

INSPECTION REPORT

SOUTHFIELDS JUNIOR SCHOOL

Peterborough

LEA area: City of Peterborough

Unique reference number: 110691

Headteacher: Mr I Sutherland

Reporting inspector: Helen Ranger
22223

Dates of inspection: 5 – 8 June 2000

Inspection number: 188613

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Southfields Estate Stanground Peterborough
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Palmer
Date of previous inspection:	July 1996

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Helen Ranger	Registered inspector	Religious education	How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements
		Music	How well are pupils taught?
		Italian	How well is the school led and managed?
Ann Taylor	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Jacqueline Cousins	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Art	
		Design and technology	
		Equal opportunities	
		English as an additional language	
Dennis Maxwell	Team inspector	Mathematics	
		Information technology	
		Physical education	
		Special educational needs	
Gillian Plummer	Team inspector	English	
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Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Southfields Junior School is an above average sized community school with 281 pupils on roll between the ages of seven and eleven. It serves a residential area on the outskirts of Peterborough. Six per cent of pupils currently come from various ethnic minority groups and almost all of these speak English as their first language. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals (28 per cent) is above the national average. Thirty six per cent of pupils have special educational needs, including 13 with Statements – these figures are high compared with other schools. Ten of the pupils with special needs are drawn from across the local authority and have access to Enhanced Resource provision specially designed to support pupils with communication difficulties; these pupils are fully integrated into mainstream classes.

When pupils enter the school at Year 3, their levels of attainment are below average overall. While the proportion who have achieved the expected Level 2 of the National Curriculum in tests at the end of Key Stage 1 is average, fewer than average achieve the higher Level 3.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Southfields Junior School is a good school. The quality of teaching is good. The school is led and managed well by the headteacher and senior staff and provides an effective environment for learning. Pupils' personal development is good and they generally achieve well in their work relative to their attainment on entry to the school. Although they begin the key stage with standards which are below average, they reach the nationally expected standards in most subjects by Year 6. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The teaching is good and enables pupils to make good progress in most subjects.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about school, behave well and get on well together.
- The headteacher is an effective and well respected leader.
- The staff work well as a team and are committed to pupils' individual development.
- A broad range of learning opportunities is provided, including good provision for pupils' social and moral development.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, including for those pupils entitled to Enhanced Resource provision.
- Attendance levels are above average.
- Levels of care for pupils are high.
- Parents have positive views of the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in English do not reach the levels expected nationally.
- There are weaknesses in the effectiveness of provision for religious education and, as a result, pupils do not meet the expected standards.
- Teachers' arrangements for planning lessons and assessing achievement in the short term do not include sufficient detail to extend the progress of all pupils, especially the higher attainers.
- Most governors are inexperienced and not yet able to support the management of the school fully.
- The special educational needs co-ordinator has a very heavy workload.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in July 1996. Since then it has made good progress on the issues which were identified for improvement and in other key areas. It is well placed to continue to improve. The overall quality of teaching seen in this inspection was substantially better than previously. The good practice in teaching is consistent across most classes, an improvement in line with a key issue from the last inspection. Results in the tests for the oldest pupils have improved

steadily in line with national trends and there has been a good rise in the proportion of pupils who achieve higher levels than those expected nationally for 11-year-olds. The school has successfully overcome weaknesses which were identified by the last inspection in science and design and technology, especially in giving increased opportunities for pupils to work independently and take responsibility for their learning. Standards in religious education, however, have not been maintained.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	D	D	D	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	D	D	E	D	
science	D	D	D	C	

The table shows results which are below national averages and, in mathematics in 1999, well below average. However, the results in 1999 were in line with the average achieved by schools with similar intakes in English and science but below average in mathematics. The school has significantly increased the proportion of its pupils who achieve the higher than expected Level 5 in the tests. Over the past four years, standards in these three subjects have risen at least in line with national trends. In 1999 the school exceeded the target it had set in English but narrowly missed its mathematics target.

Inspection findings for the group of pupils who are now in Year 6 are that they have made good progress overall across the key stage in relation to their attainment when they joined the school. The school also has a high proportion of pupils who have substantial special needs, including those with Enhanced Resource provision. This year the number of pupils with special needs in Year 6 is high. Pupils who are now at the end of Key Stage 2 attain below average standards in English and recent improvements in the subject are yet to have a full impact on the oldest pupils. They attain broadly average standards in mathematics and science. Pupils reach national expectations in information technology but below expectations in religious education. Standards are good in art and satisfactory in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. The school offers Italian as an extra subject and pupils make satisfactory progress in these lessons.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic about school and interested in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in lessons, in the playground and around the school generally.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils develop independence and responsibility. They show respect for others and get on well with adults and with other pupils.
Attendance	Good. Levels are above national averages.

The school functions well as a friendly and orderly community. Pupils grow in independence as they get older.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall			Good

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

The teaching seen was good. All lessons were at least satisfactory. Fifty seven per cent of lessons were good and a further seven per cent very good. Teaching in the key areas of literacy and numeracy is good and has benefited from the introduction of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. Teachers set clear overall objectives for lessons. They usually cater for the needs of all pupils, although they sometimes do not include sufficient detail of how they will achieve this in their plans or of how they will assess pupils' progress. Pupils understand their work and respond well. A strength of the school is the way teachers manage pupils' behaviour and promote a positive, orderly atmosphere in lessons. Pupils with special educational and behavioural needs are supported well by teachers and learning assistants.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The statutory curriculum is in place and is supplemented well by extra-curricular activities. The provision for religious education varies between classes and does not promote pupils' progress well enough.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision, based on detailed, relevant Individual Education Plans for pupils and regular assessments of progress. Provision is equally good for those pupils entitled to Enhanced Resource provision.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good provision for pupils' social development and good promotion of their moral development. Satisfactory spiritual and cultural provision.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils' welfare is catered for well. Procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' overall development are effective and there are good practices for ensuring pupils' health and safety.

The curriculum is enhanced well by planned provision for personal, social and health education. The provision of residential trips for three year groups is impressive and contributes well to pupils' progress. The school is particularly effective in promoting pupils' individual development in a caring atmosphere. Not all classes have access to a daily act of worship as required by law. The school works well in partnership with parents and parents' opinions of the school are positive.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is well respected and has led the school effectively through considerable staff changes and the reconstitution of the governing body. He is supported well by senior staff in the smooth running of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are capable and supportive and question sensibly what the school does. They are, however, inexperienced and are yet to establish fully effective management and monitoring procedures.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses its results, teaching and the curriculum well overall and consults widely on future development. The written development plan outlines current priorities well. The staff and governors have begun to establish a longer-term view.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Funds are directed to priority areas and their use is monitored well.

