

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Ratby Community Primary School**

Ratby

LEA area : Leicestershire

Unique Reference Number : 119946

Headteacher : Mrs. G. Sismey

Reporting inspector : Mr. P. Belfield  
21661

Dates of inspection : 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707551

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Type of school :              | Primary                                      |
| Type of control :             | County                                       |
| Age range of pupils :         | 4 - 11                                       |
| Gender of pupils :            | Mixed  |
| School address :              | Main Street<br>Ratby<br>Leicester<br>LE6 0LN |
| Telephone number :            | 0116 2393610                                 |
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| Appropriate authority :       | Governing Body                               |
| Name of chair of governors :  | Mrs. Maureen Harwood                         |
| Date of previous inspection : | April 1996                                   |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members                          | Subject responsibilities  | Aspect responsibilities  |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| Mr. P. Belfield, Registered Inspector | Information Technology<br>Areas of learning for children under five | Attainment and progress<br>Teaching<br>Leadership and management<br>Equal opportunities            |
| Mr. M. Romano, Lay Inspector          |   | Attendance<br>Support, guidance and pupils' welfare<br>Partnership with parents and the community  |
| Mrs. B. Russell, Team Inspector       | English<br>Art<br>Religious education                               | Attitudes, behaviour and personal development<br>Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development |
| Mr. B. Loizou, Team Inspector         | Mathematics<br>Design technology<br>Music                           | The curriculum and assessment<br>The efficiency of the school<br>Special educational needs         |
| Mr. J. Foster, Team Inspector         | Science<br>History<br>Geography<br>Physical education               | Staffing , accommodation and learning resources  |

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## **MAIN FINDINGS**

### **What the school does well**

- Good standards are attained in religious education, art, design technology, history and music; the pupils make good progress in these subjects.
- The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is excellent, it is carefully planned and the pupils make very good progress.
- There is a good ethos; the pupils work hard and their behaviour is good.
- The school provides good opportunities for the pupils to develop strong moral values, broaden their social and speaking and listening skills, and extend their cultural awareness.
- Relationships are good and a high level of care is extended to all pupils.
- There are very effective links with the local community and with parents. These links improve the quality of learning for the pupils.

### **Where the school has weaknesses**

- Standards in mathematics are below average and the pupils' progress is slow.
- In many of the lessons, particularly in mathematics and science, the teachers do not build effectively on the pupils' prior learning; their planning does not clearly identify what the pupils are to learn.
- The facilities and resources for those pupils who are under five are unsatisfactory.

This is an improving school. The weaknesses are outweighed by what the school does well but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan which will be sent to all parents and carers of pupils at the school.

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

The school has made good progress since the last inspection and is well placed to make further improvements. The action plan from the previous inspection is clear and provides a good steer for school improvement. The school has responded well to most of the issues raised in the previous report. The school now has a longer term strategic plan. Development planning is effective and focuses on raising standards and improving teaching and learning. It covers a four year period and addresses all of the significant aspects of the school's development. The role of the curriculum co-ordinators has been improved. They monitor their subjects carefully, scrutinise planning and evaluate the quality of the pupils' learning by collecting and analysing samples of the pupils' work. A policy for teaching and learning has been implemented and the school has addressed the issues related to curriculum planning and assessment. The headteacher has monitored the impact of the curriculum changes effectively. The quality of the teaching and learning in design and technology and information technology has improved and the pupils are making progress. A problem identified in the last inspection, and still not resolved, is that the teachers' lesson planning does not always clearly identify what the pupils are to learn. This results in work that is not matched to the pupils' ability, particularly the more able pupils.

**Standards in subjects**

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

| <b>Performance in</b> | <b>Compared with all schools</b> | <b>Compared with similar schools</b> |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| English               | C                                | D                                    |
| Mathematics           | D                                | E                                    |
| Science               | C                                | E                                    |

| <b>Key</b>                |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| <i>well above average</i> | <i>A</i> |
| <i>above average</i>      | <i>B</i> |
| <i>average</i>            | <i>C</i> |
| <i>below average</i>      | <i>D</i> |
| <i>well below average</i> | <i>E</i> |

These results relate to those pupils who left the school in July 1999. They show that standards in English are average when compared to all schools but below those found in similar schools. Standards in mathematics are below average when compared to all schools and well below average when compared to those found in similar schools. Overall, there has been an upward trend in the standards the pupils' have attained in national tests over the last three years.

Inspection findings are that most of the children are likely to meet the desirable learning outcomes for pupils entering compulsory education in all of the areas of learning. They make satisfactory progress but this could be improved if there were better facilities and resources for the children under five. The pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress in English and science and the standards that they attain are broadly average. In mathematics standards are below average at the end of both key stages and this is largely due to the low standards in mental arithmetic. There has been a rising trend in attainment in English, mathematics and science since the last inspection but there is still room for further improvement. In both key stages the standards in art, design technology, history, religious education and music are above the expectations for the pupils' age and they are making good progress. The standards in information technology (IT) are average by the end of Key Stage 1 and below average by the end of Key Stage 2. The pupils make satisfactory progress in all other subjects in both key stages.

### Quality of teaching

| Teaching in:           | Under 5      | 5 - 7 years  | 7 - 11 years |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| English                | Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |
| Mathematics            | Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |
| Science                |              | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |
| Information technology |              | Good         | Satisfactory |
| Religious education    |              | Good         | Good         |
| Other subjects         | Satisfactory | Good         | Good         |

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Thirty-seven percent of teaching is good or very good, sixty-per cent is satisfactory and three per cent is unsatisfactory.

*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                 | The pupils are responsive in lessons and their behaviour is good. They are respectful of each other and they enjoy taking responsibility.   |
| Attendance                | Above the national average.   |
| Ethos*                    | The headteacher, with the support of the governors and staff, creates an ethos that supports achievement and learning.  |
| Leadership and management | The school is well led and managed The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership and is well supported by staff and governors. Good strategies are in place for moving the school forward and raising standards. |
| Curriculum                | The content, planning and organisation of the curriculum is good.   |



|   |  |
|---|--|
| Pupils with special educational needs           | A strength of the school. There is an excellent level of classroom and individual support for pupils and they make very good progress in improving their basic skills.   |
| Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development | Good. The school provides good opportunities for the pupils to develop strong moral values, broaden their social skills, and extend their cultural awareness.  |
| Staffing, resources and accommodation           | The staff and governors work as a team. The accommodation has been improved since the last inspection. The space provided for those pupils who are under five is limited; there are too few staff to support their learning. |
| 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**

| <b>What most parents like about the school</b>   | <b>What some parents are not happy about</b>   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They feel encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school.</li> <li>• They find the staff approachable.</li> <li>• The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children.</li> <li>• The school achieves high standards of good behaviour.</li> <li>• Their children like school.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns about the amount of work that</li> <li>• That their children do not have many opportunities to get involved in extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul> |

The inspection team supports the parents' positive views, but judge that the homework provided by the school is appropriate and that pupils have opportunities to become involved in a good range of extra-curricular activities.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

**In order to improve the quality of education further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:**

- **raise the standards in mathematics by :**

ensuring that the key learning objectives are identified in teachers' planning, particularly in relation to the pupils' knowledge and understanding of number and mental arithmetic;

teaching the pupils mental and oral calculation strategies so that they can handle numbers more confidently when solving problems and carrying out investigations;

ensuring that the introductory oral and mental sessions challenge all of the pupils sufficiently;

adopting strategies to address the underachievement of boys in mathematics;

reviewing the setting arrangements in Years 5 and 6 so that the teachers can more easily plan work to meet the needs of the pupils.

- **raise the achievement of more able pupils by:**

ensuring that the teachers' planning takes account of the pupils' prior attainment and identifies what it is that pupils of differing ability are to learn.

- **in partnership with the Local Education Authority improve the provision for those pupils who are under five by:**

reviewing the way in which these children are placed in the mixed-age Reception and Year 1 classes;

considering the possibility of additional adult help;

increasing the resources for outdoor activities.

## INTRODUCTION

## Characteristics of the school

3. The school is situated in the large village of Ratby in Leicestershire and there are 310 pupils on roll. The majority of the pupils come from a mixture of local authority and privately owned homes. 32 pupils come from outside of the village and there are nine travellers' children on roll. Sixteen per cent of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational need which is broadly average for schools of this type. Five pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. Seven per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. The children are admitted into the school at the beginning of the term when they become five years of age. At the time of the inspection there were fourteen children under five and eleven traveller children. The attainment of pupils on entry shows wide variation, but it is generally below average.

### The school has identified the following as its main aims and priorities for the current academic year:

- the raising of standards;
- the introduction of the numeracy hour;
- to continue the development of the literacy hour;
- to improve staff confidence and resources for information and communication technology.

