

INSPECTION REPORT

South End Infant School
Northamptonshire

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique Reference Number: 121861

Headteacher: Mr Peter Neve

Reporting inspector: Mrs M C Riley - 3694

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707660

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 School Inspections Act 1996, the appropriate authority must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. Every registered parent of a registered pupil at the school should receive a free copy of the summary of the report within ten working days of receipt of the summary by the appropriate authority. A charge not exceeding the cost of supply may be made by the appropriate authority for any other copies of the report and/or its summary provided to any person who asks for one.

The appropriate authority should make a copy of the report and the summary available for inspection by members of the public at such times and at such a place as may be reasonable

Any enquiries about this legislation should be addressed to the OFSTED Compliance Helpline

Tel. 0171421 6567

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant School
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wymington Road Rushden Northants NN10 9JU
Telephone number:	01933 356571
Fax number:	01933 356571
Appropriate authority:	Northamptonshire
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Robin Underwood
Date of previous inspection:	March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Margaret Riley, Rgl	Science Music Physical Education	Attainment and Progress Teaching Leadership and Management
Jean Bouch, Lay Inspector	Under Fives	Efficiency of School Attitudes, Behaviour and Personal Development Attendance Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare Partnership with Parents and Community
Chris Corps	English	Pupils' Spiritual, Moral and Social and Cultural Development Special Educational Needs
Mary Sinclair	Art Geography History Mathematics Design and Technology Information Technology Religious Education	Curriculum and Assessment Equal Opportunities Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

The inspection contractor was:

NIAS
Cliftonville Centre
Cliftonville Middle School
Cliftonville Road
Northampton
NN1 5BW

01604 259876

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

1

- Characteristics of the school
- Key indicators

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

4

- Attainment and progress
- Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
- Attendance

Quality of education provided

20

- Teaching
- The curriculum and assessment
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
- Partnership with parents and the community

The management and efficiency of the school

50

- Leadership and management
- Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
- The efficiency of the school

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

Areas of learning for children under five	71
English, mathematics and science	83
Other subjects or courses	104

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence	138
Data and indicators	

MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The school provides well for children under five and in reception classes. The planning, teaching and assessment of attainment of the youngest pupils is a strength of the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive good quality support through individual education plans and the work of special needs staff.
- Parental support for the school is strong and relationships with parents are positive. The school actively encourages their involvement in school life.
- Community involvement is strong and supportive.
- The headteacher is dedicated to the pastoral needs of pupils and staff.
- All staff make a positive contribution to the school and there is a positive “team” approach to their work in school.
- New staff are given good quality guidance and support through a structured programme
- Short term curriculum planning is good.
- The quality of non-teaching staff is very good; they are caring and well trained.
- The governing body shows commitment to and active support for the school.
- The moral and social development of pupils is promoted well.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. There is some under-achievement in writing and mathematics.
- II. Attainment in information technology is below average.
- III. The quality and use of assessment information lacks rigour.
- IV. Curriculum planning does not ensure that the time allocated to subjects is appropriate and that there is progression in the acquisition of skills and knowledge for all pupils.
- V. The effectiveness of the literacy and numeracy strategies is currently limited. Teaching does not focus sufficiently on the essentials of the skills and strategies needed to raise attainment
- VI. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning by the headteacher, staff and governors does not have a clear enough focus on standards.

The school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses. Although the school is doing many things well the weaknesses identified in this report affect the overall attainment of pupils in the school and will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made some progress since the last inspection on all of the key issues for action which were identified. Work has been done to improve the quality of planning and assessment throughout the school. This has been successful in the reception year but is still not sufficiently focused on raising standards for pupils in Key Stage 1. Standards, when compared with the national average, are similar of those at the time of the last inspection.

Teacher planning has provided more opportunities for the enhancement of pupils' cultural development but is less successful in relation to the planned and spontaneous development of spiritual awareness.

• **Standards in subjects**

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

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools		Key
			<i>well above average</i>	A
			<i>above average</i>	B
bv	C	D	<i>average</i>	C
Writing	C	D	<i>below average</i>	D
Mathematics	C	D	<i>well below average</i>	E

The table shows that the school achieves standards which are close to the national average in English and mathematics but when compared to the levels attained in schools with similar characteristics the performance of pupils is below average. The youngest pupils make satisfactory and often good progress in their learning. This rate of progress slows in Key Stage 1 because expectations are not high enough and the potential of all pupils is not exploited sufficiently.

• **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years
English	Good	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory
Science		Satisfactory
Information technology		Satisfactory
Religious education		Satisfactory
Other subjects	Good	Satisfactory

Overall, the teaching is at least satisfactory in 93 per cent of lessons. The teaching in reception is always at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Although the majority of lessons at Key Stage 1 are satisfactory, there is some unsatisfactory teaching. This is mainly in Year 2 where pupils are sometimes unaware of what is expected of them and the work they are given is too easy. There are also gaps in teachers' knowledge in some subjects.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Pupils' behaviour is almost always at least satisfactory, and often good, particularly in reception classes. There are occasional instances of unsatisfactory behaviour in Key Stage 1 classes. This is closely linked to teaching that does not engage or challenge pupils. Pupils are polite and courteous in and around the school.
Attendance	This is broadly in line with the national average. Unauthorised absence rates are well below the national average.
Ethos*	The ethos of the school is one of care, safety and security for pupils and adults. There is a strong sense of community. Relationships are well established in the reception year and satisfactory in the rest of the school. The climate for learning is positive but there is a lack of opportunity for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning.
Leadership and management	The headteacher provides the school with a strong pastoral lead showing concern for all those involved in the school. The work of the senior team and subject co-ordinators is conscientious but they are not enabled to take their full part in subject leadership and development. The governing body is very supportive and actively involved in the life and work of the school. Monitoring, evaluation and review procedures do not focus sufficiently on raising standards or on the quality of teaching and learning.
Curriculum	The curriculum for the youngest children is planned well. It provides a suitable range of learning activities and assessment opportunities. In Key Stage 1 there are weaknesses in teachers' planning. Too little attention is given to ensuring that there is progression in the development of skills, knowledge and understanding in all subjects. The time allocated to subjects lacks balance.
Pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. The overall provision is good and pupils make satisfactory progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	The school is successful in promoting good moral and social development. Cultural development is satisfactory but there are missed opportunities to allow pupils to reflect on the world around them and to develop their spiritual awareness.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	There are sufficient, suitably qualified teachers. Support staff are of good quality, providing sensitive support to pupils in all classes. The school building and grounds are attractive and well maintained though the Key Stage 1 classes are cramped which restricts flexibility of use. Resources for learning are adequate except in mathematics and information technology.
Value for money	The school provides satisfactory value for money.

**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

- VII. The way in which the school involves them in its daily life
- VIII. The quality of information received about school events and their children's progress
- IX. The ease of access to the headteacher and all staff
- X. The way in which the health, welfare and safety of the children is promoted

What some parents are not happy about

- XI. The annual report prepared for parents when learned and how they can help their

The inspection team supports the positive views expressed by parents and confirms that the school should do more to ensure that the attainment and progress of all pupils is reported in more detail.