Strengths in leadership and management include the caring approach of the headteacher, which encourages loyalty, effort and good relationships among staff. The school is effective in seeking to ensure best value in its spending decisions by questioning what it does and ensuring that funds are spent wisely. Levels of staffing are adequate and appropriate for the pupils with special educational needs. The school has appropriate plans to increase the time available for the management of special needs. There are sufficient learning resources and good use is made of the recently established computer suite. The accommodation is spacious and supports a rich and varied curriculum well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school expects children to do their best. • Teaching is good and enables children to make good progress. • Their children like school. • The school helps children to become mature and responsible. • They are well informed about how their children are getting on. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • The extent to which the school works closely with parents. • The ease with which they can approach the school with questions or problems.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. A few parents would like to see improvements. Inspectors consider that the range and quality of extra activities in the school are good. The school makes considerable efforts to work closely with parents by its 'open door' policy, by the availability of staff and in its written communications. It organises regular information evenings, which are often not well attended by parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Pupils enter the school at Year 3 with levels of attainment which are below national averages. A number of pupils with significant special needs and low attainment also join the school at various points during the key stage.
2. In 1999 the school's results in the national tests for its oldest pupils in the core subjects showed that performance compared to national averages was:
 - below average in English and science;
 - well below average in mathematics.
3. When pupils' results are compared to schools with similar intakes, performance was:
 - average in English and science;
 - below average in mathematics.
4. Results for the school's 11-year-olds over the past four years have risen at least in line with improvements nationally. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher than expected Level 5 has risen over this period and showed a particularly good increase in 1999. It is acknowledged that the school has relatively high proportions of pupils with special educational needs, including those who attend for Enhanced Resource provision. There are proportionately a high number of pupils with Statements in each year group.
5. The school exceeded its stated target for English in 1999 but narrowly missed its mathematics target. It has set targets for future years in both subjects which aim for overall improvement and are based on appropriate testing and teachers' assessments of pupils in subsequent cohorts.
6. Inspection findings for the current Year 6 group show that they attain broadly average standards in mathematics and science but below average in English. A significant element of their lower attainment in English is their competence in speaking and listening, an aspect not covered in the national tests. Attainment in mathematics reflects recent improvements in provision, the establishment of the National Numeracy Strategy and the revised arrangements for 'setting' pupils in groups according to their attainment. From a low baseline in Year 3, pupils make at least sound progress in English and have made good progress in mathematics and science to achieve their present levels of attainment.
7. In English, by the end of the key stage, many pupils are attentive listeners but lack a wide vocabulary and the confidence to speak to an audience. They do not easily use the technical vocabulary connected with many subjects. In reading, while a considerable number read fluently for their age and most read accurately, many do not use the higher order skills such as inference and deduction in their work. Library skills are good. Pupils write in a wide variety of forms and for different audiences but their attainment in writing is affected by the restrictions of their vocabulary and their reluctance to use technical language. Spelling is often weak. Handwriting is developed well. Literacy standards are currently not sufficiently developed to support fully the pupils' work in the other subjects which require competence in reading and writing and weaknesses in oral skills hamper progress in many other areas of the curriculum.
8. In mathematics, by the age of eleven, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of number and most manipulate large numbers easily and can explain their methods of calculation. They have an appropriate knowledge of aspects of mathematics such as shape, measurement and data handling. The current initiative to improve number work has been successful but has, in turn, led to an under-emphasis on pupils' skills in practical and investigative work. Pupils' sound understanding of numeracy equips them appropriately to deal with this aspect of their

work across the curriculum.

9. Pupils' understanding of experimental and investigative science has improved considerably since the last inspection and this is evident in the work of the classes in Year 6. These pupils also show a satisfactory understanding of their work on life and living processes and on materials, electricity, light and sound. They are less secure in their knowledge of forces.
10. Pupils reach expected standards in information technology and have made more rapid progress since the opening of the computer suite. In religious education, while progress is satisfactory in some classes, provision is patchy across the school with the result that the oldest pupils do not achieve the standards expected by the Locally Agreed Syllabus. They have an inadequate knowledge of the required range of religions and lack understanding of the place of religion in many people's lives.
11. Pupils make sound progress and achieve satisfactory standards over the key stage in design and technology, Italian and music. In geography, history and physical education, pupils start the key stage from a low baseline and their progress by the age of eleven is good. Progress is particularly good in art, which maintains a high profile in the curriculum; pupils achieve high standards for their age.
12. In general, all pupils achieve at least satisfactory progress over time in relation to their attainment on entry to the school. Often their progress is good. In the lessons seen, progress was predominantly good and reflects the success of recent initiatives and successful staff changes. Pupils with special educational needs of all types make good progress. Their requirements are identified early and accurately. The well-targeted support is sensitive and thoughtful and is particularly effective for pupils with speech and language difficulties. There is currently only one pupil with English as an additional language. The school has relevant procedures in place to cater for such pupils and support their progress. There is no evidence of significant variation in the progress made by boys compared with girls. The school is vigilant in monitoring pupils' attainment by gender.
13. Compared with the last inspection report, standards have been maintained in English, information technology, geography, history, music and physical education. Standards in mathematics, science, art and design and technology have been improved. Pupils' progress in Italian is now more even but standards in religious education have not been maintained.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils' attitudes to their work, their behaviour and response to opportunities designed to enhance their personal development are all good. Relationships in the school are very good. These are important school strengths which are helping pupils to take full advantage of their education and learn effectively. This positive picture has generally been maintained since the last inspection and the quality of relationships and personal development has improved. There were no significant cases of pupils having unsatisfactory attitudes or behaviour during the inspection; in most lessons the quality of pupils' response was good.
15. Pupils enjoy coming to school; this was clearly evident during conversations with inspectors who asked pupils about aspects of their school day. Those parents who replied to the pre-inspection questionnaire also confirmed this. Most pupils who have found it difficult to settle at other schools are happy here. The way punctuality has improved over the last few terms is an indication of pupils' good attitudes.
16. Pupils enjoy their lessons. Although excitement for learning is not seen in all classes, this is related to the content of the lessons and the way in which they are taught. Some delivery is exciting and inspiring while a minority of teaching is pedestrian and lacks sparkle. Enthusiasm and excitement for learning was seen in a very good science lesson where the teacher's very good questioning and the way she challenged pupils meant that they had to think deeply about the activities they were doing. Their mature behaviour and the careful way they worked in setting up the investigations they had planned themselves, following the good example set by the teacher, ensured that they made very good progress in their learning. Many pupils had

been interested enough to bring in their own resources to use in the experiment. This same kind of excitement in discovery was evident in a religious education lesson when pupils had to hunt for a Hebrew manuscript. The nature of the activity ensured that they quickly made good progress in understanding how it feels to discover an old manuscript. In the lessons that do not hold their interest, pupils sit passively and there is not that same spark of enthusiasm for learning.