## Key Indicators

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1

For latest reporting year:

| Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1999 | 25   | 22    | 47    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results   |          | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above | Boys     | 20      | 24      | 22          |
|   | Girls    | 20      | 22      | 20          |
|   | Total    | 40      | 46      | 42          |
| Percentage at NC Level 2 or above       | School   | 85(84)  | 98(95)  | 89(86)      |
|   | National | 82 (78) | 83(81)  | 87(84)      |

| Teacher Assessments                     |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above | Boys     | 23      | 21          | 24      |
|   | Girls    | 22      | 21          | 22      |
|   | Total    | 45      | 42          | 46      |
| Percentage at NC Level 2 or above       | School   | 96(89)  | 89(91)      | 98(86)  |
|   | National | 82(81)  | 86(85)      | 87(86)  |

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2

For latest reporting year:

| Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1999 | 23   | 26    | 49    |

<sup>1</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

<sup>2</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

| <b>National Curriculum Test Results</b> |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above | Boys     | 12      | 10          | 13      |
|   | Girls    | 25      | 20          | 25      |
|   | Total    | 37      | 30          | 38      |
| Percentage at NC Level 4 or above       | School   | 76(82)  | 61(48)      | 78(68)  |
|   | National | 70(65)  | 69(59)      | 78(69)  |

| <b>Teacher Assessments</b>              |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above | Boys     | 9       | 9           | 9       |
|   | Girls    | 24      | 19          | 24      |
|   | Total    | 33      | 28          | 33      |
| Percentage at NC Level 4 or above       | School   | 67(68)  | 57(62)      | 67(66)  |
|   | National | 68(65)  | 69(65)      | 75(72)  |

### Attendance

| Percentage of half days (sessions)                            |                      |                           | %   |
|---|----------------------|---------------------------|-----|
| Missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year | Authorised Absence   | School                    | 6.8 |
|   |                      | National comparative data | 5.7 |
|   | Unauthorised Absence | School                    | 0   |
|   |                      | National comparative data | 0.5 |

### Exclusions

| Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year: |  | Number |
|--|--|--------|
| Fixed period   |  | 1      |
| Permanent  |  | 0      |

### Quality of teaching

| Percentage of teaching observed which is : |  | %  |
|--|--|----|
| Very good or better                        |  | 11 |
| Satisfactory or better                     |  | 97 |
| Less than satisfactory                     |  | 3  |

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

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

#### **Attainment and progress**

##### National tests

4. Recent benchmark data and the results of national tests at age eleven indicate that the performance of the pupils in English is average and below average when compared with the performance of pupils from similar schools. The results in mathematics are below average and well below those of pupils from similar schools. The results in science are in line with the national average but well below average when compared with those of pupils from similar backgrounds. In spite of lower results in mathematics in 1998, taking the four years 1996 to 1999 together, the figures do point to an upward trend. The results of the national tests indicate that the performance of the pupils at age seven in writing have been consistently above the national average. Reading has been close to the national average. The trend in mathematics is one of year on year improvement with standards in line with the national average in 1999.

##### Inspection findings

5. The children's attainment is below average on entry to the Reception classes. Inspection findings are that most of the children are likely to meet the desirable learning outcomes for pupils entering compulsory education in all of the areas of learning. They make satisfactory progress but this could be improved if there was better provision for the children under five. The pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress in English and science and the standards that they attain are broadly average. In mathematics standards are below average at the end of both key stages and this is largely due to the low standards in mental arithmetic. The pupils in both key stages make unsatisfactory progress in this aspect of mathematics. There has been a rising trend in attainment in English, mathematics and science since the last inspection but there is still room for further improvement. A common weakness in many of the lessons observed was that the objectives were unclear and, at times, the work was not well matched to the pupils' ability. This results in some underachievement in English, mathematics and science, particularly for the more able pupils. The school has targeted the underachievement of boys in English by providing additional literacy support. It is having a positive impact on their attainment and standards are rising and close to those attained by girls in the school.
6. The teaching of reading has many strengths and by the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of the pupils are reading and enjoying books. Some are developing preferences for certain authors or types of literature. The pupils have an appropriate range of skills and good teaching ensures that they quickly learn common words by sight and develop their word-building skills. Most pupils develop as fluent readers. Sound progress continues in Key Stage 2 and by the end

of Year 6 many pupils are able to read independently and are becoming proficient silent readers.

7. The pupils' progress in writing is variable in both key stages. Spelling has improved across the school and is systematically taught. The work undertaken in the Literacy Hour is developing the pupils' skills in punctuation and extending their vocabulary and understanding of grammar. However, there are too few opportunities in both key stages for these tools of writing to be put into practice in extended, independent creative story-writing. By the beginning of Key Stage 2 most pupils have developed a legible, joined style of handwriting but across the school the standards of presentation are inconsistent and some pupils' work is poorly scribed. Where teacher expectations are higher, the pupils are quite capable of producing neat, well-presented work.
8. In mathematics the pupils make satisfactory progress in their work on shape, space and measures. However, their general inability to use a range of mental and oral calculating strategies when handling numbers in a variety of simple problems and investigations considerably affects the overall standards achieved in mathematics. Work on problem solving and investigation using arithmetic, number systems and, for higher attaining pupils, complex number series, are under-represented. Boys are underachieving in mathematics and the school has yet to address this issue. The lower standards in mathematics are directly linked to the lack of clear learning objectives and the expectations of some pupils in lessons being pitched too low. The school is aware of the problem and the adoption of the *National Numeracy Strategy* has resulted in more emphasis being placed on numeracy and especially on mental arithmetic. The setting of the pupils in Years 5 and 6 has resulted in more able pupils working above the levels expected for their age.
9. In science, the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress but teachers' planning does not always take account of the differing abilities in the class and, on occasions, the level of work is pitched too low for more able pupils. In subjects other than English, mathematics and science, good teaching results in the pupils attaining good standards in art, history, religious education and music and they are making good progress in these subjects. Design and technology was found to be unsatisfactory in the last inspection but the pupils are now making good progress due to the improvement in the planning and in the quality of teaching. Information technology is an improving subject and standards by the end of Key Stage 1 are now average. The standards are rising in Key Stage 2 but standards of attainment are still below average by the time the pupils leave the school. The pupils are making satisfactory progress in geography and physical education.

### **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

10. This is a strength of the school. The pupils quickly settle into the calm routines of the school, learn to listen to the views of others and reflect carefully on ideas that come up in class discussions. The traveller children settle quickly into the school and are supported by members of the Traveller Education Service. The pupils

enjoy coming to school. They are eager to learn, co-operate well in whole class situations, groups or pairs, respond to challenge and share their enjoyment of learning with other children and their teachers. When their interest is engaged, the pupils are prepared to work hard to complete tasks and to master new skills. They gain confidence in voicing their opinions through the knowledge that what they have to say will be listened to and will receive careful consideration. As they progress through the school, older pupils demonstrate their ability to sustain concentration for considerable lengths of time and they are encouraged to use their reading skills to study independently.

11. Behaviour is generally good in lessons, around the school, in the dining hall and during breaks. Movement around the school is orderly and staff supervise the exit to the playground for morning and lunchtime breaks. The pupils are trustworthy and kind to one another. They are courteous and polite to staff and visitors. Classroom rules are drawn up by the pupils and their teacher and they are well understood and the pupils are generally happy to abide by them. The pupils are clear about how unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with.
12. The pupils' personal development is very good. Through a carefully planned programme of personal and social education the pupils learn to consider the needs of others, to look after each other and to become responsible. Older pupils are given many opportunities to take responsibility, including regular playground supervision, collection of registers, preparation of the hall for assembly and assisting with the younger pupils in Key Stage 1. They perform these 'duties' with great goodwill and efficiency. Through their lessons, all of the children learn to both give and accept fair criticism and they respond well to praise. The children under five have settled quickly into school routines and show confidence when working and playing together. However, the unsatisfactory facilities affects the planning and organisation of activities for the youngest children and they are not provided with sufficient opportunities to select activities and equipment for themselves.

### **Attendance**

13. Attendance in the school is good and above the national average. The pupils are punctual and registration is carried out efficiently and speedily. The attendance of the traveller children is carefully monitored and the appropriate Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) *green card* procedures are followed.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

14. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory overall. It ranges from very good to a small minority that is unsatisfactory.

15. The quality of the teaching of those children who are under five is satisfactory. They are taught in two mixed-age classes of Reception and Year 1 pupils in an open plan teaching space. The teachers work hard to provide an appropriate range of learning activities. Much of the work is planned separately for the under fives but in some lessons, for example the literacy hour, the children are involved in the whole class teaching and this develops their speaking and listening skills. The cramped accommodation limits the range of activities that can be provided and there are too few opportunities for the children to select activities and equipment for themselves. Additional adult support is only available for eight hours each week, and although the teachers have help from parents, there is too little support for the children under five. When the children are engaged in group work, the noise levels in the two classes rise considerably. On these occasions all of the pupils find it more difficult to work. The teachers do their best to overcome these difficulties by ensuring that similar activities take place simultaneously in both classes and by co-ordinating the time when activities start and finish. They give a high priority to the development of the children's language and numeracy and to developing positive attitudes to learning.
16. The best teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2 is seen in English, science and religious education lessons in Years 2, 3 and 5/6. The teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects they are required to teach and this is demonstrated in the range and the quality of the work that is produced by the pupils. The teachers' planning is thorough and detailed and the pupils are given challenging tasks. The teachers organise the pupils in a variety of ways, but most lessons begin with carefully directed whole class teaching. This is followed by small group and individual work. The pupils are required to work at a brisk pace and the teachers make it clear to them what they are going to learn. The teachers use skilful questioning to assess and extend the pupils' understanding. This results in the pupils being confident to hypothesise and predict in science and to enjoy the interactive word work in the Literacy Hour. The teachers build very successfully on previous work. For example, in science lessons in Years 2 and 3, the teachers have high expectations of the pupils as they investigate electric circuits and reflection. The lessons have a good pace and the teachers are clear about what the pupils are to learn.
17. The teachers have been keen to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. All teachers devote an appropriate amount of time to literacy and numeracy. The deputy headteacher provides a very good role model for the teaching of English. The lesson plans are clear about what the pupils are to learn, expectations are high, there is good humour and a brisk pace. Challenging questions effectively develop the pupils' understanding of the shared text and group tasks are carefully matched to the pupils' abilities.
18. Only three per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. However, it was a common weakness in many of the lessons that the objectives were unclear and, at times, the work was not well matched to the pupils' ability. This resulted in some



underachievement in English, mathematics and science, particularly for the more able pupils.

