being directly supervised. Their personal and social skills develop very well. An excellent example of this was demonstrated as groups of three or four children negotiated the performance of a dramatic scene to illustrate 'people who help us in school'.

88 Particular attention is given to language and literacy and children make good progress. Their attainment is broadly in line with that of most five-year-olds at they reach their birthday. The quality of teaching in this area is very good. Speaking and listening skills are planned into the daily activity and children are encouraged to make full responses when speaking. They listen attentively and use a growing vocabulary to speak with increasing confidence in a variety of situations. They respond well to working with the puppet theatre, which motivates the less confident children to take part and is successful in promoting speaking skills. All children recognise their names and manage to convey meaning by drawing pictures and early attempts at writing. This was exemplified following a visit to the local baby clinic. Working collaboratively, the children recorded their experiences in pictures and attempted to write some information. Following a story about a birthday party, children were fully absorbed in producing 'invitations' when asked to organise a party for their teddies.

89 Children make good progress and by the age of five most achieve an appropriate level of numeracy. They are familiar with numbers to ten and some count confidently beyond this. They recognise *more* and *less*, when comparing different amounts on a graph made from blocks. Children use their numeracy skills in work on shape, counting the number of sides and corners. They sort triangles from squares and some identify and name additional shapes such as a rectangle and circle.

90 By the age of five, children have a sound knowledge and understanding of the world. They gain an understanding of change over time by looking at collections of old and modern toys. Parents and grandparents help in this respect by discussing their own toys

and childhood experiences. Early experiences using blocks to make up a plan of the school help children to develop the concept of a plan. Most children confidently use the computer to support their learning, using the mouse to move the pointer around the screen.

91 There were few opportunities to observe children working creatively, but evidence around the classroom suggests that they have ample opportunities do so through art and musical activities. In the physical areas of learning, children make good progress. They children develop fine motor skills in their play with tabletop games, controlling pencils and brushes and in using modelling materials and equipment. Children move confidently around the classroom with regard to others. Most are well co-ordinated and play confidently with the older pupils at playtimes.

92 The quality of teaching is very good, giving the children a secure foundation for their future learning. The teacher has a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and is very well organised. The work is well planned and there is a good balance between directed and child-initiated activity. When working directly with children the teacher allows time for children to develop their thoughts and gives attention to their ideas and comments. A good balance is struck between whole-class, group and individual work. The children are well managed and they respond quickly to requests to tidy away at the end of activities or join others for group work. The classroom assistant and parent volunteers are clear about the objectives set for each area of activity and provide good support to both the teacher and the children.

93 Systems for observing, assessing and recording the children's achievements are well established and help inform the targets for individual children. The accommodation indoors is adequate and the reception class has access to the outdoor facilities and equipment used by the adjacent community nursery. Learning resources for the under-fives are good and well used.

## **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **English**

94 In the 1999 National Curriculum tests in reading for seven-year-old pupils, 70 cent of pupils achieved the expected level 2. No pupils achieved the higher level 3. These results were below the national average and those of similar schools. In writing, 84 per cent of pupils achieved the national average level 2, above average for similar schools. A below average proportion of pupils achieved the higher level 3.

95 The results of eleven-year-olds in 1999 were below the national average but in line with those of similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was below the national average. There was no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. These results are an improvement on the previous year. Current standards show a further improvement. Work seen by the pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 was broadly in line with that expected of most pupils in reading and writing at these stages. Standards of speaking and listening were generally above those found in most schools, with some pupils achieving well in these aspects of English.

96 Progress in the development of speaking and listening skills is good at both key stages. Great improvement has been achieved in this area; from being a weakness identified by the previous inspection it is now a strength. As they move through the school, pupils have increasing opportunities to develop speaking skills. From work with puppets in the younger classes, they move on take part in extended discussions and debates.

97 By the time the pupils are seven years old they use a wide vocabulary. The literacy hour is used well to develop their speaking skills to clearly report on their work. Most pupils can clearly explain a new story. In the shared reading sessions they listen carefully both to the teacher and to other pupils. They respect the ideas of others, taking turns to speak. The friendly ethos of the school and the very good relationships between pupils and teachers gives pupils confidence to speak in front of others. By the time the pupils are eleven years old, they not only listen carefully when others are speaking but they respond appropriately to what has been said and take other people's views into their considerations. Pupils use a wide range of vocabulary and express their views clearly. When speaking in front of others, they show confidence and converse easily with adults.

98 Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading during the first years in school but this slows as they progress through the school. Although pupils' attainment in reading is average at the end of both key stages there is room for improvement. By the time pupils reach Year 6, the higher attainers read a range of books with fluency and confidence but many are still reading simple texts and lack the confidence to tackle difficult words.

99 By the time pupils reach seven years old they are reading fairly accurately and with understanding. They have sound sight vocabulary and use their earlier learned skills to sound out unfamiliar words. However, pupils are unsure how to use contents and index pages to find information quickly. There is a reading home/school arrangement but it is not checked regularly by teachers and does not yet serve as an effective dialogue to guide and advise parents about pupils' progress. The higher attaining pupils show good ability and can re-tell a story and describe the main characters in the text. By the time pupils reach the age of eleven they are capable of reading more advanced texts. They read fluently with expression, self-correcting when necessary and understand what they have read. The higher attaining pupils are aware of different authors and talk about their favourite books with enthusiasm but few have read more challenging texts.