17. Most pupils are conscientious in completing homework in their termly booklets and bringing them back on time. Work is neat and well presented. Most have their individual targets to help them try and improve their work or behaviour and they can explain what their targets are. Pupils show they can be trusted to learn for themselves when using the library. During the inspection, they were seen listening sensibly to a taped story or using the computer in the corridor with the minimum of adult supervision. The exception to these good attitudes was seen during the first day back from half term, when many older pupils had forgotten their physical education kit and had to be given a theory lesson instead of practical activities.
18. Relationships are very good, both between pupils and between pupils and adults. Pupils fully accept those with special needs and often 'look out for them' in the playground and at assembly times. They respect and are tolerant of their peers who have difficulties. Pupils feel comfortable in talking to their teachers and there are some very supportive relationships between pupils and classroom assistants. In Year 6 'playpals' have been appointed to help to involve everyone in games and other activities at lunchtime. They take seriously their responsibilities and encourage everyone to play together in a friendly, harmonious atmosphere. Pupils and some parents spoke about bullying sometimes happening. Whilst acknowledging that it does occur occasionally, pupils are confident about telling adults and agree that appropriate action is taken to help them. No bullying was seen during the inspection.
19. Behaviour is generally good. Pupils behave well both in class and around the school. The atmosphere is calm and well ordered. Pupils are very positive about the school's system of rewarding good behaviour; they enjoy receiving stickers and stars to put on their own charts. One pupil spoke with pride when he explained how he had not been behaving well, was ultimately sent to see the headteacher and had made such improvements since that he was mentioned in the Achievement Book, read out in assembly. There are a small minority of pupils, mainly boys, who find good behaviour difficult. They work hard to try and improve but need extra adult supervision and their progress is often erratic. There was one exclusion during the last academic year. Occasional examples of inappropriate behaviour were seen in physical education. Pupils with special needs are helped to become interested in their tasks and to sustain concentration. Most pupils want to succeed and put in considerable effort as they make progress. Their behaviour is good, although they require firm handling at times.
20. Pupils respond well to the good opportunities the school provides to enhance their personal development and maturity. They are more limited in taking opportunities to show initiative and originality, both in lessons and around school. Pupils care for the class pets well - Year 6 pupils were carefully handling Betty the pet hamster, under the supervision of the teacher, during lunchtime. They hold positions in classrooms such as book and plant monitors and look after lunch boxes. The new playpals scheme, in which some of the oldest pupils care for others, is working very successfully. Pupils enthusiastically raise money for charity- recently through a non-uniform day for The National Children's Home Action for Children. At Harvest and Christmas times, the choir sings at nearby sheltered housing for senior citizens and in the city shopping centre.
21. Attendance is good and recent figures are above the national average for primary schools. The rate of unauthorised absence remains above national averages, as not all parents yet feel it is important to let the school know why their child is absent. Time is used well, especially in the mornings where timings have been reorganised to be more effective. The school continues to work hard to improve pupils' punctuality in the mornings and their efforts are successful. There are only a few pupils who are sometimes late.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

22. The quality of teaching is good. During the inspection teaching was at least satisfactory in all the lessons seen. Fifty seven per cent of lessons were good and a further seven per cent were very good. These figures are a substantial improvement on the previous inspection where there was 16 per cent of unsatisfactory teaching and they indicate good improvement on the key issue to disseminate best practice across the school. Inspectors' overall judgements about teaching are based on evidence from the lessons seen, from looking at pupils' previous work and talking to pupils and teachers about what they do.
23. Literacy and numeracy lessons are given a high priority. Both are taught well. The school has implemented the National Strategy for Literacy well and this has supported pupils' achievement, although it is yet to have a full impact on the attainment of the oldest pupils. The development of pupils' oral skills, while satisfactory, is somewhat less effective than the teaching of reading and writing. In mathematics, there has been a satisfactory introduction of the numeracy strategy which, combined with revised 'setting' arrangements, is proving effective in improving teaching, especially for number work. The school has understandably concentrated on improving the teaching of number work as a priority this year but, as a result, the practical and investigative aspects of mathematics do not receive the attention they require for a balanced curriculum. Programmes of Additional Literacy Support for some of the younger pupils are well organised and support this group well. The school has also made good use recently of booster classes for some of its older pupils in the run-up to the national tests. The overall good teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics equips pupils well for their work in these key areas.
24. Teaching in science is good. Planning for the experimental and investigative aspects of the subject was an issue for improvement at the time of the last inspection and is now considerably better. Teaching in information technology is good and the new computer suite has enabled teachers to provide an effective programme of skills teaching that is supporting pupils to make rapid progress. While teaching in religious education was good in the lessons seen during the inspection, evidence from talking to pupils and examining their previous work shows weaknesses in coverage between classes and insufficient attention to ensuring that pupils understand and remember their lessons.
25. Teaching was good overall in the lessons seen in art, design and technology, history and physical education. There are particular strengths in art where teachers are adventurous and challenging and enable pupils to make very good progress at times. No lessons were seen in geography but evidence from pupils' progress in their previous work indicates that teaching is effective. The lessons seen in Italian were taught well but the week's gap between lessons means that pupils do not have opportunities to consolidate their learning more regularly and progress is no better than satisfactory overall. Teaching is satisfactory in music. There is good use of specialist teachers for guitar and Italian lessons which gives pupils access to these areas of expertise.
26. Teachers' lesson planning is satisfactory. It clearly defines overall learning objectives for each lesson and these are usefully shared with pupils in most lessons. This enables pupils to understand what they are to learn and helps them and their teachers to judge their progress at the end of the lesson. In some lessons there are too many objectives for pupils to digest. Other lessons would benefit from more precise objectives and indications of what it is expected that pupils of all attainments will achieve. The lack of this is most evident for activities to challenge and extend the most able. In many lessons there are few indications in the written plan of the role the teacher will take in a lesson.
27. Teachers' methods are generally good. Explanations are clear and activities structured to balance adult input and pupil activity well. Many lessons benefit from an introduction to review previous learning and to present new work followed by group or individual practice and a summary session to check what has been learnt. Pupils understand what to do. Investigations and problem-solving activities are used well in science and design and technology but are less evident in mathematics. Teachers interact well with pupils during lessons and most use questions well to check and extend understanding.