·

· **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

In order to improve the quality of education and raise standards further the governors, headteacher and staff should take the following action:

XII. Improve the planning for teaching and learning in English by:

- developing a clear framework for teaching the skills of writing;
- placing a stronger emphasis on the teaching of phonic skills in reading and writing;
- improving the effectiveness of the plenary session of the Literacy Hour so that there is a focus on targets for future learning. (paras 7, 26, 30, 88)

XIII. Raise attainment in mathematics by:

- ensuring that the work set is consistently more challenging
- improving the quality of the oral mental sessions of the daily mathematics lessons;
- providing more opportunities for developing problem solving in mathematics;
- planning lessons with a clearer focus on the learning objectives recommended by the national numeracy framework. (paras 8, 22, 26,30, 93, 97)

XIV. Improve attainment and progress in information technology by:

- providing more structured opportunities for pupils to practise their computer skills;
- re-organising the use and deployment of computers in classrooms to ensure that all pupils can observe teachers' demonstrations and have access to the computers;
- revising the scheme of work to ensure that it provides coherence in the teaching and learning from Reception to Year 2;
- improving the quality and range of software available throughout the school;

- providing more opportunities for teachers to improve their own skills. (paras 10, 30, 33, 35, 119, 122)
- **Improve the quality of curriculum planning and approaches to assessment by:**
 - revising and updating subject policies, particularly those for history, geography and information technology;
 - providing more detail in long, medium and short term planning so that learning objectives are clear and progressive acquisition of skills is included;
 - using the good procedures for record keeping as the basis for the assessment of pupils that informs the next stages of learning;
 - improving the overall balance of the timetable so that all subjects receive appropriate and adequate time allocations. (paras 25, 27, 52, 68)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- extend the range of opportunities routinely available for pupils to be involved in active learning situations, problem solving and investigations where they can be encouraged to take more responsibility for their own learning. (paras 17, 18, 24, 31, 41)
- enhance the provision for pupils' spiritual development by identifying opportunities in curriculum planning and by capitalising on spontaneous events in school. (para 39)
-

INTRODUCTION

· **Characteristics of the school**

- 1 South End Infant School is a school for children aged four to seven years. The school is situated in the town of Rushden, Northamptonshire. The school has recently increased its size, becoming three form entry in reception from September, 1999 in anticipation of an extensive building programme that is to be undertaken in response to the demand for housing in the local area. The school is of average size, with 210 pupils on roll, 113 boys and 97 girls. The school admits children in the September following their fourth birthday. At the time of the inspection the reception children were in school on a part time basis and a large majority were under five years old. Almost all children have received some form of pre-school education, usually in local playgroups.

- 2 The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average when compared with other schools. There are eleven pupils on stages 3-5; two pupils have statements of special educational need, which is in line with the national average. Two pupils come from homes where English is not the first language. There are seven pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, which is lower than the national figure. The school serves the eastern area of the town. The majority of local housing is owner occupied and unemployment is low. The area has several new housing estates and more are planned in the next few years. Current baseline assessments on entry to school indicate that children's attainment covers a wide range but is broadly average.

- 3 The school aims "to provide a happy, secure and stimulating environment in which all pupils can become literate, numerate, creative, curious and caring, valuing themselves and others". The most recent review of the school's development plan focused on improvements to curriculum policies, the requirements of the Literacy and Numeracy strategies and the need to improve the quality of resources in science and information technology. The school is setting realistic targets for improving standards in line with national and local plans. Much time has also been given by the headteacher and governing body to the early preparations for the building programme.

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	36	24	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	26	30	26
	Girls	22	22	21
	Total	48	52	47
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	80(89)	87(86)	78(85)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(84)

Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	26	29	26
	Girls	22	23	22
	Total	48	52	48
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	80(83)	87(91)	80(94)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

1

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	4.9
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.0
	Absence	National comparative	0.5

data

• **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	2
	Satisfactory or better	91
	Less than satisfactory	7

· **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

· **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

· **Attainment and progress**

- 4 In the national tests for seven year olds in English and mathematics in 1999 pupils' performance was about average. It was, however, below that of other similar schools. The picture was similar in 1998 with results being close to the national average but below those in similar schools. Although there has been some improvements in standards over the past few years, the rate of improvement has been too slow.
- 5 Assessment of reception age children on entry to school indicates that they are broadly average in speaking, listening, reading and writing. They are just below average in their knowledge of number. Children under five years old make good progress and, by the age of five, achieve the nationally determined outcomes in all the prescribed areas of learning.
- 6 For children under five, personal and social development is good. They work co-operatively, make choices and show good levels of concentration when involved in tasks and activities. They make good progress in developing skills in language and literacy. They speak and listen well, are able to talk with confidence about books and stories and many are beginning to use writing skills well. Children gain mathematical understanding through games, rhymes and matching and sorting activities. Most can count accurately and recognise numbers in different situations. They name shapes correctly and can use simple computer programs to reinforce their knowledge. Children talk about their experiences at home and in the local area; some are able to describe their journey to school from home. Creative development is good, children use paint, crayon and a range of different media to make pictures. They use scissors and small tools well and have good skills in control and co-ordination. Physical development is satisfactory, children enjoy physical activities and show appropriate ability to travel and sequence movements in hall times and in the playground.
- 7 Standards in reading and writing are about average. There was an improvement in pupils' results in writing in 1999 but too few pupils achieved the higher standard. Although the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading was lower than in 1998, the average score remained close to the national average. Standards in reading and writing are below those in similar schools reflecting some under-performance. In common with the national position standards in reading overall are better than those in writing, but the difference is greater in this school than in most schools. The performance of girls is higher than that of boys again reflecting the situation nationally.
- 8 Although attainment in mathematics is broadly average, progress is too slow. This was reflected in the performance national tests in 1999 in which the results were below those in similar schools. Pupils have a reasonable knowledge of number and number patterns and can perform simple calculations but their ability of calculate mentally is not well enough developed.

- 9 Attainment in science is broadly average. Performance in 1999 was lower than that in 1998 but did not indicate a sustained downward trend. Current attainment is that expected. Pupils acquire appropriate levels of knowledge and understanding in science. They are able to conduct simple experiments and describe the processes involved in scientific experiments.
- 10 Standards attained in information technology are below average. Pupils acquire the skills needed to work with computers but have too little opportunity to use these skills. Progress in this subject is limited by the restricted access to good quality computers and the lack of a structured approach to teaching and learning.
- 11 Pupils attain standards in religious education that are those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school, gaining knowledge and understanding of the Bible and religious events and festivals.
- 12 Pupils make satisfactory progress in history, geography, music and physical education. Progress in art is good and the quality of pupils' art work is good, showing the development of skills and techniques. It was not possible to make a full judgement about progress in design and technology.
- 13 The progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. They make appropriate gains in skills and understanding enabling them to work towards the targets set in individual education plans. Many pupils make good progress towards achieving their specific targets in English.