19. The teaching of those pupils with special educational needs is very good. Individual education plans are used very effectively by the teachers to plan work that is well matched to the pupils' abilities. Special needs support staff are well deployed and are clear about what the pupils are to learn. The work of the literacy support teacher is very effective in targeting pupils' specific weaknesses and supporting their writing with word banks and aids to spelling. Individual education plans are monitored regularly and appropriate targets are set for each child. The teachers make good use of the additional resources provided and work closely with the special needs co-ordinator.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

20. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education takes full account of the requirements of the agreed syllabus. The school is successful in providing a broad and balanced curriculum. The curriculum for the children who are under five is satisfactory but the school has organised their provision alongside the pupils in Year 1 who share the same classrooms and facilities. Teachers' planning specifically takes account of the nationally agreed areas of learning for children under five but the available space is limited and restricts the number of practical activities that can be planned in each lesson. The additional support available for the children from a classroom assistant is very limited. The mathematics curriculum has been reorganised in line with the National Numeracy Strategy and there is now a greater emphasis on the teaching of numeracy. However, the majority of the pupils are not reaching the expected standards in mathematics. The Numeracy Strategy is beginning to influence the teaching but more account will need to be taken of the pupils' prior attainment and the teaching of mental calculation.
21. There are policies and guidelines for all subjects and this helps teachers with their planning. The topics and themes are supported with detailed planning. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection and the teachers' planning is now judged to be good. It provides a clear picture of what is to be taught and this is well supported by daily and weekly evaluations. Co-ordinators monitor their subjects by looking at the planning and collecting samples of pupils' work. They make assessments or spot checks and this is recorded in the medium term planning. The portfolios of pupils' work are clearly annotated and explain why a particular piece of work has achieved the level assessed by the teacher. But this information is not always used effectively by teachers in their lesson planning to guide their expectations of what pupils of differing ability should learn.
22. The school has developed an equal opportunities policy which is reflected in most of the work done in lessons. The underachievement of boys in literacy has successfully been addressed and the school is planning to do the same in

mathematics. Personal and social education is provided both formally and informally and this is reflected in the planned curriculum as well as the range of extra-curricular activities. Out-of-school activities include music, dance, environmental work and sport. A significant proportion of boys and girls participate in these activities that also include cross-country events, basketball, football and netball. The pupils are also taken on educational visits, including the brass ensemble and groups of singers participate in various musical events. A good range of visits are planned to support the work done across the curriculum and these include an orienteering day at Beaumanor Hall, visits to the science exhibition in Derby and to the Avoncroft Museum. The pupils also benefit from annual residential visits to Borreaton Park in Shropshire and Scarborough. Groups and speakers are invited into school, for example, musicians from Groby College and a Brass Ensemble from Leicestershire Arts perform a variety of music. The school also organises “*Activity Days*” related to a specific topic or theme, for example the *World War 2 Day* and an activity day as part of the *Ancient Greeks* topic. All of these activities enhance and support the planned curriculum and the teachers plan a series of lessons with related topics and activities.

23. In the last inspection assessment was highlighted as a weakness. Since then the school has appointed an assessment co-ordinator who has successfully implemented new procedures and guidelines to help teachers record and monitor the progress pupils make. The procedures for assessing pupils’ work are good and they enable all staff to maintain detailed records of the pupils’ progress. There is evidence of good marking but this is not consistent across the school. The pupils are tested regularly in reading and spelling and their work is discussed and moderated to check on standards across the school. Having established these procedures the school is well placed to identify the specific needs of higher attaining pupils and to raise expectations further by providing more challenging work for them so that standards will improve.
24. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent. The procedures and practices are well established and they successfully enable all the pupils with specific learning needs to make very good progress. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning and the literacy support is effectively planned to improve the way pupils read, write, speak and listen. Some lessons are specifically planned so that groups or individual pupils are withdrawn by the special educational needs co-ordinator or the literacy support teacher. Individual education plans are monitored regularly and targets are set that are specific to the needs of each child with special needs. The teachers keep good records of each child’s progress. Most of the pupils with special educational needs are in the early stages of the Code of Practice and the school has rightly targeted support early, so that pupils are provided with the most effective teaching to enable them to make progress. The pupils with physical disabilities or learning difficulties receive excellent support from staff who are specifically assigned to support them on a full-time or part-time basis in lessons.

25. There is a good programme of support for the travelling children and they are fully integrated into the school. The pupils are assessed when they are admitted to the school and targets for learning are set for them. The school ensures effective continuity of learning for these pupils by making good use of the *Green Card* record of their attainment and progress. The Traveller Education Service provides a support teacher who visits the school regularly. She offers advice and guidance to the staff, helps to plan the programme for support and reviews the progress that the pupils are making.

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

26. The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Provision for moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.
27. The pupils' spiritual development is promoted through carefully planned assemblies where time is provided for prayer and quiet reflection. The value of perseverance and personal achievement is ably demonstrated by the pupils who perform in the school's brass band. The pupils who are beginners are quite confident to play before an audience knowing that their work will be well received and applauded. Through shared stories such as 'Granny's Quilt' the pupils in Year 4 learn to value the memories they have of important events in their own family, to listen carefully to the opinions of others and to consider their own strengths and weaknesses. In class assemblies the pupils' good work is celebrated and note is made of special occasions such as birthdays.
28. There is a clear, consistent and firm approach to discipline by all staff and pupils are helped to deal with their own moments of frustration or unacceptable behaviour. The quality of relationships is good and this results in a good working atmosphere in the classrooms. All of the adults provide good role models and the pupils are taught to know the difference between right and wrong. They are given clear guidance on how to behave and teachers expect them to show courtesy and respect for each other and all adults. In a religious education lesson, the pupils discussed the need to take responsibility for their own actions and to recognise those occasions when they might need to say, "Sorry".
29. The provision for the pupils' social development is good. The youngest children quickly learn to fit in with a large group, to take turns, to perform duties around the classroom and to find and return their own resources. The older pupils perform a variety of tasks around the school, including helping to prepare and run assemblies, taking turns to assist teachers with daily playground duty and organising resources for the work of some classes in Key Stage 1. There are good links with the local community through participation in village events such as fairs and charity sales. The contribution of many parents and local residents, who offer their services on a voluntary basis to the school, helps to foster this sense of community.

30. The provision for the pupils' cultural development has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now good. Work in history, geography, art, music and religious education extends and reinforces the pupils' knowledge and understanding of their own culture and gives them an insight into the richness and diversity of other cultures and religions. Good use is made of local amenities and class topic work is enriched by visits to museums and galleries. In their topic on World War Two, the Year 5 and Year 6 pupils were able to interview elderly residents of the village who recalled what Ratby was like during that time. Whenever possible, the school employs visiting drama or music specialists to perform for the children. Pupils are given many opportunities to perform to an audience and each year group takes it in turn to put on a production for parents and friends. There are many good examples of artwork on classroom and corridor walls and the quality of their display indicates that pupils' work is valued. The teachers ensure that the background and culture of the travelling children is given appropriate prominence when planning the curriculum. Evidence of this was seen during the inspection when a topic about houses and homes was being studied.

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

31. The school provides good support, guidance and welfare for its pupils. This is reflected in the way that pupils conduct themselves in and around the school. The staff know the pupils very well and relationships between staff and pupils are good. The school provides a very safe and secure environment for all pupils including the traveller children. There is excellent support for pupils with special educational needs.
32. The procedures for monitoring the pupils' academic and personal development are comprehensive and are efficiently followed by the school. The criticisms made in the last inspection report about the limited record keeping procedures have been successfully addressed. Parents appreciate the two consultations they have with teachers each year and find that the pupil reports tell them about their child's progress. The pupils' personal development is now well monitored by teachers who know the pupils well. They record concerns and personal targets in pupils' profiles, and monitor individual progress in meeting these targets.
33. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. Monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour is seen as the responsibility of all staff and the school's behaviour policy is implemented fairly and consistently. There are effective systems of rewards and sanctions used to promote the values of good behaviour, attention in class and respect for teachers and other staff. Teachers make good use of class assemblies, circle time, and RE lessons to raise pupils' self-esteem to discuss caring for people and to praise achievements. Procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance are good and there is no unauthorised absence.

34. The staff are very aware of the child protection procedures which are very good. There is regular training and the school has very close liaison with outside agencies. Members of staff are caring and sensitive to pupils' needs. Accident procedures are very effective and health and safety procedures are comprehensive; the school takes its responsibilities seriously. There are regular inspections of the grounds and buildings and all statutory requirements are met. The good support, guidance and welfare provided by the school makes a very considerable contribution to the pupil's self-esteem, well-being and achievement.