28. A significant strength of the school is the high quality of relationships which permeates almost all activities. Almost all teachers promote these well by their pleasant, friendly manner. They treat pupils with care and respect and almost always manage their behaviour well. This results in pupils feeling valued and wanting to work. Teachers handle pupils' lack of confidence or mistakes well, making pupils feel that their contributions are important. Pupils respond well by high standards of behaviour and co-operation.
29. Time is generally used well. Some lessons, most notably in religious education and music, are very short and sometimes are rushed to fit in the required content. This does not always result in good quality learning. Occasionally the time of the learning support assistants is not used to the full in the introductions to literacy and numeracy sessions. Homework is used well to support learning in all classes.
30. While teachers use assessment information well in the long-term in their analysis of pupils' test results and overall National Curriculum levels, day-to-day assessment procedures are less well developed. Marking is carried out regularly but the quality of written comments varies considerably and does not always inform pupils of how well they have done or set the next target for development. Teachers assess pupils' overall achievements against the objectives for the lesson but these assessments rarely differentiate the progress made by pupils of varying attainments, especially for the highest attainers.
31. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers plan carefully structured, interesting and varied tasks to motivate the pupils and move them on in their learning. The teachers and support staff work together co-operatively as a team to the benefit of all pupils. The support staff who work with pupils with speech and language needs provide very focused help that is carefully targeted to their needs. Tasks are prepared at differing levels to meet the needs of the pupils. The support given by learning support assistants is most effective when class teachers plan their assistants' work and use them fully throughout the lessons. Work is set at a level closely matched to pupils' prior attainment and to any specific targets. The class teachers and the special needs co-ordinator carefully set and monitor their progress, although this is difficult for the co-ordinator to complete as well as she would wish because of the considerable calls on her time. Teachers often write good evaluations of pupils' achievements in relation to their targets.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

32. The quality of the school's curriculum is good and meets statutory requirements. It is sufficiently broad and balanced with all subjects represented, including effective personal, health and social provision on a regular basis. Sex education and drugs awareness lessons are included. Italian is taught as an additional subject to all classes. The overall planning of the curriculum is good and supports the high quality of teaching well. The time allocated to a few subjects is low, most notably in religious education and music where lessons are often short. Since the last inspection the school has reviewed its long term planning and now incorporates all new national schemes of work. Every class has a daily literacy and numeracy lesson based on national guidelines. There are extra sessions to develop reading and writing skills for those who need it most. Staff plan together in year groups and use their schemes of work to create half-termly planning sheets, which all classes use consistently.
33. Policies are in place for all subjects of the curriculum and many aspects of school provision. However, few policies are dated and the school is aware that many of them require revision to take account of the changing National Curriculum, such as those for design and technology and art. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented soundly and already there are improvements in the development of mental and oral arithmetic. The National Literacy Strategy is well developed and there are many activities targeted to pupils' particular needs. In other subjects, the national Programmes of Study or the school's own schemes of work are used well. Religious education is based on the school's scheme of work. This reflects the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus well but some aspects are not taught effectively. A structured scheme of work for personal, health and social education is being developed at

present. Significant improvements have been made in the planning of investigative activities within science and design and technology since the last inspection when the planning of these two subjects was a key issue.

34. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is appropriate and closely linked to their Individual Education Plans. This includes activities for the group entitled to Enhanced Resource provision. All are given access to the full curriculum. The specialist teachers and services are very effective in helping these pupils to have worthwhile learning experiences and to make progress. The school has good arrangements to cater for any pupils who are admitted with English as an additional language. The school is a caring establishment which incorporates all new pupils well. It ensures that language skills are developed systematically through the use of Individual Educational Plans and also offers assistance to parents with English as an additional language.
35. Extra-curricular provision is good, particularly for older pupils. Pupils enjoy Italian, cross stitch and information technology clubs. They participate in football, netball, games, country dancing, roller hockey and jump-rope activities. There are regular drama and music productions such as this year's production performed by the upper school of 'The Sound of Music'. (The choir, recorder and tin whistle clubs, which usually take place, are currently suspended due to the secondment of a member of staff.) There are a number of visitors who enrich the curriculum including a string quartet, naturalists and a theatre group. A strength of the curriculum is its school journeys. Three residential trips to extend the curriculum are made to places such as Scarborough, Burwell and Stibbington. Pupils take part in science, geography and history challenges and, for example, learn how to measure the flow of the river and develop a television programme there.
36. Equality of opportunity within the school is sound. Pupils benefit equally from all aspects of the curriculum, except guitar lessons, which are an option. There is good support for all groups of pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. One particularly gifted pupil has been identified and is working at levels well above the national expectation. However, in many subjects there is little explicit planning to challenge the more able, for example in science. The school is successful in its strong commitment that pupils with speech and language difficulties who have Enhanced Resource provision should be fully integrated in all activities.
37. Links with the local community are satisfactory. On a weekly basis the YMCA comes into the school to work with pupils. There is an 'outside hours' club for pupils and a family computer club. The school regularly lets out parts of the facilities to other members of the community. There are plans to develop links with local businesses. Visits are made to neighbouring churches, a mosque and a Sikh temple.
38. Close ties have been made with the mother and toddler group, the neighbouring infant school and the secondary school to which most pupils transfer. This has had a significant effect on the ease with which pupils adapt to their formal education. There are regular interchanges with the infant school and local secondary school to ensure that transfer is smooth. The infant school uses the swimming pool and Year 6 pupils go to the secondary school in lunchtimes regularly to use their larger pool. There are inter-school netball and football matches. Pupils increasingly use the Internet to make contacts outside the school.
39. The overall provision for pupils' personal development is good. The provision for social education is very good and moral education is good. These are strengths of the school. Spiritual and cultural education are satisfactory. There has been a significant improvement in all these areas since the previous inspection.
40. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. It is not formally considered within the curriculum and subject policies do not refer to ways in which spiritual awareness can be developed. Opportunities *do* arise for pupils to discuss their feelings in response to music, for example, when listening to Holst's Planets Suite. Circle time provides good opportunities for pupils to talk about special moments affecting their lives. During a Literacy Hour lesson seen, pupils experienced a variety of emotions when listening to the poems from 'Please, Mrs Butler'

by Allan Ahlberg. There was joy as they clicked their fingers and moved in time to the poem 'Scissors' set to jazz, empathy in listening to 'Picking teams' and murmurs of sadness listening to 'I am in the slow readers' group'. Prayer Flags made by pupils in Year 6, which include their own prayers, have given pupils the opportunity for reflection. The thought-provoking caption on the display, saying 'When the wind blows, prayers will be answered', gives a further opportunity for contemplation.