· **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

- 14 As in the previous inspection report, pupils' behaviour is rarely less than satisfactory and often good. Relationships are sound, and instances of bullying are rare. Pupils with special educational needs and those from ethnic minorities are well integrated into the life of the school. Prior to the inspection no pupil had been excluded either temporarily or permanently.
- 15 Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors and smiling and friendly when spoken to individually. They behave well in assembly where they sit quietly on the floor and listen attentively, often for long periods. They enter and leave in an orderly fashion; they are keen to answer questions and to join in discussions. In the dining hall behaviour is good, if somewhat subdued; pupils follow silence rules and have good manners. Playground behaviour is lively, active and occasionally boisterous. Pupils are busily involved in their games and generally relate well to one another. Quarrels are quickly sorted out with the help of playground supervisors.
- 16 In lessons, reception pupils behave very well. They readily conform to the rules and routines of the classroom, for example, by observing instructions on the number of pupils for each activity. They put on and take off their aprons without prompting and play sensibly with sand and water. They respond well to what is asked and are forming good relationships with one another and their teachers.
- 17 In Years 1 and 2 most pupils behave well when there is whole class teaching which engages their interest and which supports and promotes a learning partnership between them and their teacher. They behave less well in group activities which are

strongly adult dominated and which do not give them opportunities for exploration and enquiry. This applies particularly to boys, some of whom lose interest and disturb the concentration and progress of their peers. Some pupils do not readily share or take turns and find group activities difficult to organise independently.

- 1 Relationships between pupils and their teachers, whilst calm and caring, are not always firmly established. The number of adults in each classroom and the use of group work means that pupils and their class teacher do not always form a close partnership in learning. Sometimes pupils are confused about which adults to relate most strongly to and this has an adverse effect on their sense of ownership and pride in what they do.

18

Attendance

- 19 Pupils' attendance is broadly in line with the national average; unauthorised absence is well below the national average. Most pupils come to school punctually and lessons start on time. Lateness is confined to a very small minority of pupils. A small but increasing minority of pupils take holidays in term time. The school discourages this practice, particularly for pupils in Year 2.

18 **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

18 **Teaching**

- 20 Overall, teaching is at least satisfactory in 93 percent of lessons. In 24 percent of lessons teaching is good and in one lesson was very good. In 7 per cent of lessons teaching is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in the reception classes is consistently satisfactory, sometimes good, occasionally very good. The work of teachers in these classes has some significant strengths. In Key Stage 1 classes almost all lessons are satisfactory but some lessons have shortcomings. Weaknesses in teaching occur in Year 2 lessons where the expectations for learning are not shared with the pupils and the strategies used in the lesson are inappropriate for the work to be covered. The level of challenge is sometimes too low so that pupils do not respond positively and their interest, behaviour and concentration are not sustained.

- 21 Teachers in the reception year have a secure knowledge of the way in which young children learn. They encourage children to become involved in their learning and use a suitable range of teaching methods to motivate them. In most Key Stage 1 classes teachers use a good range of styles and approaches to learning which enable pupils to respond positively. In Year 1 and 2 classes, the teachers have high expectations of behaviour. Their expectations in the terms of the demands they make of pupils are not always so high. Consequently some of the work which is set is too easy. Pupils often know what they have to do but not what they are expected to learn.

- 22 In some lessons, notably aspects of literacy, numeracy and information technology teachers are not yet sufficiently confident in the subjects. They do not themselves use the specialist and technical language well so that pupils are not sufficiently

encouraged to extend their own vocabulary or to think in challenging ways about their own work. Teachers are not focused on the progressive acquisition of new skills in each lesson. Their own planning is not explicit about what is to be learned and, even where teaching is satisfactory, there is too little emphasis on extending pupils with the potential for higher attainment.

- 23 In many lessons teachers demonstrate good behaviour management strategies and most teachers establish good relationships with the pupils. In the best lessons the teachers are very clear about sharing their expectations with pupils and take care to check on progress during the lesson. Classrooms are well organised even when space is limited and resources and equipment are well prepared.
- 24 There is a high level of teacher and adult supervision in all classes. This has positive effects on behaviour and pupils' ability to stay on task but teachers do not always use support staff effectively. The quality of adult support is almost always very good but the guidance given by teachers is not consistent so that pupils are sometimes unsure about what to do and how best to approach the work.
- 25 The quality of planning for lessons is often satisfactory although the quality varies from very good in reception to unsatisfactory in some Year 2 classes. Whilst the quality is satisfactory overall not all teachers give enough attention to the planning required to ensure that skills, knowledge and understanding is promoted through the activities that have been chosen in each subject area.
- 26 Some lessons are too long for young pupils to retain a high level of involvement; others are too short to allow pupils to become fully involved. Teachers should consider the time allocated to subjects as a matter of urgency so that they can achieve a better balance in their teaching to aid pupils' learning. In each year group the opportunities for pupils to solve problems in mathematics or to learn and practise reading and writing skills are very limited.
- 27 The marking of pupils' work is consistently positive and encouraging. It could be improved still further by linking it to targets for learning, so that pupils and parents know against which criteria work has been marked. The use of assessment to inform daily planning and teaching is variable and not well focused on using information gained as a means of clarifying teaching and learning objectives. Homework is used appropriately in all classes to reinforce work completed in school and to practise spelling and writing skills.

18 **The curriculum and assessment**

- 28 The curriculum for under-fives is appropriately planned. All the designated areas of learning are covered. Long term planning ensures that children experience a suitable range of activities, including some led by the teachers, and others initiated by the children themselves, supported by the teachers and other staff. The children's social and personal development is managed effectively.
- 29 At Key Stage I all the National Curriculum subjects are taught. The curriculum, however, is not balanced and there is a lack of breadth within some subjects.

Literacy and mathematics lessons exceed the recommended times and music lessons occasionally extend to one hour.

- 30 In the last inspection report, the provision of opportunities for pupils to develop skills and raise standards in reading, writing and number was identified as a key issue for action. In English and mathematics, some parts of the programmes of study continue to receive insufficient emphasis. These include mental calculation strategies in mathematics, and reading skills and speaking and listening in English. In information technology, pupils have too few opportunities to use computers. Statutory requirements to teach religious education and health education are met. Although the school has a policy not to teach sex education formally, teachers address questions raised by pupils as and when they arise.
- 31 Whilst policy documents have been produced for all subjects, those for history, geography and information technology need to be reviewed to reflect current practice. Within the planned curriculum there are too few opportunities for pupils to express their thoughts and ideas in oral work, to undertake independent study, to make choices or to take initiative for their own learning.
- 32 The school was recommended to ensure better progression for pupils of all abilities following the last inspection. The broadly based topics currently in use do not provide a clear enough structure. Many schemes of work focus on knowledge to be taught and do not provide sufficiently for the progressive acquisition of skills and understanding within and between years. This also applies to the scheme of work for design and technology which is currently being re-written.
- 33 The information technology scheme of work is out of date and requires revision. Medium-term planning for literacy is not prepared sufficiently far in advance and lacks the detail necessary to underpin short term planning. In mathematics, planning is more rigorous when based upon the National Numeracy Strategy.
- 34 An appropriate amount of time is allocated for personal and social development. Pupils have opportunities to visit places of interest in connection with their studies. There is no provision for extra-curricular activities.
- 35 The school was recommended to ensure more effective use of assessment information in all areas of the curriculum following the last inspection, and to use the results to ensure better progression for pupils of all abilities. Effective systems are in place for carrying out standardised assessment, and the requirements of baseline assessment on entry to school and the end of Key Stage 1 tests are being met. Teachers spend substantial amounts of time recording pupils' experiences rather than what they have learnt. Too little attention is given to identifying the key learning objectives to be assessed and considering how information gathered can be used effectively to inform the next stages of learning.