100 Overall progress in writing is satisfactory. Work in the earlier years provides a foundation for handwriting, spelling and punctuation. These skills are further developed during Key Stage 2 with a good grounding with grammatical skills and expectations of presentation; however, some of the work falls below the standard and lacks care. The recently introduced additional literacy support is contributing positively to pupils' progress.

101 By the time pupils reach seven years old their attainment in writing broadly matches that found in most schools, but few progress beyond this stage. Pupils write in full sentences and most of them show the appropriate awareness of using full stops and capital letters. Good use is made of adjectives when describing characters in their descriptive work. The standard of handwriting is good and work is well presented. Spelling is satisfactory. By the time the pupils are eleven years old their attainment in writing is satisfactory but there is room for improvement in extended writing. Although pupils have sound knowledge of sentence construction, the use of similes and an understanding of punctuation, these acquired skills are not always transferred to other subjects across the curriculum and in their extended writing. Pupils do, however, write formal letters well, are fluent when writing poetry and use an appropriate style when recording the results of science experiments. Higher attaining pupils have good knowledge of speech marks and the possessive apostrophe. They are able to write in different styles and show imagination in creative work but the opportunities to work in this way are infrequent. The school is aware of this issue and has extended teaching time beyond the literacy hour to improve writing. Opportunities to write detailed accounts in history are limited.

102 Pupils have very positive attitudes to English. They are keen to participate in discussions and respond well to teachers' questions. Relationships are good and pupils collaborate well, for example in the shared reading groups. Pupils are anxious to complete and produce work of good quality and, when finished, show independence by either completing previous work or progressing with extension work without teacher intervention. They concentrate well in lessons and on their tasks without direct teacher intervention.

103 The overall quality of teaching in English is very good. All the lessons observed were at least good, with a third being very good or excellent. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Lessons are well planned following the structures and the learning objectives of the National Literacy Strategy. Lessons have clear objectives; work is planned to meet the needs of the pupils with activities and appropriate resources to interest and challenge pupils. Good teaching is also underpinned with effective questioning during both the introduction and plenary sessions. This strategy, to establish pupils' understanding before starting the task, results in good progress and a brisk pace, although lessons are occasionally slowed when the introductions are too long. All work is marked regularly with useful comments and pupils are given clear guidelines about how they can improve their work. However, as much of the work is completed on paper and then placed in folders when marked, pupils do not always have the opportunity to read these comments and are unsure how to improve their work. It is difficult also for teachers to check pupil's work to ensure that corrections are completed. In the best lessons teachers have high expectations of their pupils, set challenging work and celebrate their achievements with delight. Many links are made between all aspects of literacy, and listening and speaking are encouraged. Teachers demonstrate good classroom management and deal quietly with any unacceptable behaviour. Classroom assistants provide good support for teachers and pupils.

104 The scheme of work for English identifies the progression in literacy, providing clear guidance for teachers' planning. A portfolio of assessed samples of pupils' writing provides good support for teachers in their assessments. Frequent book fairs enable pupils to purchase books and to hear visiting poets and authors talk about their work. These fairs also provide a useful income for the school, the profit being spent on increasing the class libraries. The leadership of the subject is good. Teaching is monitored on a regular basis and teachers are given formal feedback. This is having a positive effect on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Newly purchased materials have improved the range of texts available for class and group reading in the literacy hour. Class libraries provide a good selection of suitable fiction books, but the stock of non-fiction books in the library is rather limited.

## **Mathematics**

105 Attainment in mathematics is above average at Key Stage 1 and well above average at Key Stage 2. The proportion of seven-year-olds achieving the expected Level 2 in the 1999 National Curriculum tests was broadly in line with the national average. When compared with those of similar schools, the results were above average. The results of the national tests for eleven-year-olds were well above the national average and also well above those found in similar schools

106 Results have fluctuated a little over recent years, but the school's results, which were below average in 1996, have been consistently above average since then. Attainment in the current Year 2 is generally better than that expected at this stage of the year and the work in Year 6 reflects standards which are well above those found in most schools.

107 Owing to the high quality of teaching throughout the school, pupils respond very well to lessons and make good progress across both key stages. The school anticipated the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy by starting to use the recommended structure and methods last year. Pupils are grouped into sets for mathematics across the four junior classes. This combination of factors has resulted in accelerated progress in numeracy across the school.

108 Building on early counting and sorting activities in reception, Year 1 pupils learn to add single-digit numbers in their heads. They can identify who has the longest and shortest name and have a good grasp of the order of the days of the week. Pupils' number work is further developed in Year 2 where they accurately add two-digit numbers and begin to understand multiplication and division. For example, one pupil offered an explanation of sharing as, *"It means you get the same amount"*. Pupils in Year 2 progress to counting in twos, fives and tens. The practical approach taken by the teacher means the vast majority make good progress in numeracy.