41. The quality of assemblies and acts of worship is generally satisfactory. These are held in classrooms and larger groups. However, not all classes are timetabled for a daily act of worship as required by law. A monthly clergy visitor from the nearby church, who took an assembly during the inspection, makes a good contribution by giving a wider Christian perspective. Music is incorporated into assemblies and sometimes, but not always, used as a focus for reflection; too often it is barely audible and appears incidental. Pupils are offered the opportunity to join in prayer during most assemblies, based upon Christian values.
42. There is good provision for pupils' moral development. The headteacher plays an important part in setting the tone for the school and pupils are aware of his role in rewarding good behaviour as well as in providing ultimate sanctions. All staff provide positive role models for pupils to follow. Good behaviour is actively encouraged and expectations are high. Pupils are given the chance to compile their own class rules and an array of award systems is well used to encourage pupils towards the correct path to follow. The Home-School agreement includes space for pupils to sign, which most do, where they undertake to do their best to respect school rules. Pupils are helped to appreciate other people's points of view through their literacy work, for example, when involved in debating the rights and wrongs of a proposed bypass cutting through woodland.
43. The school places an appropriately high emphasis on the development of pupils' social education and provision is very good. Pupils are given a good range of responsibilities, both in the classroom and within the school as a community, which is helping to develop their self-confidence and levels of maturity. A wide range of extra-curricular activities plus the very good provision for residential trips in Years 4, 5 and 6 are making a significant impact on their personal development. Staff make time to provide a good level of support for the needs of the individual. Pupils are encouraged to think of others less fortunate than themselves through raising money for national children's charities; they are helped to understand that there are local people who also need extra help by collecting produce at harvest time, taken to senior citizens and other residents nearby. The provision of a foreign language within the curriculum is beneficial in helping to raise pupils' confidence in their own abilities and their levels of self-esteem. Lunchtimes in the dining hall are pleasant, with the combination of good food, a welcoming atmosphere and an insistence on good behaviour and manners which is making mealtimes a valuable social occasion.
44. Cultural education is satisfactory. Pupils' own culture in Stanground and Peterborough is used well. Italian lessons help pupils to stay in touch with the traditions of the local area and broaden their horizons to a wider European perspective. In history, pupils are encouraged to understand the richness of their heritage with information from local history sources, which is helping them understand, for example, about the effect the railways had when they first came to their city in Victorian times. Art makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development; for example, in using Indian patterns (based upon seals found in the Indus valley) to create repeated patterns by block printing. The planned curriculum in music, geography, art and literature all support pupils' cultural development satisfactorily but current weaknesses in religious education mean that some valuable opportunities to enhance this aspect further are lost. The school has correctly identified the need to make better use of galleries, churches, museums and places of interest to support further development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

45. The school continues to provide good support for pupils in a warm and friendly atmosphere where teaching and learning is flourishing. A particular strength of the school is in the level of support shown for the individual pupil, some of whom have more extreme learning, behaviour

and personal needs.

46. Arrangements for child protection are good and this area is one highlighted for continuing development within the school. The named person with responsibility for child protection matters is well trained and keeps up to date with recent developments through attendance at a good range of meetings and a Teachers' Peer Group forum.
47. There are good arrangements to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. Medicines are dispensed within strict and closely followed guidelines, detailed in the school's first aid policy. This is especially important as there is a significant number of pupils who need daily medicine, more than usually seen in many mainstream schools. The caretaker is experienced in health and safety procedures and is vigilant. Concerns mentioned in the previous report, regarding signing-in procedures, security and the safety of the food technology area, have been successfully resolved. However, the school's current health and safety policy is very brief, out of date and does not fairly reflect much of the good practice taking place. This is an area for development.
48. Monitoring of pupils' attendance, particularly in the area of timekeeping, is good. Conscious of the need for a prompt start in the mornings, the school has implemented a good system where pupils' punctuality is recorded and awards given for consistently good timekeeping. Pupils with special educational needs are generally punctual in arriving at school, although a few have difficulties. For these pupils the school monitors their attendance and sets appropriate expectations. For pupils who have specific problems, individual charts are helping. A draw, where names go in a hat for a small gift, is proving successful in helping pupils to establish and maintain good habits. Regular attendance is also rewarded well and parents at the meeting with inspectors agreed that they could detect an improvement in their child's willingness to attend school. A testimony to this is seen in the attendance figures, which have risen since the previous inspection and are now just above national averages.
49. The school is working hard and successfully in improving pupils' behaviour. The systems in place for promoting behaviour are good and have been revised to help improve areas for development identified in a recent independent audit of pupils' behaviour. The headteacher takes a strong line in helping to create a positive environment where pupils are praised for the good things they do, rather than the focus being on poor behaviour and reprimands. Using the view that 'if children are involved, their behaviour improves', an innovative system using a specially employed playleader and Year 6 playpals has been set up at lunchtimes. This is significant in helping to create good behaviour on the playground, where most pupils are involved in a variety of games, contributing to a playground full of life and vigour!
50. Most staff are experienced in encouraging good behaviour and an array of rewards, such as marbles in a jar leading to 'free' time, certificates and stickers, is working well. However, the current behaviour policy, whilst providing an appropriate framework, does not reflect all of the good practice taking place. Arrangements to deal with any cases of bullying are good. The school takes these seriously and parents are involved, where necessary. Pupils are happy that staff help them if they are being bullied and matters are dealt with to their satisfaction.
51. The school has a deserved reputation for dealing well with pupils who have a range of emotional and behavioural difficulties, many of whom have found it difficult, for a variety of reasons, to settle in other schools. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are good, based upon formal recording systems, on end of year reports and the good informal knowledge staff have. A range of good systems is in place to help, such as a group funded by the school and run by the YMCA for some Year 6 pupils, to help them deal with the move to secondary education. Circle time is used to help pupils discuss situations and emotions which they find difficult to cope with.
52. There is a good level of support and guidance provided for the needs of the individual pupil. Often learning support assistants provide a friendly ear and are able to give time to listen to those who need someone to talk to. Teachers, too, are caring and support pupils and their families well. Some spend considerable amounts of time talking to families after school has finished. Lunchtime staff, many of whom have been at the school for some years, generally enjoy talking to the pupils and know them well.