18 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

- 36 The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good, and that for their cultural development is satisfactory. The provision for spiritual development is unsatisfactory. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The school continues to provide a caring and supportive environment. There is a sense of

community and the virtues and values promoted by the school are shared by all staff and parents.

- 37 Provision for pupils' social development is good. The school makes good use of the community, and, in turn, contributes to the community through fund raising and welcoming groups and individuals into the school, including the local police and clergy. Relationships within the school are sound, and pupils' benefit from seeing all members of staff operating as a team. The implicit messages that pupils experience through being part of the organisation are reinforced explicitly by consistent expectations of behaviour, and illustrations of good behaviour are seen in assembly.
- 38 Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school has made some progress since the last inspection, and through the improved provision of books and music, is helping to raise pupils' awareness of cultures other than their own.
- 39 Provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory. There are too few opportunities for pupils to reflect upon their experience, and to respond with wonder to the experiences of daily school life. While assemblies give pupils the chance to sing and listen, they do not provide a quiet space in the day to reflect upon the message of the assembly, or allow each child to pray or contemplate silently. This is a missed opportunity, for pupils clearly show the capacity, as when they watched and listened in rapt silence to the sound of the saw cutting wood and the plane shaping it smooth, during one assembly about Joseph, the carpenter in Nazareth. Similarly, within the topic work on 'Touch' in Year 1, the provision for learning through direct experience does not always include the chance to wonder and express children's inner feelings.

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

- 40 Overall, provision for pupils' support, welfare and guidance is satisfactory. There are particular strengths in pastoral care and support for pupils with special educational needs.
- 41 There are weaknesses in the school's approaches to promoting the pupil's personal development. Pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to gain independence in learning and opportunities for exploration and enquiry are limited. The sometimes narrow range of teaching strategies used in Key Stage 1 classes and the emphasis on supervision in group work does not enable pupils to take sufficient responsibility for their own learning.
- 42 The school has a satisfactory behaviour policy with clearly defined sanctions and this is implemented consistently. The headteacher has a high profile in the management of behaviour and leads by example. Nevertheless, the behaviour policy and practice are not linked to teaching strategies. The school does not explicitly recognise the link between pace, challenge, expectation and pupils' behaviour. As a result time is wasted and pupils' progress is impeded. There are strategies in place to deal with bullying, although bullying is not an issue at the school.
- 43 Provision and support for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school has a deservedly high reputation within the community for integrating special needs

pupils into the life of the school. Flexible, supportive arrangements and a multi-agency approach enables pupils with disabilities to make progress in their learning.

- 44 The school has appropriate arrangements for child protection with two designated teachers and appropriate involvement of all staff. Pupils are well supervised and cared for throughout the school day. There are good procedures for handing over children at the end the day with plentiful opportunities for informal contact with parents. Appropriate procedures are followed in first aid. Pupils benefit from a caring ethos and a very secure and well cared for environment as they did at the time of the previous report.

18 **Partnership with parents and the community**

45 This is a strength of the school and a tribute to the daily efforts of the headteacher and staff to keep parents and the community fully informed and involved. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school to which they show a strong sense of loyalty and affiliation. Many parents are themselves ex-pupils of South End Infants' School and retain strong ties.

1The school's provision for the involvement of parents in their children's learning is very good.

47 Parents are welcomed and encouraged to come into school on a regular basis. They help in the classrooms every day, attend weekly coffee and book sessions, assemblies and curriculum meetings. Induction arrangements for reception pupils are carefully planned to enable parents and pupils to settle in at their own pace. There is good communication through the home school reading diary and regular informal feedback. The headteacher is very attentive to the pastoral needs of his pupils and their families and ensures that he is easily accessible to them.

48 General information for parents is good. They receive frequent letters informing them of school activities and policies on which they are consulted. There is plenty of notice of future events and much helpful information in the school prospectus, which emphasises partnership. Reports to parents contain limited information on what pupils have learnt but do not give parents sufficient guidance about how to help their children to improve.

49 There is a very active Parent Teacher Association that supports the school with social and fundraising events and raises a large amount of money for the school. Thirty people attended the association annual general meeting when a new committee was formed without difficulty. There are strong links with the nearby old peoples home and hospital, with local churches and children's charities which extend pupils' experiences and personal development. As in the last report, links with industry and commerce are not yet well developed.

46 **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

46 **Leadership and management**

50 Since the last inspection the school has made a number of improvements in its approach to management and school development. The school development plan now contains sufficient detail about the allocation of resources, staff responsibilities and training implications. Criteria for success are clearly identified though these do not focus sufficiently on raising standards and improving pupils' performance. Staff and governors are fully involved in decision making with regard to priorities for the school. The senior team is now defined clearly but recent staff changes, including the appointment of a new deputy headteacher, have slowed down the progress of some initiatives as new staff become familiar with their classes and school routines.

51 School aims are strongly focused on the personal and social development of pupils. The aspirations for pupils' academic progress and intellectual growth are partially met but there is a need to tighten the action plans for achievement in English,

mathematics and information technology so that there is a stronger focus on all pupils achieving at a higher level.

- 52 The ethos of the school is one where care, respect and the value of individuals is placed at the forefront. The headteacher is responsible for giving this strong lead about the way in which the school develops relationships with pupils, staff, parents, governors and the local community. He and the staff are very successful in ensuring that the school is a safe and secure environment for pupils and adults. The school is justifiably proud of the esteem in which it is held in the local area. Team working is encouraged throughout the school and there are strengths in the way in which year teams of teachers and associate staff work very well together to plan the curriculum. The teams are less successful in ensuring that the whole curriculum promotes progression from reception to Year 2. The role of subject co-ordinators is not defined well enough to ensure that they can monitor and evaluate the development of classroom work or have an overview of standards and quality. Some co-ordinators are very new to their posts of responsibility but, nevertheless, urgent work is required to clarify roles and allow them to become actively involved in revisions and updating of policies, monitoring pupils' progress and setting targets for teaching and learning in their subjects.
- 53 The governing body has continued to be a source of support to the school. Governors take a keen interest in all that happens in the school and have worked hard to ensure that the headteacher and staff are given the necessary resources to support school development. The committee structure is successful in monitoring the budget and the governing body has risen well to the challenges presented by the proposals for expansion of the school. The governors receive useful information about initiatives in the school and are strong advocates for the school in the community. Their work does not yet focus sufficiently on improvement in overall school performance.
- 54 The management of special educational needs provision is good. The quality of identification of pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties is good and the level and quality of additional support that is offered to pupils is very good.
- 55 Routine management and administration is good. There are appropriate systems and procedures in place to deal with day-to-day issues. Good support is provided through the school administrator for the headteacher, staff and governors. Essential work is carried out efficiently and statutory responsibilities are met.
- 46 **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**
- 56 There are sufficient, suitably qualified teachers to teach the subjects of the national curriculum and religious education. Classroom support assistants and volunteer helpers make a positive and valued contribution to the school. However, the support they are asked to provide within classrooms sometimes limits pupils' readiness to think for themselves. The school administrative assistant ensures the smooth running of the school.
- 57 There has been considerable change of staff since the last inspection. Three teachers were appointed two years ago whilst the deputy and two other teachers

joined the staff at the beginning of this term. The school has an induction policy which provides good support and guidance for all staff including teachers who are recently qualified, or are new to the school.