109 At Key Stage 2, pupils' skills in numeracy are successfully extended by more challenging work in their mathematics sets. For example, most pupils can add 9 by adding 10 and then subtracting 1 from the total. Pupils make very good progress in understanding how their knowledge of a simple number bond, such as  $6+4=10$ , can be used to quickly solve  $56+4$ , and they learn different strategies for doubling and halving numbers. Work on fractions and decimals in Year 5 is extended in Year 6 when pupils are introduced to mixed fractions and calculate to two decimal places. A good proportion of pupils in Years 5 and 6 know the multiplication tables well and this greatly helps them to tackle other aspects of mathematics, such as finding areas.

110 Pupils' work on shape, space and area progresses well. In Key Stage 1, they learn to identify regular shapes, such as squares, triangles and circles, and to describe their properties, and this work is continued at Key Stage 2 with more demanding activities. For example, work in Year 6 involves identifying the properties of parallelograms and trapeziums.

111 Work on handling data develops systematically through the school. Pupils at both key stages draw graphs and interpret them - for example, by finding the most popular food in their class. For most year groups, the numeracy strategy covers handling data at a later point in the term, which explains why little was seen during the inspection week. However, the previous work seen included some challenging tasks related to probability and some graphical work which included continuous variables such as changes to temperature.

112 Most pupils are able to apply what they already know to solve new problems. This frequently occurs in lessons when teachers provide open-ended activities to consolidate what has been learned. Pupils, especially in the older classes, respond well when they are asked to use their mathematical skills and understanding in other subjects such as geography and science.

113 There are high expectations for all pupils. As a result, the vast majority make good progress within and across years. In most lessons the children have precise targets to reach and this encourages them to work purposefully towards their agreed goals. This applies also to pupils with special educational needs who often make good progress.

114 Pupils' behaviour in mathematics lessons is never less than satisfactory and is often very good. They are attentive and enthusiastic. They offer suggestions spontaneously and are willing to explain their mental strategies, even when they are not sure themselves how they worked something out. Most have a pride in their work and try hard to work neatly;

they are aware that neatness can aid accuracy. When working on individual and group tasks, nearly all pupils sustain their concentration. The fact that most pupils enjoy mathematics is a tribute to the skill of the teachers in motivating them.

115 The good progress pupils make and their positive attitudes are a result of good quality teaching. None of the lessons observed was less than good at either key stage; four of the seven lessons observed were excellent. Teachers' knowledge of mathematics is clearly evident when they finely structure a lesson to support all pupils. Teachers involve pupils in the mathematics lessons by genuinely requesting their ideas and opinions, listening attentively to their explanations and then using their ideas in the lesson. This makes pupils feel valued and as a result they work hard. At Key Stage 1, the teachers relate most aspects of mathematics to the pupils' everyday experiences. For example Year 1 pupils were counting the letters in their names and pupils in Year 2 were investigating division by sharing real sweets.

116 A significant feature of lessons, particularly at Key Stage 2, is the way teachers draw out pupils' thinking and extend their understanding by asking appropriate questions. For example, in an excellent lesson in Year 4, pupils made very good progress in using their existing knowledge to solve new problems due to the clear exposition by the teacher, her skilful use of resources and the quality of her questioning. Successful approaches are also evident in other classes. For example in Year 6, the teacher's combination of drive, pace, humour and warmth motivated the pupils to do their best.

117 There is good support for pupils with special educational needs through the practical nature of many lessons and by the ways teachers build up a mathematics vocabulary. Setting in Key Stage 2 is also a positive factor in their progress. There is no stigma attached to working in a set which is below or above that of many in one's year group. The teachers handle this with great care and ensure that all pupils are given opportunities to increase their confidence and maintain their self-esteem.

118 The subject is very well led. With the support of the headteacher and governors, and the enthusiasm of her colleagues, the subject manager has successfully led the implementation of the numeracy strategy. This has already raised the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Significant progress has been made since the previous inspection, when weaknesses in planning, the pace of lessons and the level of challenge in some lessons were identified. Indeed, these particular characteristics are now strengths in the quality of mathematics teaching.

## **Science**

119 Standards in science are good. Most pupils attain the national expectations and a substantial minority attains the higher level. The trend is one of sustained improvement.

120 In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds in 1998, attainment was broadly in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level was also close to the national average. In the 1999 tests, eleven-year-old pupils reached standards well above the national average, with 100 per cent at level 4 or above. These high standards were evident during the inspection. In particular, pupils' understanding of life processes and living things, and of physical processes, is above average.

121 In Year 1 pupils remembered facts about light and dark from a previous lesson and identified a number of different light sources including the sun. Most could draw and label a number of different light sources and describe with confidence how they are used. By

Year 2, pupils extend their understanding of electricity well by learning how to fit a light bulb into a simple circuit and how to make devices work by putting in batteries. Higher attainers could make a circuit including two bulbs and understood why bulbs did not light until they had found the break in the circuit.