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

35. The school's positive partnership with parents and the wider community makes a good contribution to the pupils' social and academic development. Very good information is provided for parents in the School Prospectus, in the Annual Report to Parents and in newsletters. The teacher's annual reports on each pupil are well designed and effectively summarise each child's progress and attainment and have improved since the last inspection. Parental involvement in the school is good and parents and other volunteers help with lessons, visits and extra-curricular activities. Governors are involved in the life of the school and there is an active and successful Parent Staff Association which organises social functions and fund raising events. Parents are involved in their children's work at home and the homework diary gives them clear information about what is expected.
36. The school has good links with the community and these make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning and personal growth. They are involved with the many visitors to the school, who include the school nurse, the vicar, a large number of people from industry, the arts and other schools. The pupils are taken on educational visits to museums, parks, exhibitions and a residential centre. They collect for a number of local and national charities including a hospice in Leicester. The links with the village pre-school group are good, and the programme of visits and meetings with parents and pupils before moving to the secondary school ensure that transfer to the next stage of education is smooth. The school is used regularly in the evening, and this exemplifies the key part the school plays in the life of the village.

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

### **Leadership and management**

37. The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. She has established a clear educational direction for the school and has put in place good strategies for moving the school forward and raising standards. The headteacher is supported by an able deputy who sets a good example in both her teaching and her leadership. Very effective support is provided for curriculum development. The school has set

realistic targets for improvement. The governing body has undergone several changes recently but demonstrate a commitment to supporting the work of the school. Governors' committees enable the governors to perform their duties effectively. They have a clear view of the school's priorities and the ways in which these will be achieved. The school's development planning is effective and focuses on raising standards and improving teaching and learning. It covers a four year period and addresses all of the significant aspects of the school's development. The staff and governors evaluate progress towards the targets set. The review of practice and its impact on the quality of education provided and standards achieved is evident in the school's work. This is exemplified in how the school was awarded the Basic Skills Agency quality mark.

38. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and is well placed to improve further. The action plan from the previous inspection is a good model from which to plan improvements and the school has responded well to most of the issues raised in the previous report. The school now has a longer term strategic plan. The role of the curriculum co-ordinators has been effectively developed. They now monitor their subjects by scrutinising curriculum planning and evaluating the quality of the pupils' learning by collecting and analysing samples of their work. A policy for teaching and learning has been written and the school has very successfully addressed the issues related to curriculum planning and assessment. The headteacher has carried out an extensive monitoring and evaluation programme to ensure that the curriculum is implemented effectively. There is an improved range of activities planned in design and technology and the pupils now make good progress in this subject. Information technology is improving and standards are beginning to rise. The school has increased the resources and provided clear guidelines for teaching the subject. A problem identified in the last inspection, and still not resolved, is that the teachers' lesson planning does not always clearly identify what the pupils are to learn. This results in work that is not matched to the pupils' ability, particularly the more able pupils.
39. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy has been well managed and this has enabled the teachers to make a confident start. A review and evaluation of progress is reported regularly to governors. The staff have received training for the introduction of the Numeracy Hour and funds have been set aside for the co-ordinator to teach demonstration lessons. The school makes excellent provision for those pupils that have special educational needs and, in partnership with the Traveller Education Service, ensures that the provision for traveller children is good.
40. The school has a good ethos. The school's aims are reflected in its work and its policies are implemented consistently and effectively. The staff work well together as a team; they face the challenge of implementing initiatives with commitment.

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

41. The school has an appropriate number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers. Support staff, including those who assist those pupils with special educational needs, are well qualified and make a good contribution to the quality of education provided by the school but there is too little support provided for the children under five. There are suitable arrangements for the appraisal of teachers and the headteacher holds regular professional development interviews with the staff. The programme of induction for newly qualified teachers is good. Staff development opportunities reflect an appropriate balance between the needs of the school and the professional development of individual staff. All staff have received training for the national Literacy Strategy and Numeracy Strategy.
42. The school has worked hard since the last inspection to improve the quality of the accommodation and the environment for learning. Additional teaching spaces have been provided and a classroom has been converted into a library. The accommodation provides sufficient space for the number of pupils although the provision for those children who under the age of five is unsatisfactory. The facilities for outdoor play are inadequate and the space available in the mixed Reception and Year 1 classes prevents the staff from providing a sufficiently wide range of activities. The school has good playground and playing field provision. The grounds, including a pond and environmental area are used effectively to support learning.
43. The level of resources is satisfactory overall. There are good resources for literacy, science, religious education, art, design and technology, music and for pupils with special educational needs. The resources for other subjects of the National Curriculum are satisfactory. However, there are shortages for those pupils who are under five to promote their physical development out of doors. There are no wheeled vehicles and outside play equipment and no outdoor climbing apparatus. The school uses external resources well. It makes effective use of museums and art galleries. Residential visits are arranged for older pupils and visitors to the school include actors, musicians and puppeteers.

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

44. The school runs smoothly and effectively and the financial administration is good.
45. The governing body has a finance and general purpose committee, which takes responsibility for monitoring the school budget. The finance committee oversees the school's budget and the school development plan. There are terms of reference which allow the finance committee to allocate funds to a number of budget categories which are then administered by the headteacher and staff. These procedures are effective and there are good planning arrangements in place to make the most effective use of the resources available to the school. There are good procedures in place to ensure value for money.

46. Oversight of the school's finances is good. There are good routines in place to ensure that the administration of the school's resources is effective. The bursar and clerical assistants are very capable and knowledgeable and they ably assist the headteacher in the day-to-day administration and the management of finances. Money allocated for the support of pupils with special educational needs and traveller children is directed towards meeting their needs. Funding is successfully directed towards the professional development and training of the staff.
47. Good use is made of learning resources across the school and the school has adapted well to the specific needs of the recent Literacy and Numeracy Strategies . The support staff are effectively deployed to provide support although the provision for children under five does not have sufficient additional support in the form of a nursery nurse or classroom assistant.
48. Taking into account the below average attainment on entry, the satisfactory progress of the pupils, the satisfactory teaching and the good use and management of resources, the school provides satisfactory value for money.



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

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

49. The children are admitted to the Reception class at the start of the term they reach five years of age. If their fourth birthday falls between September and January, they are admitted into one of two mixed-age Reception/Year 1 classes which occupy a shared teaching space. If their fourth birthday falls between January and August they are admitted to a single age Reception class. At the time of the inspection fourteen pupils under the age of five were being taught in two classes. The results of the baseline assessment indicate that the children enter Reception with a wide range of attainment but their attainment is generally below average. By the time they are five, most of the children are likely to achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes. The children make satisfactory progress in all of the areas of learning but the rate of progress within lessons slows when there is insufficient adult support to extend the children's learning and when the range of activities available is restricted by the lack of space.

#### **Personal and social development**

50. Good relationships are established between the children, their families and the staff. The daily routines and rules form the basis for developing the children's understanding of the organisation of the school and the wider community. Teaching is sound in this area of learning and the children make satisfactory progress. They develop positive attitudes to learning and good relationships with adults and other children. There is a secure and caring atmosphere where the contributions of all the children are valued. The teachers' use of praise and encouragement contributes to the growth of the children's self-esteem. When the children make mistakes or, when they do not succeed with tasks, they are encouraged to understand that they cannot always get things right first time and that they should persevere. The children listen carefully to the adults and concentrate well when the whole class is gathered together. In group tasks the noise levels in the two classes rises significantly and, on occasions, this make it difficult for the children to concentrate on their work. The restrictions of space and the planning and organization of activities does not always provide sufficient opportunities for the children to select activities for themselves.

#### **Language and literacy**

51. The children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning. When all the class is gathered together they listen carefully to the teacher. There is a very clear emphasis in the teachers' daily planning on developing the pupils' language and literacy. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and the skills of speaking and listening are developed well in teacher directed activities, although the opportunities for imaginative play are restricted by both the cramped accommodation and the shortage of appropriate resources. The children listen to the teacher and to each other and can take turns to speak. They are confident when

speaking to adults and in front of a larger group and they are taught to speak in more formal situations when talking about the different buildings in their locality. Early reading skills are developed through the sharing of books and stories. Careful assessment by the teachers ensures that all of the children make satisfactory progress. The children make steady progress as they 'read' a book using picture clues and their own knowledge of the story. They recognise many letter sounds. They learn that writing conveys meaning and are able to make predictions about events in the 'Big Books' which are used effectively by the teacher. More able children are beginning to recognise familiar words and all children learn how a story is structured with a beginning and end. The children enjoy books and are provided with an appropriate choice. They handle them well and turn the pages carefully. The children make satisfactory progress in their writing skills. Most children can write their name. They are all able to make marks and draw pictures to share their ideas and many of the children can draw or trace letters correctly and record other information.

### **Mathematics**

52. In mathematics the children are making satisfactory progress. Through small group work and class activities they extend their mathematical language and learn to count, sort and measure. The teachers ensure that the children become familiar with mathematical language through stories, rhymes, discussions and activities. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and songs and rhymes are used effectively to develop the children's mathematical understanding. The teachers have appropriate expectations and take every opportunity to introduce numbers and counting into activities. However, they encounter difficulties in providing sufficient support for the children when they work in small groups on practical tasks using mathematical apparatus. The children are taught to recognise shapes and they can name simple shapes and sort and classify objects by colour, shape and size. Many children are able to count up to ten and beyond, recognise numbers and record numbers up to five. Some table games and computer programs help the children to match numbers and objects. However, the provision and planning for a wide variety of practical tasks is restricted by the lack of resources and adult support and the children have too few opportunities to play number games to extend their mathematical language.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

53. The scrutiny of the teacher's planning and evidence of the children's previous work indicates an appropriate range of work in this area of learning. The children are developing an awareness of places in and beyond their own environment. They are taken on walks to identify different features around the school and in the village. They cover topics on buildings, construct models of their own homes and acquire a basic understanding of maps and direction. The children's knowledge and understanding of places beyond the immediate vicinity is developed further with visits to the Boroughs. The children have an appropriate understanding of the past

and the present and understand chronology in relation to their birthdays and families. They devise their own personal time-line and find out what they need to grow and develop.