- 58 Whilst professional development is undertaken by all teachers, and is linked to priorities identified within the school development plan, it does not focus sufficiently well on improving the quality of teaching. Teachers' subject knowledge, understanding and expertise are not well developed in some aspects of English, mathematics and information technology. The professional development needs of support staff are well met through courses and training within the school.
- 59 The school building and grounds are attractive, well maintained and fully used. Displays provide an effective resource for learning in the reception area. In Year 1 and 2 classrooms children's art enhances the appearance of the school. Pupils' writing and displays to provide information are less evident.
- 60 Accommodation is just adequate for the size of Key Stage 1 classes. The separation of the sitting and wet areas from the rest of the classroom restricts the flexible use of space. Storage space in classrooms is limited. To overcome this problem, former kitchen facilities have been developed to provide a resource area housing the reference library and storage space for teachers' resources. The large hall provides good accommodation for assemblies, lunch and physical education.
- 61 Outside accommodation includes two playgrounds on different levels and a grassed area. The playground adjacent to the reception area provides adequate space for the use of outdoor play equipment including the use of large wheeled toys. This playground and the small pond are securely fenced. An area of the school grounds is managed to provide an environmental resource.
- 62 Plans to extend each year base by adding an extra classroom provide an opportunity to improve the safety of the existing building by reducing the gradient of an outdoor ramp and removing cloakroom pegs from narrow corridors. A temporary building, providing additional accommodation for all reception classes, is well used.
- 63 The school has adequate resources for all subjects except mathematics and information technology. There are few resources for whole class teaching in mathematics. Some basic resources such as rulers are worn and in need of replacement. Insufficient computer hardware and software limits pupils' access to computers to develop their information technology skills. During the inspection the school took possession of two further computers which should ensure that pupils have more frequent access.

46 **The efficiency of the school**

- 64 The school is efficient in the use of the resources available to it. The budget is well managed and governors receive frequent and useful financial information. The finance committee of the governing body meets regularly and has a good overview of the financial health of the school. All sub-committees and staff groups record their actions and decisions. These are fed into the whole governing body meetings to assist in the decision making process. The most recent financial systems audit found the school procedures to be satisfactory with only minor recommendations for improvement which have been implemented.

- 65 The school development plan is reviewed and updated annually. It is a useful working document and forms the basis of discussion in relation to improvement and achievement. Since the last inspection report actions have been incorporated into the plan. Funding is allocated according to the needs identified in the plan. Additional funding from the parents' association is used to supplement educational equipment and resources.
- 66 This year governors and staff held a seminar to review progress since the previous inspection. This was useful in charting progress but did not focus on whether standards in the school have improved sufficiently during the last three years. Procedures for monitoring, evaluation and review have been agreed but are yet to have a marked impact on raising standards.
- 67 Financial resources for pupils with special educational needs are allocated efficiently and decisions made about the level of additional classroom support have proved effective in improving the quality of provision.
- 68 The deployment of teachers is satisfactory. The arrival of three new teachers, including two newly qualified staff, in September 1999 has necessitated interim changes to subject responsibilities. Newly designated co-ordinators are not yet fully effective in fulfilling their roles but all have clear job descriptions and are already making a positive contribution to the work of the school.
- 69 School accommodation is bright, attractive and well maintained. Currently the classroom space for Key Stage 1 pupils is cramped reducing the flexibility for teachers to group pupils in appropriate ways for the effective delivery of aspects of the curriculum. The school is preparing well for the upheaval that will result from the planned building programme.
- 70 Taking into account the broadly average attainment of pupils on entry to the school; the average levels of attainment and satisfactory progress by the time pupils are seven years old; the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs; the mostly satisfactory teaching and the good teaching in the reception year and the average unit costs per pupil, the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

46

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

46 Areas of learning for under fives

71 At the time of the inspection only a very small proportion of the children in the reception classes were five years old. The majority of children arrive at the school having had some form of pre-school experience either in local playgroups or nursery settings.

72 Assessment on entry to school indicates that when compared with other children in the county, children are attaining at broadly average levels in speaking and listening, reading and writing. In the development of mathematical skills four year olds do not exhibit the range of skills that are average for their age. As a result of effective teaching the attainment of children at five meets the outcomes deemed desirable nationally for their age group in all areas of learning.

73 The planned curriculum for children under five is good. Planning matches the nationally defined areas of learning and Desirable Learning Outcomes and is designed to enable children to move into the National Curriculum Programmes of Study at an appropriate stage of their development. The long and medium term plans for the curriculum are well constructed, detailed and useful to teachers and classroom assistants in setting up activities to promote learning. Assessment procedures are clear, carried out conscientiously and are used effectively to plot children's progress and to inform future steps in learning.

74 The teaching team includes two newly qualified teachers and is well led by the early years co-ordinator who guides the work of the reception classes very well. The quality of teaching in all reception classes is always at least satisfactory and often good. Teachers are well organised, they have high expectations of children's behaviour and learning and are all very clear about the way in which these are shared with children and classroom support staff. All of the adults who work with the children work as a strong team so that group work and activities are well structured and supervised.

75 Children respond positively to their teachers. They are interested in lessons, remain attentive and show good levels of concentration. Many are capable of working independently for lengthy periods of time as well as relating well to other children in group activities.

46 Personal and social development

76 Children make good progress in this area of learning. They are confident in class, enthusiastic and interested in playing and working. Good social skills are developed, enabling children to work co-operatively, take turns and share games and equipment. Children make sensible choices about their activities and are good at tidying away equipment. They are building good relationships with each other and with the adults who work with them.

46 Language and literacy

77 Good progress is made in the development of speaking and listening skills. Children contribute well to class discussions and have their own ideas in group work that they are eager to share. They enjoy books and many are beginning to read, using picture and sound cues to support them. In literacy lessons children enjoy sharing Big Book stories and can re-tell the main events of stories accurately. Children reading Humpty Dumpty enjoyed the opportunity to recite the rhyme and to make up their own versions. Writing skills are well developed so that children are beginning to make up their own stories, understand printed instructions and are forming letters accurately.