53. Procedures for the effective assessment of pupils' attainment and progress throughout the school are good. The School Improvement Plan sets out assessment priorities such as target setting with parents. This has been introduced and the school is aware that the targets need to be more specific for pupils to make good progress and for standards to be raised.
54. The school's assessment overview gives a clear picture of what assessments are to take place in all areas of the curriculum each term in all year groups. Teachers' year group plans give more specific details and ensure consistency across the year group. National Curriculum levels are being recorded for assessed work. Portfolios of work show teachers' understanding of what pupils of different abilities can do in a variety of subjects. However, the work is not levelled in line with National Curriculum criteria which would support teachers in having a shared understanding of these levels. This is important as the levels are being used to monitor pupil progress.
55. The school's use of formal assessment information to guide curricular planning is good. Test data at the end of the key stage, for example, has been analysed for gender differences and action has been taken to address any areas of concern. There are currently no significant differences in boys' and girls' performance. Data are also being used effectively to 'set' pupils for mathematics within year groups and to group them by ability within the classroom for English. This is helping to raise standards. Assessments enable the school to identify pupils who would benefit from additional literacy support in the lower school and booster classes in the upper school, again to raise standards. The school successfully assesses and monitors the progress of pupils with special educational needs, including those with substantial communication difficulties. Their individual learning programmes are closely analysed and the necessary formal reviews of progress take place.
56. While annual tests in the core subjects English, mathematics and science are analysed to identify areas of strength and weakness in the curriculum, there is currently no strategic plan for the use of this information at classroom level.
57. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory for tracking pupils' achievement. This is the first year of the current system. Individual pupil profiles are kept as a record of pupils' attainment and will be passed on through the school. These include termly reading ages using a standardised test, assessments for pupils with special needs, annual spelling ages and the results of subject-specific tests. Writing journals, which are completed and assessed half-termly, are also to follow pupils through the school as a measure of on-going progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

58. The school works hard to establish a good relationship with parents. It has successfully maintained the positive climate described in the previous inspection report and the quality of parental support, in terms of the number of positive replies received to the inspection questionnaire, has increased.
59. Parents were largely positive in all of their responses to the questionnaire. They agree that their child is making good progress and that the school expects their child to work hard and achieve his or her best. They also agree that the school is making their child more mature and responsible. Those parents at the meeting expressed overall satisfaction, but with a few reservations. Inspectors agree with the parents' positive views. Parents were unusually positive in their views about the school's provision for homework, which inspectors agree is good. A small minority of parents do not feel that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside of lessons. Inspection judgements are that the quality of extra-curricular activities is good. These include three opportunities for pupils to go away on residential visits, which constitutes very good provision.
60. The school strives to establish effective links with parents, although the response to meetings is often very disappointing and attendance low. Nevertheless, the school is committed to continuing to try and build on the home-school partnership and the quality of what it offers is good. It is active in organising events which will help parents: for instance, two family computer courses have been recently provided in partnership with outside agencies. It provides facilities and support for an established 'Messy Play' mother and toddler group and a 'Time Out' activity club.
61. A particular strength in the good quality information for parents is the number of parents' information evenings the school holds. During the academic year these have included meetings about sex education, a visit to the Life Education Centre bus and a linked drugs information evening, meetings about the residential trips and an evening which encompassed several topics including a Numeracy Hour workshop, discussion on the school's homework policy and the home-school agreement.
62. The quality of end-of-year reports on pupils' progress, based on a sample sent out last year, is satisfactory overall. There are inconsistencies within year groups and reports do not clearly identify attainment in all subjects or areas that pupils need to improve upon. The school is currently changing the format so that the comments will be more closely linked to assessments of pupils' work. This is an appropriate move. In the autumn term, the school discusses with parents the targets set for pupils to work on, based on work, attitude or behaviour. The school acknowledges the need to make these targets more sharply focused and for areas for development on reports to be tied more closely into target setting.
63. The school welcomes parents' help; recently a request has been sent out for help in renovating the wildlife area. Parents have a satisfactory level of involvement in school life. The Friends of Stanground School (FOSS) is a well-established group. This is an improvement in the parent and school relationship as the group was formed since the previous inspection. Their hard work helps the school to buy items of equipment it would otherwise find it hard to afford; currently 'The Friends' are saving to purchase computer equipment. A few parents provide regular help in classes and this is valuable in giving extra adult support for pupils.
64. Parents provide a satisfactory level of support for learning at home. The vast majority have returned the home-school agreement to say they will support the school. In practice, some parents regularly listen to their child read and help them with homework, whilst others find this kind of support difficult. Attendance at parents' evenings is usually very good, although the actual level of support at home is variable. Several parents were previous pupils at the school and this in itself can cloud their perceptions of what the school is now like and may deter them from getting too involved.
65. The school works well in partnership with parents of children with special educational needs. There are regular opportunities for parents to attend discussions about their child and the staff

make themselves available for informal contact. Parents attend the regular reviews of Individual Education Plans. They feel that they are fully informed about their child's progress and that any problems are discussed carefully to include them in decisions. Parents are very appreciative of the support that the school gives to their children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