54. Topics such as change and growth help to develop the children's scientific knowledge and understanding. They plant seeds and measure the growth of the plant. The children solve simple problems by making and modifying models and can use a variety of small constructional equipment. They cut, paste and stick as they create their models out of card and paper. They learn to use the keyboard and the mouse to operate a number of different computer programs. The staff plan to cover all of the different aspects of this area of learning and though much effort is put into setting out the classroom, the lack of space and resources limits what is on offer. The opportunities for the pupils to work individually and in small groups and to carry out investigations with water, wet and dry sand and to explore light, sound and magnetism are restricted.

### **Creative development**

55. The children have many opportunities to experiment with colour, texture and shape and they are making satisfactory progress in this aspect of their creative development. They paint themselves in holiday clothes and use shells to create pictures and patterns. They are introduced to the work of famous artists such as Picasso and Kandinsky. They print attractive patterns using fruit and vegetables. They handle pencils and crayons well and produce well proportioned drawings. The children are encouraged to listen carefully to music and have opportunities to make their own music using percussion instruments. The teaching in this aspect of creative development is good and the children are taught simple forms of notation. They respond well to music and join in confidently with action rhymes and songs. The area available for imaginative play is small and under-resourced and is inadequate in meeting the needs of this aspect of the children's learning.

### **Physical development**

56. The children make satisfactory progress in some aspects of this area of learning, but there is little equipment to develop their strong movements or imaginative role-play. Lessons in the hall are well planned and the children are able to use the apparatus. They are developing a rhythmic response to music and learn some of the rules of team games. They learn to move around the school and classroom in a controlled way. Manipulative skills, seen in modelling with the small construction equipment and using pencils and other tools, are developed well. The children enjoy physical activity and respond well.

## **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **English**

57. The end-of-key stage tests for 1999 indicate that standards at age seven are in line with national expectations in reading, writing and spelling. At age eleven standards are in line with the national figures but below average when compared with those of similar schools. These results relate to pupils who took the tests last year. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are broadly average and the pupils are making satisfactory progress. The pupils with special educational needs are given excellent support and make very good progress throughout the school. The underachievement of boys is being successfully addressed through the additional literacy support arrangements and the special educational needs programme.
58. Many of the younger pupils enter school with below average speaking and listening skills. The teachers work very hard to provide opportunities which encourage the use of spoken language ensuring that new vocabulary is constantly introduced and reinforced. The pupils learn to follow instructions, contribute to class discussions and both ask and answer questions thoughtfully. Throughout the school discussion is an important part of the Literacy Hour and is used effectively to develop the pupils' vocabulary and self-confidence. The teachers are careful to direct their questioning to include those children who are more reticent about speaking to an audience. Animated debates were observed in both key stages in, for example, religious education where pupils were asked to consider issues such as 'friendship', 'right from wrong' or 'memories'. The pupils were able to conduct a balanced argument, listen carefully to each other and give sensible, reasoned answers.
59. The school places high priority on teaching pupils to read and has a well planned progressive scheme to help achieve this aim. Most pupils make good progress. In Key Stage 1, phonic skills are well taught and the youngest pupils respond well to books, understand that pictures and text tell a story and quickly learn the shape and sounds of letters of the alphabet. They recognise familiar words in their reading scheme books and make good use of picture and context cues to help them to understand what they are reading. Year 2 pupils have appropriate strategies for sounding out combinations of letters and sounds as a way of reading unfamiliar words. Satisfactory progress is maintained throughout Key Stage 2 with many pupils becoming proficient, independent readers who enjoy reading silently and have the ability to use their skills effectively to research class topics. Some of the older pupils are beginning to develop preferences for particular types of literature and are able to discuss the books they read with deeper understanding. This is well demonstrated in the shared reading session of the Literacy Hour in Year 5/6 as pupils analyse the text of 'Goodnight Mr. Tom'. There are good systems in place for teachers and classroom assistants to hear pupils read on a regular basis and very careful reading records are kept throughout the school. Those pupils who are experiencing difficulty are quickly targeted for extra help. Some children take books home to share with their families and this has a positive impact on the standards that they are attaining. The school library has recently been refurbished

and many of the books are being replaced. All of the pupils are given systematic training by a qualified librarian on how to use the library and this is having a positive impact on their ability to use the library for independent research and recreation.

60. The pupils' progress in writing is variable in both key stages. Spelling is systematically taught and there has been a marked improvement in this throughout the school. Younger pupils are given appropriate practice in copying shapes and patterns, learn to form their letters correctly and observe correct spacing. They begin to sequence words in captions and simple sentences. Through work in the Literacy Hour a good understanding of the use of punctuation, interesting vocabulary and grammar is taught. In most of the lessons observed there are adequate word banks and dictionaries available to assist pupils with their writing. However, there are too few opportunities in both key stages for these tools of writing to be put into practice. There is plenty of evidence of poetry, letter writing, diaries, play scripts and factual accounts but too little evidence of extended, independent creative story-writing. Regular handwriting practice ensures that most pupils begin to develop a legible style of writing although many do not begin to join their letters until the beginning of Key Stage 2. Standards of presentation are inconsistent and some poorly scribed work is accepted without comment. In those classes where teachers demand a high standard of presentation, the pupils demonstrate that they are quite capable of producing neat, well-presented work.
61. The pupils have good attitudes to learning in both key stages. They enjoy English, respond well to the format of the Literacy Hour, listen carefully to class discussions and generally work hard. In most classrooms there is a good working atmosphere. The pupils are quick to settle to their work and remain on task. Relationships are harmonious. The teachers are consistent in demanding good standards of behaviour and the pupils respond well to their praise and encouragement.
62. In both key stages the quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. Lessons are conducted in a quiet, orderly manner which helps to establish good relationships and a pleasant working environment. Where the very good teaching is observed, particularly in Year 6 and Year 3, the teachers' planning is more accurately matched to the needs of each child, learning objectives are very clear and expectations realistically high. Good use is made of a variety of techniques and there is an appropriate mix of whole-class, group and individual teaching. Well established class routines encourage the pupils to become independent in accessing and returning resources. All teachers make good use of the classroom support staff whose contribution makes a significant impact on the progress made by the pupils. When lessons are less successful, the teacher does not clearly identify what the pupils are to learn and the pupils' assessments are not used effectively to plan the work for the different ability groups.
63. Resources to support the teaching of English are satisfactory. There is a good supply

of reading scheme books in each classroom and non-fiction material is obtained from the school library. There are adequate supplies of books for group reading and large books for use during the Literacy Hour. Appropriate dictionaries are available in all classrooms. Each classroom is equipped with computers and a supply of tape recorders and story tapes.

## **Mathematics**

64. The end-of-key stage tests for 1999 indicate that standards of attainment at age seven are in line with the national figures. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards are below average and well below average when compared with those of similar schools. These results relate to pupils who took the tests last year. Girls tended to achieve better results than boys in the 1999 Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 national tests. Standards at age 11 show some improvement on the 1998 results.
65. Inspection findings indicate that standards are below average at the end of both key stages and this is largely due to the low standards in mental arithmetic. The pupils in both key stages make unsatisfactory progress in this aspect of mathematics. They are not secure in their understanding of counting, using multiplication tables and using a range of mental strategies when calculating. The pupils make satisfactory progress in other areas of mathematics, such as identifying two and three-dimensional shapes, comparing lengths and weights and constructing simple graphs, tables and matrices. However, their progress is often hindered by their general inability to use a range of mental and oral calculating strategies when handling numbers in a variety of simple problems and investigations. This considerably affects the overall standards achieved in mathematics. In most of the lessons seen during the inspection, pupils in both key stages made satisfactory progress in their work on shape, space and measures but their knowledge and understanding of number is very limited. For example, in Year 2, a group of higher attaining pupils can only use 'counting on strategies' when handling larger numbers up to 200 which makes it difficult for them to make accurate calculations using more efficient methods. In Key Stage 2, more able pupils underachieve because they are unable to recognise the value of each digit in a number, or identify common patterns in the number system, to handle larger numbers. This affects their ability to understand long multiplication, division or more complex fractions, decimals and percentages.
66. The school has recently adopted the National Numeracy Strategy and more emphasis is being placed on numeracy and especially on mental arithmetic. In Years 5 and 6 there is evidence that some pupils are working above the levels expected for their age, for example, they are beginning to apply and understand the use of simple algebra, the decimal representation of probability and the order of line symmetry in regular plane shapes. However, work on problem solving and

investigation using arithmetic, number systems and, for higher attaining pupils, complex number series, are under-represented. Boys are underachieving in mathematics. The school is aware of this issue but has not yet addressed it.