122 Standards are good at Key Stage 2. Year 3 pupils can identify permeable rocks that soak up water and non-permeable rocks such as slate which they understand is good for roofing. They could all describe what was needed for a 'fair test' when investigating rocks and recorded their findings with reasonable accuracy. Good standards were also evident when Year 4 pupils identified the bones of a skeleton and described the function of muscles in their topic on moving and growing. By Year 5 pupils know the position of the planets and many can describe what happens during an eclipse. They are beginning to understand the need for different time zones and most could explain how the earth rotates causing day and night, and the apparent motion of the sun. The level of this work is above that usually found in Year 5. The oldest pupils have good recall of the food chain which they have recently studied. In work on the habitat of the seashore, pupils are very good at deducing the function of various parts of gulls, using relevant scientific language. They have an above average knowledge of parts of plants and an understanding of how to carry out a systematic investigation into what happens to plants that are deprived of light. However, most pupils have to few opportunities to use information technology to enhance scientific understanding.

123 Pupils make good progress across the school. Younger pupils begin to record their observations on simple charts and work sheets and can confidently describe what they observe. Older pupils predict and hypothesize with confidence but they use a limited range of presentation to record their increased knowledge and understanding. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in scientific investigations.

124 Pupils have very good attitudes to science. Younger pupils are enthusiastic, show interest, listen attentively, discuss and offer relevant suggestions; for example, they relevantly discussed which devices worked from batteries. At Key Stage 2, pupils are increasingly confident in discussing and communicating ideas; for example, the Year 6 class offered sensible suggestions about how sea-shore creatures had adapted to their habitat. Pupils are polite and respond well to teachers' questions, being eager to explore. However, they do not readily take the initiative to suggest their own investigations, being content to follow teachers' ideas.

125 The quality of teaching is good and often very good, with some excellent teaching at the end of both key stages. Teachers have a good level of scientific knowledge, often presented in an exciting manner. Lessons are very well planned, with clear statements of what is to be learned, and time is used well with a suitable balance between pupils listening, being active and recording. Teachers use questions effectively to assess pupils' understanding and encourage evaluation of their own findings. Work is planned for different abilities very well and appropriate support is given to special needs pupils to enable them to understand and carry out the task. Resources are used well, especially in experimental and investigative science, when whole-class involvement is often the most effective method. In every classroom teachers have created high quality scientific displays, often with the opportunity for pupils to have hands on experience. For example, younger pupils are encouraged by a display to try completing electric circuits and older pupils can see clearly the position of the planets and make comparisons of size and distance

126 The subject is well led. The subject manager regularly reviews the planning and is currently monitoring the effectiveness of the revised scheme of work. The programme is well planned to provide good continuity and progression across the school and relevant

links to other subjects. Assessment is thorough; it is effectively built into science work and reinforced by analysis and review of test results. Resources are plentiful and accessible to teachers and pupils.

## OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

### Information technology

127 During the inspection no direct teaching of information technology was observed. Judgements, therefore, have been based on the evidence of discussions with teachers and pupils, scrutiny of pupils' work and observation of individual pupils' work at the computer

128 The attainment of seven-year-old pupils is in line with national expectations. Pupils produce short pieces of writing using a word processing program. They understand how to obtain capital letters and produce spaces between words and know how to change the size of the letters and print their work. Pupils confidently use the computer mouse. An example of this was seen when pupils accurately placed parts of a car in a design program and when they drew shapes in a variety of colours using the 'autoshape' facility in an art program. Using a programmable electronic toy, they entered instructions for it to move forward a set length, turn and reverse. Pupils are developing an understanding of handling information using an introductory database program.

129 By the time pupils reach eleven years old their attainment is below the national expectations. However, they use a word processor competently. They enter their text, use the backspace key to edit their work and have an understanding of the 'cut and paste' facility. Pupils are confident in loading a new program, saving their work and printing. However, they do not have sufficient opportunity to use the computer regularly as a tool to help with drafting and re-drafting their written work. Pupils have knowledge of a spreadsheet and an understanding of its use but their experience is restricted to checking and changing numbers on a pre-programmed template. They have no understanding of the formulae for simple mathematical calculations. Pupils have little experience of control and monitoring and of using a database for enquiry. Pupils successfully use the CD ROM facilities for research. Some pupils have used a desktop publishing program to mix text and graphics. An example of this is the bookmark designs in a Year 5 class.

130 Pupils' progress at Key Stage 1 is broadly satisfactory. They develop skills on the keyboard and gain confidence in using the mouse. They learn commands such as 'return' and 'shift' and the directional keys. They establish the basics of control and handling information. The progress, however at Key Stage 2 slows and is unsatisfactory. The key factor which hinders pupils' progress is the limited access to computers. Although the equipment is in good condition and capable of meeting the requirements of the curriculum, the quantity of hardware is limited to one computer per classroom, restricting regular access and practice. Knowledge gained in earlier years from using a programmable toy for control is not developed, due mainly to the lack of suitable software. However, in the areas covered, pupils' progress is better. For example, in word-processing, pupils have the opportunity to practise their skills and develop a familiarity of the keyboard.

131 The attitude of the pupils to information technology is good. They enjoy using the computers when given the opportunity. They talk enthusiastically about their work and are keen to demonstrate what they have achieved. Pupils treat the equipment with respect and can be trusted to work on their own in a mature and sensible manner without direct teacher intervention.