46 **Mathematics**

78 Children make satisfactory progress in this aspect of learning. Some of them are starting from a low base but gain understanding of numbers to ten, can count backwards and forwards accurately and are beginning to form numbers correctly. In mathematics games they show that they can match and group objects, sort by shape and colour into groups and can talk about numbers using appropriate mathematical language. They handle number operations orally and show real enjoyment when working with practical equipment.

46 **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

79 Children talk knowledgeably about their local area and how they come to school. They are familiar with the school building and grounds and enjoy describing things that they like or dislike in the locality. Role play activities enable them to extend their ideas imaginatively. Children use computers with confidence showing understanding of the functions of the keyboard and mouse. They make good progress in increasing their understanding of their world.

46 **Physical development**

80 Children gain physical confidence and skill from their times in the hall and in the playground. They make satisfactory progress. Co-ordination and control improves in lessons and children are able to show their skills in travelling and freezing, making simple body shapes and are beginning to put sequences of movements together. There are sufficient opportunities for children to learn how to handle small tools, scissors and pencils. The outdoor play area provides good opportunities for playing and using games and equipment to help them with their physical control.

46 **Creative development**

81 Children make good progress in expressing their ideas through paint, clay, play dough and construction kits. In music, songs, rhymes and stories children listen well, respond imaginatively and enjoy making their own pictures in response to different stimuli. In a lesson using taped music to stimulate ideas about movement the children responded imaginatively.

82 The accommodation currently in use for the youngest children has been well organised to provide suitable home base spaces for the three classes. The additional temporary classroom that has been provided in recognition of the

increasing roll in reception is being very well used as an activity base for reading, writing, information technology and small group activities. Classroom areas and temporary classroom are stimulating environments for children's learning. The resources for learning are well prepared and of good quality.

46 **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

46

English

- 83 Standards in reading and writing are broadly average. However, standards are below those in similar schools. Significantly more pupils attain the higher levels in reading than in writing. This reflects the national position but the differences are more marked in this school. There is no clear trend in performance. The results in writing in 1999 were a slight improvement on those in 1998, but results in reading were lower.
- 84 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They are frequently supported well in the classroom and given appropriately matched tasks which enable them to meet the targets for them in their individual education plans. Pupils of average and above prior attainment make progress at a rate which is often too slow. This arises because there is too great an emphasis on consolidation of existing skills and knowledge rather than on the acquisition of new skills and understanding.
- 85 All pupils are keen to read, and most understand that reading is concerned with gathering meaning from text, rather than just guessing words. Pupils of all levels of ability enjoy talking about their books, and are able to recall the plot. This commitment to reading is very well supported by parents, many of whom regularly read with children in school, and help to create a positive culture. The more able pupils read fluently, and understand the way punctuation informs expressive reading. High attaining pupils willingly conjecture about the motives of characters in stories, and all pupils have the ability to make predictions to support their reading for meaning. Many understand the differences between fiction and non-fiction, and are able to use index and contents pages to track down information. These developing skills are well supported by the more focused teaching of the literacy hour, and, for pupils with special educational needs, by the well-targeted support of associate staff. Where pupils have difficulties, these often centre upon their poor ability to identify sounds within words to segment these sounds within words, and then to blend the sounds together again for fluent reading. Most pupils are dependent on a more limited range of strategies. They have strengths in the use of context clues and sight vocabulary but do not use phonic strategies to build unfamiliar words.
- 86 Where writing is good — as is often the case in topic folders — pupils apply their skills with accuracy and a sense of purpose. Pupils produce a range of writing, from diaries, book reviews and poetry. Most work is presented attractively and the quality of handwriting is good. During Year 2 almost all pupils write using a well-formed cursive script. Pupils' writing does not have a prominent part in classroom display and thus opportunities to celebrate achievement or promote discussion are lost.
- 87 The weaknesses in writing come about through the poorly planned progression in the teaching of skills, other than handwriting, as well as the inadequate opportunities

to write during the literacy hour. The writing is often too heavily weighted towards the completion of worksheets or to the re-writing of a familiar text. There is insufficient challenge to encourage pupils to use their own developing language for writing, or to write at length over a number of lessons. Weaknesses in spelling, which are often linked to pupils' poor phonic strategies, result in hesitancy, an over reliance on wordbooks, or a supporting adult. This slows the pace of the pupils' writing.

- 88 The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers of children under five display a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and of the development of language and literacy skills appropriate to this age group. Teachers' understanding of the National Literacy Strategy is less secure and, as a result, not all teachers are confident in taking these lessons. Insufficient emphasis is placed on the acquisition of new technical skills and development of appropriate vocabulary. Although they work hard on the planning and organisation of lessons, too little use is made of assessment information in planning the next stages in learning. Consequently, there is too little challenge in the work set for higher attaining pupils who are not sufficiently extended.
- 89 Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and these promote positive attitudes to learning.
- 90 The two subject co-ordinators provide satisfactory leadership. They have a clear view of the priorities for literacy in which they have led the staff in recent training. The school's policy for the teaching of English has recently been updated. This has resulted in the acquisition of a good range of resources, especially for shared and guided reading. Other resources are of good quality and in good quantity. They are used well in the classroom with the exception of IT resources which, currently, have minimal impact on pupils' learning, especially their reading and writing. The word processor is used to promote writing in a variety of forms but insufficient emphasis is given to its use to develop literacy skills.

46

Mathematics

- 91 Progress in mathematics is unsatisfactory. Standards achieved in the national tests in 1999 were close to the national average, but when compared with similar schools the results were below average. Standards are similar to those at the time of the last inspection.
- 92 Trends in performance are erratic. The average score of pupils in 1999 was similar to that in 1998 even though the proportion achieving level 2, the expected level, was lower. More pupils than previously achieved level 3, the higher level.
- 93 Many pupils in their final year at the school can recall number facts to 10. They can count backwards and forwards to 20 and in steps of 5 or 10, beginning at zero. Throughout the key stage, pupils make use of a limited range of strategies when calculating mentally. Most count in ones to add single and two-digit numbers. Pupils measure using non-standard measures. They can name and describe the number of sides and angles of regular straight-sided shapes, but cannot, for example, identify a pentagon that is not a regular shape.

- 94 At the beginning of most lessons, pupils are attentive and eager to participate. Concentration wanes when pupils are expected to listen for too long without active engagement in oral work or when tasks set provide few opportunities for pupils to think for themselves. Pupils receive considerable support from classroom assistants. This can be excessive and prevents pupils from becoming more independent in the way they tackle their work.
- 95 Teaching is at least satisfactory in three out of every four lessons but there are some shortcomings in the rest. The main weaknesses are: there are gaps of the teachers' own knowledge; there is a failure to make clear to pupils what is expected of them; and too often work is set which is not sufficiently challenging. There is insufficient teaching of the strategies pupils need to solve problems mentally. In the best mathematics lessons teachers use a good mix of questions and provide opportunities for all pupils to participate. The introduction and plenary sections of the lesson are conducted at a brisk pace and pupils are challenged to solve problems.
- 96 The co-ordinator is new to her post. All staff have been trained in preparation for the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy's daily mathematics lesson. An audit of mathematics in the school has been undertaken to inform an action plan for the implementation of the Strategy.
- 97 Providing greater opportunity for pupils to develop skills and raise standards in number across the curriculum was identified as a key issue in the last inspection. The school's scheme of work for mathematics, developed since the last inspection, details progression in different areas of mathematics. Learning objectives are listed in sequence but are not specified for each year and mental calculation strategies are not included. The absence of this crucial aspect of mathematics limits pupils' progress in mathematics lessons and its application in other areas of the curriculum. Assessment does not focus sufficiently on significant achievement to enable teachers to use their records to plan the next steps of learning.
- 98 There are insufficient resources for some aspects of the work. There is too little apparatus for pupils to use in some lessons where they are all engaged in the same task. Some equipment is also worn and in need of replacement.