67. The setting for mathematics in Years 5 and 6 has helped the school to focus on higher standards of work, especially for the more able pupils. However, the school has grouped the higher attaining pupils into one large set, and the remaining pupils are in two mixed ability groups. This makes it difficult for the two teachers who have these mixed ability groups to organise and focus on particular skills that are closely matched to the abilities that exist in each class. The pupils in the higher ability mathematics set are making satisfactory progress as the work is more closely matched to their needs and abilities. The pupils in the other two groups are making variable progress, ranging from satisfactory to unsatisfactory, because the teaching is not as successful in focusing on the particular needs of pupils across the ability range.
68. All teachers start their mathematics lessons with a session which explores basic numeracy. These sessions are useful and help pupils to practise their mental arithmetic skills by engaging in quick-fire re-call exercises and number games. However, pupils are not being specifically taught numerical skills or strategies to help them build on their current knowledge of the number system. For example, in one Year 4 lesson, fractions are being taught so that pupils can recognise and distinguish between parts of a whole number, a shape or a set of objects. Too much time is spent on handling cubes and shapes which limits the progress of the more able pupils because they are more than capable of investigating the problems presented to them mentally. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils are presented with some quick-fire mental arithmetic problems, but little time is given to actually teaching or pointing out the specific learning objectives that are related to solving these problems efficiently. For example, when doubling or halving numbers, the teachers do not always point out that there are similarities and number patterns. Although higher attaining pupils in Year 6 have been taught complex multiplication and division, the majority of the pupils in the age group are unaware of the relationship between fractions of numbers and division.
69. Pupils like their mathematics lessons. They are keen to participate in the oral mathematics sessions and willingly answer questions or help others in a group to calculate simple problems. Behaviour is generally good. Resources are well used, including calculators, number squares and flash cards or flip charts. The majority of pupils are keen to finish their work on time and they enjoy the challenge of the introductory oral arithmetic sessions.
70. The teaching is satisfactory overall in mathematics but there are some shortcomings in the way that numeracy is being taught. The teaching ranges from good to unsatisfactory. Teachers have adopted the format of the National Numeracy Strategy and there is now a more focused approach towards the teaching of numeracy skills. However, in the majority of lessons the key learning

objectives are not being identified to help all pupils make better progress in arithmetic and number work. The introductory oral mathematics sessions do not always challenge the pupils sufficiently and they rarely explore efficient strategies to help the pupils, especially the more able ones, calculate mentally. In the most effective teaching more time is spent at the start of the numeracy lessons introducing key skills. In these lessons the teaching is likely to point out number patterns, the value of digits in a number and quick checks to see if the answer is correct in a number problem. Although most lessons provide different tasks for pupils according to their abilities, they often start from the same point so that more able pupils are not being sufficiently challenged for sustained periods of time. In most lessons the pace of the numeracy sessions is too slow and the level of work is usually pitched at the average and lower attaining pupils. All teachers have managed to prepare structured numeracy lessons and in this respect the planning is good. The aims of the lessons meet the criteria set out in the National Numeracy Strategy for each year group but the learning objectives are sometimes unclear or confused with less important tasks. In other areas of the mathematics curriculum teachers are more secure in their understanding of the core skills in teaching shape, space, measures and data handling. In this respect there is an imbalance between the teaching of number skills and other areas of the mathematics curriculum.

71. The mathematics curriculum is broad and now includes a greater emphasis on numeracy. Good use is made of a range of mathematics resources. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated in all mathematics lessons and often they receive additional support which is of a very high standard. This enables them to make good progress. Computers are sometimes used to support mathematics work but this is not consistent across the school.
72. The management of mathematics is generally good as the co-ordinator demonstrates good expertise and supports other staff very well. She leads by example and in the very short time that the *numeracy strategy* has been in place the organisation of resources and planning documents has been helpful to all teachers and support staff. Test results are being analysed to help the school to focus on the likely areas of underachievement. Optional tests are now being done by pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5. The co-ordinator and the headteacher, together with the governors, recognise that mental arithmetic, both in terms of how it is taught and how the pupils learn, is unsatisfactory across the school. There is some good practice in the school which is being used to support the work of all teachers in their numeracy lessons. There is also the potential for an improvement in the overall standards achieved by the pupils. The school has rightly focused on further professional development of the teaching of numeracy and there are positive signs that standards are improving as a result.

## **Science**

73. The end-of-key stage tests for 1999 indicate that at the end of Key Stage 2



standards are in line with the national figures but well below average when compared with those of similar schools. The end of Key Stage 1 teacher assessments in 1999 indicate that standards are average.

74. Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of both key stages the pupils' attainment is broadly average. The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress but the progress made by more able pupils is slower and by the end of both key stages the percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels is lower than expected.
75. By the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils know about the different materials used in constructing their houses and some of the properties of them. They recognise why bricks are used for strength and that glass is the most appropriate material for windows. The pupils know about some of the foods they eat and identify a range of fruits, vegetables and dairy products. They have an elementary knowledge of electricity and make a bulb light when completing an electrical circuit. The pupils know about simple life processes through their study of birds, rabbits and hedgehogs. By the end of Key Stage 2 the pupils identify a wide range of properties of materials they study. They identify particular materials as flexible, brittle, hard and soft and indicate whether the materials are conductors or may be used as insulators. The pupils are aware of the differences in the molecular make up of solids, liquids and gases and recognise that water must become colder to freeze and that heat is needed to make it melt or change it to steam. The pupils have well-developed understanding about plants and animals. They identify the different parts of plants and show the links in food chains from provider to primary and secondary consumers.
76. The pupils make satisfactory progress throughout both key stages. The progress made by the pupils with special educational needs is very good. In Key Stage 1 the pupils gain increased scientific vocabulary in relation to their work. They learn, for example, about crocodile clips and how they are used to connect wires in an electrical circuit. The pupils develop a greater understanding of the properties of materials and why some are more suitable for a particular job than others. They begin to understand more clearly how their bodies work and identify, for example, how their hearing of sounds is affected by outside influences. In Key Stage 2 the pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils gain greater understanding of their bodies and about the world around them. They learn how light is generated from different sources and how reflective surfaces change the direction of light. The pupils consolidate their knowledge about food and learn, for example, the differences between carbohydrates, proteins and fats. When studying tooth decay they begin to identify through the examination of lists of ingredients on food packages, which foods contain sugars. Towards the end of the key stage the pupils develop greater understanding of how materials change their state and gain increasing knowledge about the properties and uses of materials. They have a greater knowledge of life processes and learn, for example, how the skeleton functions.

77. The pupils' response is good. In most lessons they are well behaved, sit quietly and attentively and are keen to take an active part in class discussions. The relationships between the pupils and between the pupils and the teachers are good. When working in groups the pupils take turns and listen to each other.
78. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with elements of good and very good teaching. The highest quality teaching occurs when teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject and are clear about what it is they want the pupils to learn. Particular features of these lessons are the brisk pace, well organised and appropriate resources and good questioning techniques to develop the pupils' thinking. In these lessons the teachers plan work most effectively for the pupils' different levels of attainment and they use effective demonstrations by pupils to clarify teaching points. In the less successful lessons the teachers' planning does not take account of the differing abilities in the class and the level of work is pitched too low for more able pupils. Learning objectives are not always clearly identified, though detailed activities are usually included
79. The school has made sound progress in developing the subject since the last inspection though the more able pupils are still not fully extended. The co-ordinator provides good leadership. The newly developed scheme of work is designed to give full coverage for the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. The co-ordinator monitors the subject most effectively through discussion with other teachers, the scrutiny of their planning and of the pupils' work. There is a good range of appropriate resources for teaching and learning and these are of good quality.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **Information technology**

80. Information Technology is an improving subject. Standards in Key Stage 1 have improved since the last inspection and are now average. Although standards are improving in Key Stage 2, they are still below average for the majority of the pupils in Year 6. The development of the new scheme of work, the teachers' planning and the investment in hardware is addressing many of the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. As a result, the pupils are now making better progress and standards are beginning to rise. The school is beginning to benefit from the co-ordinator's expertise and there are plans to increase the number of computers and to continue to develop the confidence of staff through in-service training. A significant improvement since the last inspection is that the school is clear about the skills to be taught, but there is still some inconsistency in the way in which this is done in some of the classes in Key Stage 2.
81. The pupils are making satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. The younger pupils can use simple word and number games appropriately; they have basic keyboard

skills and can type simple texts. In Year 1, the pupils are able to use the mouse and their keyboard skills to devise graphics for seaside pictures. They are able to print out their work with help from an adult. In Year 2 the majority of pupils know how to use the space bar, delete, shift and return keys. They are confident in following instructions on screen. They can use an art program to draw pictures of their homes and favourite toys. By the end of the key stage they can write text on screen and are learning to edit their work.

82. In Key Stage 2, standards are improving but the rate of pupils' progress is variable and is determined by the teachers' expertise and confidence in teaching the subject. In some classes the teachers do not make sufficient use of ICT to support the pupils' work in subjects such as English, mathematics and history. In Year 3 the scrutiny of the pupils' work indicates that they can add text to the pictures that they have drawn and print out their results using a different range of fonts. Word processing skills improve in Years 4 and 5 with the pupils learning to underline text and how to use auto correct commands. By the end of Year 6 many of the pupils can cut and paste sections of text and select appropriate fonts to present their work. Data handling skills are underdeveloped and there is little evidence of the pupils using computers to present and analyse data. By the end of Key Stage 2, some pupils are beginning to use CD-ROM data bases to retrieve information. However, many pupils do not yet have the skills to transfer text from information sources and integrate it into their own work. The presentation of data is underdeveloped. There is evidence that standards are beginning to rise but the pupils' ability in the use of information technology to solve problems, to research information, to communicate information and to support their work in other subjects is below average by the time they leave the school.
83. Throughout the school the pupils enjoy working with IT equipment. They are enthusiastic and are keen to work with computers and to develop their skills. They work well together and take turns fairly. They enjoy talking about their work.
84. It was only possible to observe a limited amount of direct teaching but an appropriate range of activities is planned by the teachers in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 the co-ordinator was observed teaching the pupils how to manipulate text and to cut, move and resize text boxes. The pupils were taught effectively in this lesson and made good progress. Resources are barely adequate. The school plans to address this problem and this is identified in the school improvement plan. In partnership with other schools, a technician has been employed and works in the school for a day each week. This is already ensuring that problems with equipment are being dealt with more speedily and effectively.