66. The school continues to be led and managed well. It has an appropriate statement of its aims for pupils, which are reflected well through its policies and procedures. The headteacher is an effective leader. He is very well respected and has led the school successfully through a period which has seen a considerable amount of staff change and the reconstitution of the governing body. He promotes a caring atmosphere in the school based on equality of opportunity for all. His influence has supported the spirit of friendly teamwork evident in the staff. He has a clear vision for the continuing development of the school.
67. Roles and responsibilities are delegated well and the headteacher is aware of the staff's capabilities and divides the workload accordingly. Some of the senior staff in the school have been appointed recently and there have been several changes to areas of responsibility. In spite of the turbulence caused by these changes, the school functions well at all levels. The senior management team increasingly promotes high standards in all aspects of the school and enables effective teaching and learning to take place. Good progress has been made overall since the last inspection on the key issues defined for action at that time and on improvements in pupils' performance. The school is well placed to continue to improve.
68. The management of special educational needs is good, though within constraints at present. This is because, as a class teacher, the mainstream co-ordinator has a very heavy workload and limited time away from her class to attend to documentation and work with or observe the pupils with special needs. There are plans soon to remedy this situation and release the co-ordinator from some of her class commitments. The school meets fully the recommendations of the national Code of Practice for these pupils. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and hard working. She has careful records so that details about pupils are available. Good working procedures are in place and ensure that teaching colleagues have up-to-date education plans from which to work. The co-ordinator liaises closely with parents and outside agencies to ensure that pupils receive the best provision available. The teacher in charge of pupils with speech and language difficulties has a very good understanding of the role and a thorough knowledge of the pupils' language background. She monitors the work with these pupils closely and is alert to their developing needs. Her shared role in the infant school enables continuity of provision for pupils.
69. The level of learning support staffing is good for the pupils with speech and language difficulties. There is an appropriate range of materials and resources for these pupils. The accommodation supports them well, with good spaces for groups of pupils to work when needed.
70. The governing body is newly reconstituted. Many of the governors are inexperienced but they are skilled, capable and willing to learn. Under the able leadership of the Chair and with continuing support from the headteacher, they have established an appropriate committee structure and terms of reference. This has entailed a heavier than usual commitment of time and energy from the headteacher in recent months to ensure that governors have fulfilled the essentials of their role and have been inducted into good working practices. Governors are beginning to work closely with staff and have established good relationships. They visit the school whenever possible and are keen to find out about its day-to-day working. Inevitably, at this early stage, the governors do not yet take a full and independent part in aspects such as development planning and financial monitoring. They question sensibly what the school does but are not yet fully aware of its overall strengths and weaknesses. They are beginning to monitor teaching and the curriculum in areas such as literacy and as a result are becoming more involved in determining where the school could improve. A member of the governing body who is employed by the school in special needs work has also acted as the monitor of special needs on behalf of the governing body and this is inappropriate. Governors ensure that most statutory requirements are met but there are a few omissions from the prospectus

and from the most recent annual report to parents and a daily act of worship is not ensured for all classes.

71. The headteacher takes a lead in the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching and learning. Together with the relevant co-ordinators and advisers from the local authority, recent monitoring has concentrated on the focus areas of literacy, numeracy and science and has supported improving standards. The direct monitoring of teaching is not yet widespread for other subjects. Information from the school's results in national and optional tests is increasingly analysed to set future targets for development. This has led to well focused initiatives, for example to ascertain the reasons for apparent variations in the attainment of boys and girls and action to remedy any perceived weaknesses.
72. The School Development Plan sets out priorities and targets for the coming year. It includes an impressive set of quality assurance statements. Co-ordinators contribute well to the plan, devising action plans for each subject and for other aspects of school life such as assessment and behaviour. Once set, the development plan is a working document and reviewed and modified accordingly. The plan determines how available finance will be targeted and gives clear criteria by which the success of initiatives will be judged. In practice, the headteacher has a clear overview of relevant priorities for the school in the longer term which is expressed in written form. It is increasingly shared with the staff and governors to promote a statement of the corporate vision.
73. Financial planning by the headteacher is detailed and thorough and enables the school to make good use of its resources. The planning process is increasingly shared with the governors, who monitor the budget satisfactorily. Expenditure is carefully considered and linked to educational priorities. The use of any available funds carried forward between financial years is carefully considered and questioned by governors. Financial regulations and controls are fully in place. The most recent auditors' report was positive and its few recommendations are being addressed. The funding for special educational needs is complex due to the arrangements for Enhanced Resource provision but this and other funding from special grants is carefully targeted, managed and documented. The school increasingly seeks to ensure best value by comparing its performance with other schools, questioning the effectiveness of what it does, consulting on its further development and carefully comparing prices and contracts.
74. The administrative staff are very efficient and help to ensure the smooth running of the school. The school makes increasing use of new technology to support its administration. Assessment software has recently been acquired which will improve the facility with which information on pupils is processed. In the school generally, good use is made by staff and pupils of information technology, especially in the computer suite.
75. There are sufficient qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of the pupils and the requirements of the curriculum. Most teachers have additional responsibilities beyond their classroom duties that match their interests or qualifications. The school has good procedures to ensure that newly qualified teachers get support from colleagues acting as induction tutors and a 'mentor'. It provides effective, generous levels of support for students training to be teachers. Learning support assistants are prepared well by the teachers and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Professional interviews take place for teachers to identify strengths and areas for improvement and this procedure helps to identify training needs. The school ensures that members of staff attend regular training sessions. Appropriate procedures for performance management are in place, although, in common with many schools currently, they are being reviewed and awaiting further national guidance.
76. The site manager makes an effective contribution to the pupils' welfare. The midday assistants contribute to the good ethos of the school, although they are not always fully respected by the pupils. Catering staff are efficient and support the school's ethos well by helping to promote a caring, sociable atmosphere at lunchtimes.
77. The accommodation of the school is good. The classrooms are of sufficient size. There are no practical working areas adjacent to most classrooms but the teachers manage such activities

well within the available space. There are several smaller teaching spaces, such as the music room, a language room and corridor bays, that the school uses well. The spacious library is used in a variety of ways and houses a few computers. A separate 'shared use' block provides space for a valuable computer suite, which has contributed well to provision. The school building is in good condition internally and there are many attractive displays of pupils' work. The hall is of a good size and is used for physical education and assemblies amongst other activities. There is a separate dining area that serves the school well by causing no disruption to activities in the hall. Externally, the building is in the process of having double glazed windows fitted but otherwise is in a satisfactory condition. There are two good playgrounds, which allow for a quiet area in one as well as active games such as football. A learner swimming pool is used well during the summer months. There is a good-sized grassed area, which allows for field games and athletics. The school is also developing an interesting wildlife area, which is used for pupils to take part in science and environmental activities.

78. Learning resources are satisfactory overall in range, quality and quantity. The school undertakes a range of valuable outside visits. The headteacher has focused improvement in resources on appropriate provision for English, mathematics, science and information technology. Pupils' learning and research skills are supported well by the accessible library, which has a satisfactory range of books. The very good computer suite is beginning to provide pupils with good learning experiences.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

79. The school has many strengths. In order to build on these and improve the overall quality of provision and raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- raise standards in English by:
 - the promotion of speaking and listening skills to encourage pupils to have a wider vocabulary, increased confidence and participation in discussion, the expressive use of language where appropriate and the correct use of technical language;
 - implementing a manageable and effective system of assessment of speaking and listening skills;
 - implementing a strategy to improve spelling;
 - exploring the wider use of links with other subjects to promote literacy skills across the curriculum.