46

46 **Science**

- 99 At the end of Key Stage 1, when pupils are seven, attainment is about average. The results of the 1999 assessments show a decline from the high standards achieved in 1998, but this decline is not reflected in the standards currently being achieved. Pupils are able to talk about the stages and processes involved in their work on the properties of materials. Year 2 pupils understand the concept of a fair test and can suggest ways of testing the strength of models made using story of The Three Little Pigs as a stimulus. Year 1 pupils can describe the ways in which their senses are used to discriminate taste, touch, smell, sight and hearing. Progress is generally satisfactory. Pupils gain knowledge and factual scientific information appropriately but their opportunities to engage in investigation and experimental activities are restricted and pupils do not make rapid enough progress in this aspect of science.

Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

1 Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers reinforce and consolidate skills in the introductions to lessons, and resources and equipment are well prepared. The short term lesson plans are satisfactory but there are weaknesses in the medium term planning. It identifies suitable activities but does not place sufficient emphasis on the acquisition of scientific skills. The planning does not create enough opportunities for pupils to be involved in posing possible outcomes before investigating through guided experiments to see how well they have predicted. Some science lessons are slow paced and rely too heavily on whole class work. Whilst activities are largely appropriate there is very little evidence of teachers matching the work to the needs of different groups of pupils in each class.

101 Pupils show interest in the lessons and many respond well to questions. For a minority of pupils in each class the lack of active learning opportunities leads to deterioration in their behaviour and a loss of attention to the tasks. When involved in group activities many pupils show an ability to listen to other points of view and they co-operate well in carrying out small scale group tasks. Work is enhanced by a good programme of visits to a local country park, and the school grounds are used to develop awareness of seasonal changes. The local park is also used to look at plants and trees. Visits to Snibston Discovery Park each year enable pupils to have direct experience of scientific ideas.

102 The school has made progress in science since the last inspection and now has a more clearly defined scheme of work that is planned as part of broader topics. This approach has ensured that science is well represented in teachers' planning but there is a loss of structure in some topics that results in the science element being diluted. The language and technical vocabulary of science is not given sufficient prominence in some lessons. There is sometimes a lack of clarity about the expectations in relation to scientific knowledge, skills and understanding that is required from the planned activities.

103 The resources available for teaching and learning in science are of good quality and there are sufficient to meet the needs of the current curriculum. The co-ordinator has revised the scheme of work and ensures that records of science assessments are maintained in each class. Further work is required to develop this approach so that each teacher has a clearer view of each pupil's attainment and progress. The portfolio that has been developed includes samples of pupils' work but this is limited in its use as a means of assessing and moderating the progress of pupils in their scientific understanding.

100 **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

Art

104 The good standards in art have been maintained since the last inspection. Only one designated art lesson was observed, but judgements are based upon a range of further evidence, including work on display, year group art portfolios, and a review of work by the co-ordinator, and scrutiny of both the art policy and scheme of work.

- 105 While art is used as a means to illustrate and explore other curriculum areas, it is rightly identified as a subject in its own right. This is important. The policy and scheme of work are helpful in giving direction to the school's work, and ensuring that children's experience is successfully integrated into other areas of learning where this is appropriate. It promotes the use of a range of media, and the results of this are evident in both the portfolio and current work on display. The scheme is less helpful in identifying techniques to ensure pupils develop their skills in a progressive way, making the most of each lesson, by building upon previous teaching and learning.
- 106 The quality of pupils' work is good, and some of the best examples are formally framed alongside the work of famous artists. This helps to nurture pupils' self-esteem, as well as encourage the notion of 'children as artists'. Pupils' observational skills are generally well developed. Portraits and first paintings in reception are vibrant. They show bold choice of colour, and confidence in expression. These traits are evident throughout the school, where current painting, in the style of either Monet or Van Gogh, are reflective, without being overly constrained by the original.
- 107 Opportunities to work in a range of media are an important aspect of the art provision. Year 1 pupils use clay as part of their topic work on the senses. This builds upon earlier experiences of using modeling materials in the reception class. Opportunities to weave, print, sew, to use fabrics and make collages and paintings in large dimensions enrich the art curriculum, and help pupils to engage in learning which has value and purpose beyond the individual. In this sense art is providing opportunities for pupils to develop their awareness of wonder, and the world beyond their immediate environment. The school does not effectively exploit this dimension when considering pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
- 100 **Design and Technology**
- 108 No observations were made of design and technology lessons during the inspection. Judgements are made on the basis of evidence gathered from samples of pupils' work, from photographs of completed work and from discussion with pupils.
- 109 Using construction kits and other materials to make models pupils make progress in the development of their designing and making skills at a satisfactory rate.
- 110 The co-ordinator is currently revising the scheme of work for design and technology which is taught as part of cross curricular topics. While appropriate focused practical tasks have been identified for all year groups, the key learning objectives and the associated skills to be developed in each year have not been clearly identified. This limits progress in the subject. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and is able to undertake some observation of lessons.
- 111 The school has sufficient and appropriate tools and materials for woodwork and the preparation of food. It is well stocked with commercially produced construction kits.

Geography and History

- 100
- 112 No history and geography lessons took place during the period of the inspection. This reflects the situation at the time of the previous inspection when, again, no lessons were observed. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work in their topic portfolios and on teachers' plans.
- 113 On the evidence available pupils' rate of progress in both subjects is satisfactory. In history they are developing a sense of chronology through the study of important events such as the Gunpowder Plot, and research into famous people from the past, including Elizabeth 1.
- 114 In geography younger pupils are gaining a satisfactory understanding of location within the immediate area of the school and the local town of Rushden. Older pupils gain understanding of geographical features from visits further afield such as the school trip to Snibston. A comparative study of Great Britain with Australia helps older pupils to gain a basic understanding of geographical differences.
- 115 Both subjects are enriched by links made through art. In studying ancient history pupils have explored the construction of Stonehenge through making replica models of the Sarson Stones. This valuable way of reconstructing a national heritage site in such an imaginative way makes an important contribution to pupils' appreciation of history and to their involvement in learning on a wider scale.
- 116 The co-ordinators have given priority to the development of a scheme of work to assist colleagues in their planning. They also seek to improve the quality and quantity of resources available to pupils, especially artefacts which pupils can handle and undertake further investigations.