132 Teaching has improved since the previous inspection with the benefit of in-service training and most have a satisfactory level of competence. However, most teachers find it difficult to incorporate information technology into their day-to-day work. Examination of teachers' planning suggests that they are aware of the strands of the National Curriculum but the skills to be achieved are not always clearly identified. Assessment of pupils' work is

not formalised and records are confined to a 'tick list' of pupil individual access.

133 The subject manager is a newly qualified teacher and has not as yet had the opportunity to have an impact on the subject. She is, however, well qualified to lead the subject and has a vision for the future developments. The school has recently adopted a centrally recommended scheme of work. Although this is providing good support for teachers planning, the scheme would benefit from adjustment to meet the immediate needs of the school. The school is aware of the shortage of computers and is in process of negotiating a contract with a local company to increase the provision.

### **Religious education**

134 Standards in religious education are good across the school and pupils make good progress towards the recommendations contained in the locally agreed syllabus.

135 Religious education makes a significant contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and to the overall ethos of the school. In particular the study of Judaism and Islam make an important contribution to building understanding of faiths and cultures other than their own among the pupils in this predominantly Christian school. Positive features of the provision in religious education are the links between the themes chosen for assembly and the work carried out in lessons.

136 Younger pupils can remember information about worship in a synagogue from the assembly and understand how important prayer is to Jews. They compose simple prayers for their own 'prayer tree' making appropriate comparisons with the star of David to the sign of the cross. Pupils in year 4 examined Jewish artefacts and successfully prepared presentations to share their secure knowledge and understanding with the rest of the class. Year 5 pupils know that in the Hebrew language people read from right to left and they consolidate through discussion their understanding of Jewish symbols and their meaning. At the top of the school, pupils composed their own psalms to the modern day. They were able to reflect upon things which they valued and were motivated to write their own personal psalms - for example, about the joys of fishing and the advantages to be gained from modern technology. All pupils made good progress during the week in relating to Judaism and acquiring an understanding of the faith.

137 The quality of discussion in religious education lessons and the amount of writing in a variety of styles is at least of satisfactory quality and often better. This indicates that this subject is making a positive contribution to the development of literacy. Pupils have positive attitude to this subject, showing themselves to be keen, interested and well behaved in lessons.

138 The quality of teaching is good and sometimes excellent. Lesson planning is generally very good; teachers relate the subject to what pupils already know from their own experience. Teachers create an environment in which the study of religion can take place with mutual respect and understanding. In one excellent lesson the teacher provided outstanding resources which gave pupils a sense of wonder. She created the ideal balance of practicality and religious philosophy, which the pupils could understand. All teachers have high quality displays in their classrooms, which gives a clear focus to the subject and celebrates pupils' achievements. Materials are used imaginatively and pupils are often excited by the work undertaken.

139 The subject manager has created an environment in which religious education is making a positive contribution both to the overall curriculum and to the life of the school. She has produced a detailed two year rolling programme which effectively links lessons to

the assemblies and is a useful framework for continuity and progression in the subject. However, the scheme is in need of updating to match the school's new artefacts and resources to the programme and also to incorporate more closely the locally agreed syllabus.

## **Art**

140 Pupils make good progress through the school, often producing work of high quality. Although, owing to timetable arrangements, only one lesson was observed, a visit to the art club, together with the scrutiny of a wide range of work in folders, on display and in photographs, provided ample evidence of pupils' achievements.

141 Pupils in Key Stage 1 record ideas with an increasing ability to represent what they can see. The youngest pupils confidently experiment with colour mixing, using bold brush strokes, such as in their paintings which followed a visit to a baby clinic baby. They used a variety of media to represent an autumn topic with careful pastel drawings and leaf prints. By Year 2, pupils refine their work by beginning to use sketch books, and the quality of observational drawings of household appliances is very high. Brightly coloured paintings show an understanding of the technique used by Van Gogh when pupils used thick paint and short brush strokes to create a similar style. Pupils make very good progress in painting, drawing and modelling from reception to Year 2. However, little work is developed from the imagination. In a Year 3 art lesson pupils were able to refine initial pastel drawings of rocks to create paintings of the same subject. They effectively used tone, texture and colour to bring out contrast between the foreground and background. High quality three-dimensional work is on display and very good progress can be seen in the use of fabric.

142 Work on display shows that pupils have positive attitudes towards art. Great attention to detail is given to beautiful pastel drawings of plants and animals in the style of Henri Rousseau. The art club is very popular and pupils discussed with obvious pride the tiles that they had created. Overall, art is making a good contribution to the spiritual dimension of pupils' lives and makes a good contribution to their awareness of their own and other cultures.

143 Teaching is good across the school. It has a positive impact on the rates of progress and levels of attainment. Art is often taught to complement a theme or study in other subjects, but there is clear evidence in pupils' work that skills of drawing, painting and modelling are well taught. A good range and balance of work are planned across the school but limited use is made of computer generated work. High quality, attractive displays are a strength of the school with teachers contributing art work towards displays in every curriculum area. Art makes a valuable contribution to the learning environment in every classroom. The work of other artists is well used to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of art and design.