### **Religious Education**

85. It was only possible to observe three lessons being taught. Evidence from these lessons, teachers' planning and work in pupils' books indicates that, by the end of

both key stages, attainment is in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and good progress is being made.

86. In Key Stage 1 the pupils learn about the major festivals of the Christian calendar such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest. They gain first hand experience of the joy of 'giving' through their collections for various charities such as the hospice in Leicester and the distribution of Harvest gifts amongst the villagers of Ratby. In their early studies on Hinduism, pupils are introduced to the festival of Divali and they begin to have some understanding of the religious and cultural diversity within society. There are many well-conducted class discussions on aspects of religious teaching such as the need to distinguish between right and wrong, how difficult it is to say 'Sorry' and the importance of having a good set of rules by which to live.

87. In Key Stage 2 the pupils continue to increase and deepen their understanding of the great festivals of all world religions. They learn about baptism in the Christian Church, the feast of Haggadah in Judaism, the festival of Holi in the Hindu faith and the stories of Buddhism. They study stories such as "Noah" and learn about famous people who have made significant contributions to the well-being of others, such as Florence Nightingale and Louis Braille. In the lessons observed in Year 4 and Year 5/6, the pupils demonstrate their ability to think in depth about issues such as 'caring for others' and 'remembering things that are important to us'. They make observations which are well thought out and show a sensitivity for the feelings of others.

88. Pupils' response to religious education lessons is good. They are well behaved and attentive. During discussions they are keen to contribute their ideas, knowing that whatever they have to say will be given careful consideration.

89. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. Using the recently revised scheme of work, the teachers plan lessons carefully, ensure that they have good resources to excite the pupils' interest and maintain a brisk pace through challenging, thought-provoking questions. In all of the lessons observed, very good relationships were established and the pupils were able to express their opinions confidently. Good links are made with the work in English, art, history and geography. Resources for teaching the subject are generally good.

### **Art**

90. During the inspection it was only possible to observe art being taught in two of the Year 5/6 classes in Key Stage 2. Evidence from these lessons, observations of work on display around the school and teachers' planning indicate that art has a very secure place in the school's curriculum and the pupils are making good progress in both key stages.

91. The variety of well-displayed work on classroom walls and in corridors helps to create an interesting and stimulating environment in which to work. In Key Stage 1 the pupils work with a good range of media including pencils, paint, collage and

sewing. From the time they begin school there are many opportunities for drawing and colouring in English, science and topic books. Pupils are encouraged to observe closely and copy what they see. Their paintings of farm animals demonstrate that colour mixing skills are effectively developed. Throughout the school there are examples of studying artists such as Hockney, Monet, Mondrian, Hokusai, Kandinsky and others, leading to paintings which show a sensitive understanding of the qualities in the work of these great painters. In Year 5 and Year 6, the pupils become absorbed in painting poppies as part of their work on Remembrance Day and demonstrate the good progress that has been made in their ability to mix colour successfully. Other pupils attempt to use tone and colour to depict mood and feelings. Pupils use their skills to enhance their work in other areas of the curriculum, for example the paintings of Egyptian figures in Year 4 or the patterned candles in Year 3. There are some examples of computer-generated art work on display.

92. The pupils respond with enormous enthusiasm to their art lessons. They are quick to settle to work, become very absorbed in what they are doing and take great care of all equipment. This good response is a direct reflection of the quality of the teaching. Work is well planned, an interesting range of resources is made available and, wherever possible, tasks are linked to current class topics. Good use is made of the immediate environment as a source of inspiration and pupils are encouraged to look carefully and draw what they see.

### **Design and technology**

93. The pupils make good progress in design and technology in both key stages. Evidence from three lessons observed during the inspection, the scrutiny of previous work and discussions with pupils and staff show that the subject is well managed and well taught. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
94. The pupils in Key Stage 1 have designed and made models of homes, furniture and rooms using boxes, card, glue and textiles. They have also made boats with sails and tested them to see how effective they are when changes are made to their structure and design. During the inspection Year 1 and 2 pupils were observed making animal puppets having previously sketched out designs with clear labels indicating the different materials to be used. Some Year 2 pupils also made Mehndi and Rangoli Patterns as part of the school's celebration of the Hindu festival of Diwali. Other groups of Year 2 pupils have made robots using a wide range of materials, glue and tools. The reception and Year 1 classes have linked their Teddy Bear Stories to a simple design project and Year 1 pupils have designed and made models of lighthouses as part of a project. All of these examples clearly demonstrate the key elements of the design and technology curriculum which has helped all pupils to make good progress.

95. In Key Stage 2 older pupils in Years 5 and 6 have designed and made models of Anderson Shelters using card, glue, textiles and other materials as part of their history topic on World War 2. There are also examples of model hot air balloons which have been designed, evaluated and modified with clear diagrams and labels identifying the materials and tools to be used. In Year 4 the pupils have successfully generated ideas from their history topic about Ancient Egypt. They have produced labelled sketches of Egyptian jewellery from their observations in textbooks and other visual aids. The pupils can describe the design implications of their products and then make sensible suggestions to modify their designs. Good use is made of junk-modelling techniques and the use of appropriate tools to produce the jewellery. There is also a good example of effective design, evaluation and adaptation in the Year 4 topic on Perfectly Presented Pizzas. The pupils have made good progress in their understanding of food technology, packaging and the effect that these have on the environment and changing life-styles.
96. The pupils in both key stages thoroughly enjoy their design and technology lessons. They work co-operatively in pairs or groups and use materials and tools sensibly. They make sensible choices and often reflect on what they are doing and then take time to produce the most effective product or model.
97. The quality of teaching is usually good and at least satisfactory. Teachers demonstrate a good understanding of the subject and successfully take the pupils through logical stages to improve their knowledge and understanding of the subject. Good links are established in the curriculum with other subjects and topics. This provides pupils with an accessible range of activities which are meaningful and help them to develop an increasing understanding of design and its relevance to a product or object. Teachers provide pupils with a range of choices, including materials, tools and different techniques. Assessments are carried out after each topic or project and good photographic records are being kept to produce a portfolio of previous work.
98. The co-ordinator manages the subject effectively and this is helping teachers across the school to plan and prepare good design and technology lessons. Resources are well maintained and accessible to the pupils and staff. Planning is effective with clear medium term topics and plans which form natural links with other subjects and projects. All elements of the National Curriculum are being taught effectively and the school has successfully addressed the issues raised during the last inspection to raise standards in the subject.

### **Geography and history**

99. It was only possible to observe two lessons in history and four in geography during the inspection. The evidence from these lessons, the scrutiny of the pupils' previous and current work, the examination of the teachers' planning and

discussion with pupils and teachers indicate that at both key stages the pupils make satisfactory progress in geography and good progress in history.

100. In geography, at Key Stage 1, pupils gain knowledge about their own environment and begin to make comparison between the area in which they live and other towns and cities. They identify the buildings they pass on their way to school and understand the importance of these places in their lives. They learn the differences between shops and compare, for example, the types of goods sold by the post office and the local supermarket. The pupils make direct comparisons between their life in Leicester and that of children in Delhi and in London. They begin to make pictorial records of the weather they experience. In Key Stage 2, the pupils develop greater understanding about different types of industry. They make comparisons between the food grown and produced in Germany and in their own country. The pupils increase their range of geographical vocabulary. They identify features on a map using appropriate descriptions for the physical features and the use of the key and scales on maps. The pupils gain experience of different geographical locations. They accurately identify some of the countries in Europe and make comparisons between their own area and the Caribbean. The older pupils, on a residential visit to Scarborough, compare and contrast that locality with their own.
101. In history at Key Stage 1 the pupils learn about toys from the past, comparing them to their own toys. They develop their understanding of chronology through the study of time lines and can identify with reasonable accuracy the date when different toys were made and locate the period on a time line. For example, they know that a toy made fifty years ago is further away from the present than one which is twenty years old. Closely linked to their local study in geography and science, the pupils study old and new buildings. In the early years of Key Stage 2, the pupils study the civilisations of Ancient Greece and Ancient Egypt. They learn about the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb and how the artefacts brought from the tomb display the Egyptians' belief of needs for the afterlife. They realise that by translating the hieroglyphics found on the tombs, we can gain understanding of life in those times. The pupils, when studying the Ancient Greeks, learn about the stories of the Greek Gods and Goddesses, Theseus and the Minotaur, Jason and the Golden Fleece and Athena, Hermes, Nike and Apollo. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils develop their knowledge and understanding gained earlier in the school. They have greater understanding about the Greeks and realise that by looking at the pottery they used, we can find out much about how they lived. They learn more about the cultures of the Ancient Greeks through their studies of theatre and masks. The pupils make a special study of Britain since the 1930s, with particular reference to the Second World War. They learn about how war affected children and how many were evacuated from cities to the countryside. They are made aware of the importance of the poppy in remembering people who have died in the war.
102. The pupils' response is good in history and satisfactory in geography. They enjoy

their work and talk knowledgeably about what they have learned. They work well collaboratively when, for example, they decide on what they should bury in a capsule to indicate to future generations what life is like now. They do this when comparing their clothes, toys and books to those of children living during the Second World War.

103. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in geography and it is good in history. The higher quality lessons are carefully planned with clearly identified objectives and appropriate activities to achieve them. The teachers in these lessons make learning exciting through lively presentation, with very good relationships between the pupils and the teachers. The curriculum for both subjects is broad and relevant to the pupils' needs. The co-ordinators lead the subjects effectively, supporting and monitoring teaching and learning. The curriculum is planned to ensure full coverage of the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. The quality and quantity of learning resources for both subjects is satisfactory.

### **Music**

104. Music was judged to be a strong feature of the school at the time of the last inspection. Inspections findings this time confirm that the school has maintained its high standards and the pupils make good progress in both key stages. Music is timetabled for every class on a weekly basis and this includes singing, playing tuned and untuned percussion instruments as well as the support provided by the peripatetic music service and teachers in both key stages who teach the pupils to play musical instruments. Instrumental tuition is provided for the considerable numbers of pupils who are learning to play brass instruments and recorders.
105. The pupils in Key Stage 1 sing in unison in assemblies and song practices. Words are clearly articulated, and ensemble and phrasing are generally good for the age group. By Year 2 the pupils can imitate a rhythmic phrase and recognise familiar songs from a tapped rhythm. The pupils respond sensitively to the mood of a piece of music. Year 1 pupils are able to clap in time and follow the teachers' instructions when learning new songs.
106. In Key Stage 2 the pupils continue to make good progress. The singing in assemblies and song practices is of a high standard with the large majority of pupils able to alter pitch and rhythm. A large number of pupils can play a range of brass instruments to a high standard and are making very good progress playing as an ensemble. In a Year 4 music lesson groups of pupils are able to follow simple notation, clapping beats and varying the pitch in a simple phrase. Listening skills are well developed and graphic scoring is being taught to help the pupils read from a song-sheet or when playing an instrument, to read a variety of compositions.
107. The pupils are alert and attentive in their singing sessions. They listen carefully in lessons and participate enthusiastically. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 enjoy



accompanying a radio broadcast by singing, clapping and following the beat of simple melodies. Younger pupils in Year 3 are able to mime actions, keeping a beat and sing in unison. The pupils throughout the school enjoy their music lessons and those who play instruments are particularly enthusiastic about music.

108. The school has a number of staff who are able to teach music very well. A member of the Leicestershire Arts Peripatetic Services provides very good quality tuition for those pupils learning to play brass instruments. The school's brass band has earned a very good reputation for the quality and range of the music played. The co-ordinator, along with other teachers in the school, gives up a great amount of their own time to provide extra-curricular recorder tuition and singing sessions. The teaching is mainly good overall and it is least satisfactory across the school. The high level of commitment and dedication to the teaching of music is also helping those teachers who are less secure in the subject to provide acceptable music lessons that build on the good progress made by the pupils. Taped broadcasts, song practices, musical ensembles provide a broad and balanced music curriculum for all of the pupils.

### **Physical education**

109. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and make satisfactory progress.
110. In Key Stage 1 pupils begin to warm up when they enter the hall for their lesson. They use simple running, stretching and turning exercises. The pupils develop appropriate skills in dance and games lessons. They move well in these lessons to music and create simple sequences of movements. They are aware of the best use of space, not only around themselves but also in relation to other pupils. The pupils develop basic skills in games lessons. They throw balls into hoops with increasing accuracy and are very active, sticking closely to the rules set by the teacher, when playing small games.
111. In Key Stage 2 the pupils build successfully on the earlier skills learned. When warming up for exercise, for example, they use a wider range of movements. In dance lessons the pupils interpret the music well when expressing emotions and in developing sequences of movements. When they perform a dance depicting evacuees leaving their parents, for example, they display, through facial expression and their body movements, the sadness felt. The pupils gradually build up their sequences of movements individually, in pairs and as groups of four
112. The pupils' response is good. They are keen and enjoy their lessons. They strive hard to improve their performance. The pupils are supportive to each other when, for example, they assess other groups' movements in dance lessons.
113. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some elements of good

teaching. The teachers' planning relates closely to the programmes of study of the National Curriculum, with appropriate activities identified to enable the learning objectives to be achieved. When higher quality teaching takes place the teachers have high expectations of the pupils' performance, using their own expertise to develop learning at a fast pace. On some occasions, however, too much time is spent on explanations and this slows down the pace of the lesson. The newly appointed co-ordinator leads the subject enthusiastically. The scheme of work has recently been reviewed. Though still in draft form, it is used effectively to develop the subject. The co-ordinator has undertaken appropriate professional development training. She has successfully increased the range of extra-curricular activities for the pupils, including cross-country, dance, athletics, rounders, netball, basketball, football and rugby. The school regularly participates with other schools in sporting activities.

**The inspection of this school included a focussed view of swimming which is reported below.**

114. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils meet the requirement to swim 25 metres. The school provides swimming for the pupils in Year 3 at a local Leisure Centre. During this year these pupils have a twenty minutes lesson each week. At the time of the inspection the pupils had been receiving swimming tuition for half a term and about a quarter could swim 25 metres using a good style. This group floated on their fronts and backs confidently, making a variety of shapes in the water. A further quarter of the pupils were competent swimmers for a shorter distance of 10 metres. About a half of the pupils at this stage were non-swimmers although many were confident in the water and could swim a few strokes.
115. The pupils enjoy their swimming lessons and try hard to improve their performance. They are well behaved on the coach when travelling to the Leisure Centre, when changing and when in the pool. They encourage and support each other well.
116. The quality of teaching and instruction is satisfactory. The year group is divided into four equal groups with two groups in the learner pool and two in the larger pool. In each pool a teacher and an instructor are deployed effectively to teach a group of pupils. Effective methods are used to develop the pupils' skills. Lower attainers, for example, are encouraged to use floats whilst practising their leg kicks whilst higher attaining pupils are taught to touch their shoulders when swimming front crawl to ensure that their elbows are pointing towards the ceiling. All teachers and instructors use praise well to support the pupils' learning.
117. In Year 3, non-swimmers and those pupils who are poor swimmers receive good levels of support in developing their skills. There is no additional provision for the pupils who have failed to reach the required standard by the end of Year 3.
118. The curriculum for swimming is satisfactory. The scheme of work for physical

education includes an appropriate section for swimming. The planning for the subject overall is satisfactory. Long-term and medium-term plans indicate the progress to be made and the teachers' short-term plans identify ways in which the learning objectives for each particular lesson are to be achieved. Time is used well.

For a twenty minute lesson there is a total time commitment of sixty minutes each week, though some of this is offset by travelling to the pool during the pupils' playtime. The teachers' assessment of the pupils' attainment and progress is sound.

During each lesson the teachers and instructors constantly assess performance and explain how this may be improved. The recording of the pupils' attainment is at an early stage of development. The newly appointed co-ordinator is aware of previous shortfalls in recording the progress made by the pupils and plans are in place to remedy this.

119. The provision for swimming is satisfactory. The heated pools used are situated about four miles from the school with transport provided through parental contributions. The learner pool is of equal depth of one metre whilst the larger pool has graded depth from one metre to two metres. This allows for diving skills to be taught. The school has exclusive use of the pools for swimming lessons with appropriately qualified poolside staff provided. The level of adult supervision is good. Two teachers and two instructors teach each of four groups and four parent helpers help to supervise the pupils on the coach and when they are changing.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspection was undertaken by an independent team of inspectors, led by Mr Peter Belfield, a Registered Inspector of Schools. During the inspection 66 lessons or part lessons were observed; this amounted to over 46 hours. A number of assemblies and registration periods were observed. Planned discussions took place with the headteacher, teachers, non-teaching staff and governors. The pupils' work was scrutinised and a selection of pupils were heard to read. Additionally, the inspectors talked to many pupils about their work and asked them to read samples of their own work. All of the documentation provided by the school was analysed. A parents' meeting was held and 78 parents' questionnaires were completed. These were analysed and the results helped to inform the inspection .

## 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 | Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals |
|---------|---|---|--|---|
| YR – Y6 | 310   | 5                                       | 49   | 22  |

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)

12.8

Number of pupils per qualified teacher

24.2

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

Total number of education support staff

14

Total aggregate hours worked each week

106.5

Average class size:

28.2

### Financial data

Financial year:

1998/99

|  | £       |
|--|---------|
| Total Income                               | 505,075 |
| Total Expenditure                          | 488,674 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 1,485   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 16,401  |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 25,966  |

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

310

Number of questionnaires returned:

78

### 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           | 24.7           | 54.5  | 18.2    |          | 2.6               |
| I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren) | 39.7           | 48.7  | 10.3    | 1.3      |                   |
| The school handles complaints from parents well   | 13.2           | 50.0  | 30.3    | 6.6      |                   |
| The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught                                     | 6.4            | 69.2  | 16.7    | 7.7      |                   |
| The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress                                | 15.4           | 59.0  | 19.2    | 6.4      |                   |
| The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work                             | 21.8           | 67.9  | 9.0     | 1.3      |                   |
| The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons            | 16.0           | 52.0  | 20.0    | 12.0     |                   |
| I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home                   | 21.8           | 59.0  | 5.1     | 14.1     |                   |
| The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)                       | 25.6           | 64.1  | 6.4     | 3.8      |                   |
| The school achieves high standards of good behaviour  | 19.7           | 63.2  | 13.2    | 3.9      |                   |
| My child(ren) like(s) school  | 46.2           | 48.7  | 3.8     | 1.3      |                   |