100 **Information Technology**

- 117 Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is below national expectations.
- 118 From an early age pupils have access to information technology (IT) facilities with which they develop control skills using a mouse to operate, for example, clip art programs. Pupils become increasingly familiar with the computer keyboard and know the function of some of the important keys. They develop their IT capabilities in the communicating strand through simple word processing.
- 119 Progress is, however, unsatisfactory. Whilst skills and concepts are developed through whole-class lessons using a range of software, there are too few opportunities for children to practise their computer skills. Some pupils do not have enough access to computers. As a result they lack opportunities to develop their existing skills further or to develop new skills. This greatly restricts pupils' rate of progress.
- 120 Pupils are enthusiastic about information technology lessons but find concentration difficult without access to the computer. They are eager to develop their skills and take good care of the equipment when working on it.

- 121 Teaching is sound. Lessons are planned in satisfactory detail. Teachers have clear lesson objectives which relate mainly to improving skills and in applying these skills to work in other subjects. On occasions all pupils in a class are taught the same skills at the same time. When this happens not enough care is always taken to ensure that all pupils can see what is being demonstrated clearly enough.
- 122 The co-ordinator, who is new to the post, is aware that the current scheme of work needs revising to ensure a coherent approach to the progressive acquisition of skills. At present the school only has one operational computer in each classroom and this restricts pupils' access. However, pupils will shortly enjoy access to recently acquired additional resources which have yet to be installed. The school has only a limited range of software which needs to be extended in order to provide sufficient programmes to enable the necessary skills to be taught effectively.
- 100 **Music**
- 123 All pupils make satisfactory progress in music. They sing well in lessons and in assemblies and remember the words and tunes of songs, rhymes and action games. The youngest pupils clap simple rhythms and older pupils repeat quite complex patterns. Pupils know the names of percussion instruments and distinguish between high and low sounds when listening to music. When playing instruments they show a good level of control. Year 1 pupils use graphic notation to compose their own music and in Year 2 they are able to talk about pitch and tempo and give explanations of their use of different symbols to express their ideas in music. Most pupils respond to musical instructions and directions, for example, singing softly and loudly in response to the style of different types of music.
- 124 Pupils have opportunities both to listen to and perform music in lessons. They respond with interest and enthusiasm to invitations to sing and play instruments. In one lesson pupils responded particularly well to their teacher as the conductor, watching and listening carefully to the directions given.
- 125 The teaching of music is satisfactory. In lessons pupils are well managed and a good range of suitable activities is prepared. Not all teachers are specialist musicians but they are well supported by a commercial scheme that allows them to use a range of musical styles and approaches to singing, composition and music making.
- 126 The co-ordinator is new to the post. He has specialist skills but recognises that the school lacks a clear policy. The scheme of work needs to be supported by training to ensure that all teachers feel greater confidence in their ability to teach successfully in this subject.
- 127 Resources are adequate. The school has a variety of instruments that are of good quality and sufficient for whole classes to have access to them.

100 **Physical Education**

- 1 Pupils make satisfactory progress in physical education throughout the key stage. By the time they are seven they are often making good progress, especially in gymnastics and dance. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in physical activities by classroom assistants who are sensitive to the needs of the pupils.
- 129 Pupils are physically well co-ordinated. They have good levels of control and use their bodies to travel, make different body shapes and repeat simple sequences of movement to perform to their classmates. Even the youngest pupils are confident about running, jumping and stretching high and low to interpret broadcast musical accompaniment or teachers' instructions.
- 130 Pupils respond very well to work in physical education. They listen well and are careful about safety as they move about the hall. In one lesson some pupils failed to listen to instructions but were reprimanded and reminded of the need for safety and safe practice.
- 131 Teaching is always satisfactory and sometimes good. Most teachers manage pupils well in lessons. They have a good range of activities available to offer an appropriate level of physical challenge to pupils. In one good lesson the teacher used a commercial tape recording very well, interrupting the tape to make good teaching points so that pupils improved their performance as the lesson progressed. In another lesson the teacher demonstrated the moves and sequences to good effect so that pupils were able to copy and add to her ideas. All teachers observed gave feedback to pupils about how to improve their performance.
- 132 Most lessons contain a good range of opportunities for pupils to refine and practise their skills. Teachers generally make good use of the pupils themselves to demonstrate to the rest of the class. The structure of most lessons is good in that there is a warm up followed by activities, and a cooling down session at the end of each lesson.
- 133 Safety procedures are well established and dress codes adhered to. Pupils and teachers wear appropriate clothing and teachers are good role models for their pupils. The resources for physical activity are satisfactory and older pupils are involved in the setting up and dismantling of apparatus.

128 **Religious Education**

- 134 Attainment in religious education is in line with expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus. By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils can identify and describe some religious events. They have a satisfactory knowledge of a number of Bible stories and can retell stories from the Old and New Testaments.
- 135 Progress is broadly satisfactory and is shown by pupils extending their knowledge and understanding of religions. Where the pace in individual lessons is slow and children are not involved, they lose concentration.

- 136 Teaching is satisfactory and follows the local education authority's agreed syllabus. Teaching is better where children are encouraged to draw a simple meaning from a story with a moral and respond with a personal view.
- 137 The subject is managed by a co-ordinator. She is aware that the school's scheme of work requires revision. An adequate range of resources, including artefacts and books, are stored centrally. Additional resources are borrowed from the adjacent junior school.

128 **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

128 **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

- 138 The inspection team of four inspectors spent a total of 12 inspection days in the school over a period of four days. A total of 43 lessons or parts of lessons were observed, during 26.4 hours of classroom observation. A representative sample of pupils' work, covering all age groups, was scrutinised.
- 139 All subjects taught during the inspection were observed and the evidence gained from discussions with the headteacher and all staff, governors and members of the non-teaching staff which totalled 12 hours, was used to assess the standards, quality and progress made by pupils.
- 140 Pupils were observed arriving at school and leaving, in assemblies, during registration and in the playground. Discussions took place with pupils about their work and pupils in all year groups were heard reading.
- 141 School documentation including the school development plan, budget papers, policy documents, teachers' planning, pupils' records, reports to parents and attendance registers were examined.
- 142 A meeting was held for parents before the inspection to seek their views about the school. The meeting was attended by 16 parents. Sixty four questionnaire responses (33%) were analysed.
- 143 Feedback was offered and given to all members of staff on the quality of their teaching.

128 **DATA AND INDICATORS**

128 **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	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y2	210	2*	32*	7

* Y1 and Y2 only.

128 **Teachers and classes**

128 **Qualified teachers (YR – Y2)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	26:1

128 **Education support staff (YR – Y2)**

Total number of education support staff:	9
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	131

128

Financial data

Financial year:	1999
	£
Total Income	286421
Total Expenditure	281613
Expenditure per pupil	1482.17
Balance brought forward from previous year	7980
Balance carried forward to next year	12788

Number of questionnaires sent out: 194
 Number of questionnaires returned: 64

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	75	23	2	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	62	37	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	25	62	11	2	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	50	47	2	2	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	47	47	5	2	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	50	45	3	2	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	33	50	16	2	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	35	57	2	6	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	44	51	5	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	48	51	2	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	67	30	2	0	2