144 The subject is managed well by a very knowledgeable and experienced teacher who leads by expecting high quality work from pupils and by supporting teachers in achieving it. The policy and a scheme of work contain a useful framework to ensure progression across the school in the six areas of art experience. Resources are good and well maintained.

## **Design and technology**

145 Only one full lesson at each key stage was observed during the inspection, but a scrutiny of the work on display in classrooms and in photographs suggests that pupils at

both key stages make good progress and achieve high standards.

146 Building on their work with construction kits in the reception class, pupils in Year 1 develop their making skills through activities which focus on particular skills; for example, they had recently completed moving toys, using paper fasteners for the joints and a variety of paper, card and glue. Their work shows evidence of careful planning and a good level of skill in cutting, fixing, sticking

147 During a very busy and successful afternoon, the Year 2 pupils were engaged in a range of activities associated with design and technology. These included cooking, collage, sewing and model making. High standards were evident in all these activities, particularly in the approach taken to building model houses. Pupils were left to decide how to make translucent windowpanes and selected appropriate materials, carefully cutting and joining them to fit the window spaces. Building on their work in science, they successfully wired up an interior and exterior light, using their knowledge of circuits.

148 In Key Stage 2, pupils rise to the challenge of more demanding tasks. A good example of this was found in the Year 4 class where pupils were making quiz boards that lit up when the correct answer was selected. They made sensible suggestions about how their designs could be improved and had good ideas for solving emerging problems. Well-constructed models of jugs and helmets relating to the study of Greece were on display in the Year 5 class and pupils in Year 6 were fully absorbed in designing and making slippers. They had drawn patterns and were carefully tacking, cutting out and sewing.

149 Not enough teaching was seen to make a secure judgement on the overall quality of teaching, but the lessons seen were very effective and the high standard of outcome of other lessons would suggest that teaching is generally of good quality. In discussion, pupils express their enjoyment of the subject and they certainly persevere to produce the volume of finished work that is on display.

150 The subject manager is recently qualified and new to the school, but has already made a good start in reviewing existing practice and has some good ideas for the development of the subject.

### **Geography.**

151 Pupils have many good opportunities to study their surroundings and other localities, and to learn a range of geographical skills. Standards in some areas of work are good and pupils progress well through the school.

152 Much of the work at Key Stage 1 is appropriately linked to studies of the school grounds, the locality and visits. For example, during a recent visit to Sherwood Forest, pupils had the opportunity to follow maps and gain an understanding of geographical features. Pupils' understanding of weather is enhanced through the collection of daily statistics about sunshine, temperature and rainfall. They have good opportunities to develop their numeracy skills such as measuring and drawing graphs of their weather records and literacy skills are extended when pupils write at some length about the seasons. When planning for the visit to Sherwood Forest, they were aware of the effect of weather on people, deciding which clothes are appropriate for various conditions. Good progress in understanding maps is evident when pupils draw weather symbols on maps of the British Isles, most correctly labelling the constituent countries.

153 These early geographical skills are further developed when older pupils study two contrasting localities. In Year 4, they were finding out about Eritrea. Most could comment

on the similarities and differences in people's everyday lives, such as going to the doctor. The understood the limitations of a poor water supply and compared the use of water holes with the convenience of a household supply. More advanced work is tackled in Year 6 when pupils study Pampagrande in South America. They can locate the area on a world map and have a good understanding of the way the people have adapted their way of life to the conditions. Their geography folders contain evidence of their ability to compare localities in some detail. Activities relating to a map of Pampagrande enables pupils to extend their mapping skills, locating various features and using map references.

154 During the annual residential visit to Northumberland or Wales, older pupils develop their knowledge and have further opportunities to practise and improve their geographic skills.

155 The pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy lessons. Teaching is of good quality. It is carefully planned and very good use is made of local and more distant resources. Consideration is given to the various abilities in the class and this is effective in maintaining pupils' interest in the subject.

156 The study of different geographical themes makes a good contribution to pupils' literacy and numeracy skills at both key stages. The pupils regularly use reference books and materials to obtain information and are encouraged to report and record observations using charts and grids. In some lessons, pupils are encouraged to use the library independently but further opportunities for the development of individual research skills should be considered.

157 The subject is well managed. The curriculum has been carefully constructed to help ensure that pupils are systematically introduced to geographical concepts in meaningful ways. Geography makes a good contribution to pupils' understanding of different cultures.

## **History**

158 Pupils make satisfactory progress through the school. By the time pupils are seven years old, they understand how life for older generations was different in the past. Transport in the present day is compared with that in the past and holiday destinations are compared. Through walks in the local environment pupils gain an understanding of buildings from the past by observing an old style school. They develop an understanding of chronology based on their own lives and how they have changed over time. They learn about the main historical events such as The Great Fire of London. Pupils have a good understanding about why the fire spread so quickly and how houses were constructed. By the time pupils are eleven years old pupils' sense of chronology is quite well developed and they demonstrate a clear understanding of Life in Victorian Britain. They have a sound knowledge of ancient Greece with an understanding of the beginnings of the Olympic games and notable buildings, such as the Parthenon. In their studies of ancient Rome they learn about the main Roman towns in Britain and famous people from the period.

159 By the time they are eleven years old, pupils appreciate how past events have affected present day life. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good; they are well behaved, listen attentively and maintain a good level of concentration. Visits to historical sites stimulate their interest and are well remembered by pupils in discussion.

160 The overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a clear understanding of the main elements of the subject and lessons are well planned. In most of the lessons observed, pupils' interest was developed and sustained through tasks that challenged pupils' historical thinking. There is, however, an over reliance on worksheets and pupils are

not given sufficient opportunity to develop their personal inquiry. Pupils' progress is greatly helped with relevant displays of work that are stimulating and of high quality.

161 The school has recently adopted schemes of work recommended by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. These are at an early stage of implementation and would benefit from adjustment to meet the immediate needs of the school. Current approaches promote the development of independent skills only to a limited extent and there is little evidence in pupils' work of personal investigation.

## **Music**

162 Progress in music is sound and provides a secure base for pupils' understanding and skills across the range of musical activities. Younger pupils sing songs for memory, clap in time and maintain a steady beat using percussion instruments. Pupils respond well when listening to music and are able to recognise the instruments played. By the time pupils are eleven years old they have an understanding of different types of music. They listen to and appraise the music that is played during the daily assembly and can name notable composers. With the benefit of recorder lessons pupils are beginning to read formal notation and can place notes in the correct place on a musical stave. In creative music they record their work with symbols on a graphic score and use the appropriate vocabulary when discussing their compositions. The school choir, which performs at local and school events, is of a good standard and can confidently sing songs containing two independent parts. The singing in assemblies is tuneful and of a good standard. Pupils who have additional instrumental tuition attain high standards.

163 Pupils' make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Younger pupils, develop their skills in practical lessons, sing songs with improved rhythm and gain an understanding of reading from a graphic score. Older pupils progress with their technical knowledge with regular opportunities to play the recorder and by the time they reach Year 6 can play a series of tunes with accuracy. Listening to different styles of music in the daily assembly develops pupils' appraising skills. Pupils' progress well with their understanding of music from other cultures. This was evident in an assembly about the Jewish religion, when all pupils sang a song in the appropriate language. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into lessons and achieve the targets set for them. The progress of pupils who play a musical instrument is good.

164 Pupils respond enthusiastically to music throughout the school. Their behaviour is good in lessons and they participate well in extra-curricular activities. They settle to work quickly, enjoy the practical sessions and are keen to demonstrate their playing ability. They work collaboratively when sharing instruments and offer sensible comments when evaluating the work of others.

165 The quality of the teaching is at least satisfactory and often good. Specialist teachers have good musical knowledge, demonstrate skills well and transfer their enthusiasm to pupils. Lessons have clear aims and are thoroughly planned to promote pupils' musical skills and understanding. Teachers have good discipline and deal with any misbehaviour quietly and efficiently. Good relationships are evident between pupils and adults, very noticeable in the choir rehearsal. Resources are well used during lessons.

166 The school has an adequate range of resources with tuned and untuned percussion instruments. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator, who has recently modified the schemes of work. Although the scheme provides continuity within year groups, it would benefit by being more detailed to give better support to the non-specialist - in particular, the creative and composing elements that are not being given enough attention in the

curriculum. Music in the school contributes well to pupils' cultural development with opportunities to perform at concerts and school productions. Pupils also benefit from the visits from local musicians.

## Physical education

167 Progress is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. There are strengths in games, gymnastics and swimming, and particularly high standards in dance.

168 In the reception class pupils are able to travel on different body parts in different directions in gymnastics; they are able to persevere, with practice, to improve the quality of rocking movements using different parts of their bodies. In a Year 1 dance lesson, pupils understood that they needed to control their movements to reflect happiness, moving safely through the space. Pupils can repeat a simple pattern of movement and are beginning to compose their own movements. Following opportunities to observe each other, they use language well to describe what they understood to be good movement. Year 2 pupils throw and catch accurately and show good technique and control when travelling while bouncing balls. The consistency of most pupils' achievement in footwork and ball handling skills indicates that a good level of progress in games has been made.

169 Owing to timetable arrangements, it was not possible to observe any gymnastic or games lessons in Key Stage 2. There is a very good programme for games, providing opportunities for pupils to develop a wide range of skills in appropriate small-sided games. In an after school touch-rugby session pupils could pass the ball effectively in a group competition and were beginning to develop tactics to avoid being tagged. In a dance lesson the oldest pupils showed a good range of movement to communicate their ideas of plant and animal life and the role of the sun in their growth. In the three weeks of dance they had made good progress in composing, performing and appreciating one another's contribution to the class dance. In swimming, most pupils can propel themselves effectively using only their legs in breaststroke; higher attainers could synchronise their breathing well with breaststroke arm-action. A pupil with special educational needs made good progress in developing water confidence to enable her to participate in the beginner group's programme.

170 Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Younger pupils enjoy movement and work hard to fulfil the teacher's tasks even in cold and windy weather. Key Stage 2 pupils showed a mature response to organising themselves to develop a whole-class dance composition and pupils in the beginners swimming group were delighted to be able to get their feet off the bottom of the pool.

171 The quality of teaching is mainly good and some very good teaching takes place in dance. Teachers develop constructive relationships and control pupils well, paying due attention to safety. Pupils with special needs are supported effectively to enable them to fully participate in all activities and especially in swimming. In games, teachers plan work well to ensure progression in ball handling and footwork skills. Recent in-training has enabled teachers to select and match an appropriate range of resources for pupils to achieve success in ball handling. In dance, teachers use questioning very well to engage pupils in composing, performing and describing what they understand to be very good movement. They give pupils the opportunity to reflect and improve their movement sequences but still maintain a good effective pace.

172 The subject is well led by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject leader who has provided a useful policy and is developing an effective programme enriched by exciting after school activities. The accommodation and resources for games and outdoor activities are very good, but gymnastic apparatus is too big and heavy for younger pupils and the range of apparatus limits the development of gymnastic skills across the school. Assessment is used well in lessons but planning for each activity does not give sufficient guidance to achieve continuity and progression, and procedures for recording performance are underdeveloped.

## Swimming

173 The inspection of this school included a focused view of swimming which is reported below.

i. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in swimming are in line with national expectations. Pupils in Year 6 in the middle ability group make good progress, while those in the advanced group make satisfactory progress.

ii. The swimming teacher organised groups well so that the middle ability group was given effective teaching while the more able group was given appropriate tasks to improve breaststroke technique. Good subject knowledge was used effectively to identify individual weaknesses and improve efficiency of breaststroke. The teacher gave good demonstrations with clear instructions and used pupils effectively to demonstrate breathing timed correctly with the arm action. The support assistant taught the beginners group competently, based on guidance from the swimming teacher during the previous week, and followed carefully the framework planning taken from the LEA scheme.

iii. The support assistant gave appropriate support to develop water confidence, giving floats with instructions to enable pupils to confidently propel themselves across the pool. A voluntary adult helper gave very good support to a pupil with special educational needs enabling her to join in some of the group's activities and make some progress in developing water confidence.

iv. Most pupils in Key Stage 2 have three sessions of physical education per week, but because of the extra curriculum time taken up by their swimming lesson, the Year 6 class has only one other 30 minute lesson each week. During the inspection, the other lesson was in dance. Most of the afternoon is taken up with the swimming lesson and therefore a short 15 minute lesson on citizenship is all that can be included during the swimming afternoon. Adequate assessment is made during the swimming lessons when teachers involve pupils in evaluating their own performance. Records are kept of the award stages that pupils have reached, included in the swimming attendance register. There is an achievement award booklet, which gives details of the different stages of the awards. Records are sent to the secondary school as part of pupils' records of achievement. Planning is based on the LEA scheme, which is fairly detailed but needs to be taught by a knowledgeable swimming teacher if it is to be implemented effectively. There is very little time for the sole swimming teacher to discuss pupils' progress and give sufficient guidance to the adults who teach some of the groups.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **174 SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

A team of four inspectors visited the school for a four-day period.

The Registered Inspector noted the views of 12 parents who attended the meeting for parents held before the inspection.

The questionnaires returned by 60 parents were analysed.

A wide range of documents was examined. These included:

- XIV.the school development plan;
- XV.budget statements;
- XVI.curriculum policies, schemes and outline plans for the academic year;
- XVII.teachers' planning, timetables and lesson plans;
- XVIII.the school brochure, newsletters and other information for parents;
- XIX.minutes of meetings of governors and staff;
- XX.the staff in-service training records;
- XXI.results of National Curriculum tests;
- XXII.the report of the previous inspection in January 1996;
- XXIII.the governors' action plan in response to the 1996 inspection.

The inspection team observed 49 lessons, or parts of lessons.

Pupils' previous and current work, and relevant assessment records and reports were scrutinised. Pupils read to inspectors and many were observed reading during the literacy hour. Discussions were also held with pupils about their reading habits and recent work.

Photographs and displays of pupils' previous work provided additional evidence.

Discussions were held with governors, the head teacher, subject managers, class teachers, classroom assistants, clerical and caretaking staff, and parents.

## DATA AND INDICATORS

### Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN <sup>5</sup>	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR - Y6	198	1	30	50

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	8.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.4

#### Education support staff (YR - Y6)

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week	22

Average class size:	32
---------------------	----

### Financial data

Financial year:	1997/8
-----------------	--------

Total Income	356264
Total Expenditure	343254
Expenditure per pupil	1553
Balance brought forward from previous year	-12164
Balance carried forward to next year	846

<sup>5</sup> Pupils on stages 2 to 5 of the register.

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

198

Number of questionnaires returned:

60

### Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	25	67	2	3	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	30	63	3	3	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	22	55	14	5	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	22	65	7	3	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	30	62	5	3	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	40	53	5	3	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	48	49	3	2	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	23	68	3	2	3
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	25	67	8	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	40	55	3	2	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	55	41	3	0	0