paragraphs 6,7,23,80-96,110,126,133,158

- raise standards in religious education by:
 - ensuring that sufficient time is allocated to the subject to carry out the planned programme of study;
 - ensuring that pupils acquire and retain the required knowledge, understanding and skills,
 - monitoring provision to ensure consistency and high standards in all classes,
 - ensuring that religious education and the programme of assemblies have separate, appropriate aims and content but exploit any links where this is beneficial to pupils' progress.

paragraphs 10,24,29,32,33,44,154-158

- improve the quality of teachers' planning and assessment, and thereby support pupils' progress more efficiently, by developing teachers' short-term planning procedures to include:
 - sufficient detail of the objectives for all attainment levels;
 - what the teacher's role in a lesson will be;
 - how the progress of all pupils will be manageably assessed;
 - methods to ensure that teachers' ongoing assessment of progress is effective in providing pupils with information about how well they achieve and what they need to do to improve.

paragraphs 26,30,36,89,103,109,118,124,130-132,140,149,158

- lessen the overall workload of the special needs co-ordinator, as already planned, by increasing the time available to carry out her specialist administrative, liaison and teaching duties.

paragraphs 31,68

- enable the new governing body to take a full part in the management of the school, as planned, by a programme of induction and training.

paragraphs 70-73

Other issues which should be considered by the school:

- improving the consistency of marking and target-setting for pupils to bring it into line with the best practice already evident;

paragraphs 30,53,62,92,94,109,123,130

- increasing the levels of practical and investigational work in mathematics;

paragraphs 8,23,27,104

- ensuring that all classes have a daily act of collective worship in line with legal requirements and with school policy;

paragraphs 41,70

- making more focused use of the learning support staff in the introductions to literacy and numeracy sessions;

paragraphs 29,91,102

- the limited effectiveness of very short lessons in some subjects;

paragraphs 29,32

- ensuring that the prospectus and annual governors' report to parents include all necessary information;

paragraph70

- bringing the health and safety policy into line with the evident good practice.

paragraph 47

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

67

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7	57	36	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y3– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		281
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		78

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y3– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		13
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		90

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.2
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	43	42	85

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	32	29	35
	Girls	29	23	30
	Total	61	52	65
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (59)	61 (46)	77 (62)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	25	29
	Girls	31	22	27
	Total	56	47	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (44)	55 (55)	66 (57)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	276
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	28

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	333

FTE means full-time equivalent

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	517,139
Total expenditure	508,602
Expenditure per pupil	1,810
Balance brought forward from previous year	21,250
Balance carried forward to next year	29,787

Figures include the delegated budget for Enhanced Resource provision

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	281
Number of questionnaires returned	104

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	44	6	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	44	4	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	50	6	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	52	6	2	5
The teaching is good.	56	38	6	1	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	46	7	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	33	8	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	39	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	38	49	8	5	1
The school is well led and managed.	47	42	5	3	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	47	4	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	42	12	4	7

Figures may not total 100% due to rounding.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

80. Standards in English are below average. In the 1999 national tests for the school's eleven-year-olds, pupils achieved standards below the national average. Nevertheless the school's realistic literacy target for 1999 was exceeded. When compared with schools with similar intakes, the school's results were average. The trend over the past four years shows standards slowly rising with an increase in the number of pupils attaining a higher level. This denotes an improvement since the last inspection.
81. Inspection evidence shows that the overall attainment of the present Year 6 group is below national expectations in most aspects of English and that this particular year group has a significant number of pupils with special learning needs.
82. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school in Year 3 is below average, especially in spoken English. There are high levels of special needs in each intake and pupils joining the school through Key Stage 2, including those who join the Enhanced Resource provision, often have substantial language needs. By the end of Year 6, attainment overall remains somewhat below average. While they are capable listeners, many lack confidence in speaking at length, particularly when expressing their thoughts and opinions. Brief responses are usual. Though frequently introduced to technical terms in lessons, pupils are rarely effectively encouraged to make use of these. They do not have a widely developed vocabulary and rarely make use of technical language. Oracy skills are not fully promoted across the curriculum though some good uses are seen. In Year 4 pupils performed poems with expression. In Year 5 in history they debated the coming of the Victorian railways from the viewpoint of angry participants. The teachers in these lessons made effective use of the time available and allowed pupils to make good progress in both speaking and history skills. The expression of emotions is well developed through poetry.
83. All teachers take the opportunities that the Literacy Hour offers to involve pupils in discussion but not all target particular individuals to answer questions and, in a few lessons, some pupils who do not put their hands up remain passive throughout. Few teachers used pupils' spoken responses to support, challenge or develop those of other pupils. Speaking skills are not systematically assessed and monitored to raise the standard.
84. In Year 6 standards in reading are below those expected overall although approximately a third are good readers. Technically most pupils read fluently with reasonable confidence but many do not read with expression. Pupils read poems and comment on their structure at a literal level: 'repetition', 'it's funny', 'four lines in one verse', 'you've got to say it fast' but they make few inferences or deductions. Most know how to locate an information book in the school library and understand the purpose of the index or contents page. Library skills are developed well across the school. Research skills, such as finding their own way of summarising a text, are practised to a limited extent through subjects such as history.
85. Attainment in writing is slightly below average by the time pupils leave the school. A lack of wide vocabulary continues to hamper pupils and affects other subjects such as geography and history where all but the higher attaining pupils lack confidence in using technical words. Only pupils working at the higher level are able to do this well. In poetry most pupils use imaginative similes well but find the use of metaphor and personification difficult. Good imaginative examples are seen nevertheless: 'sea spilling out little boats'. Pupils write appropriately in a range of different forms including letters, report writing and arguing a point of view ('people can't go fishing because...') and they write for a range of audiences. Few grammatically complex sentences are used. The use of basic conventional forms of grammar is satisfactory. Many pupils have difficulty with spelling. Pupils write in paragraphs with a satisfactory range of punctuation marks. Most use a clear, joined script. Handwriting throughout the school is well developed and pupils make good progress in this aspect of writing. Examples of very good levels of handwriting are seen in the display of those pupils

winning first and second prizes in the Southfields Handwriting Competition 2000.

86. Literacy has a high profile in the school and the Literacy Hour is now well established in the school with extra time being given to extended writing and reading to raise standards, although these improvements have yet to have a full impact on the attainment of the oldest pupils.
87. Pupils have positive attitudes to literacy throughout the school, an improvement since the last inspection report when pupils' responses were satisfactory. They listen well and most concentrate when working independently. Teachers have worked hard to achieve this. Good examples of pupils working well together are seen. This contributes positively to their social skills. In Year 4, pupils worked sensibly and pleasurably in pairs identifying alliteration in poems, for example, 'Christine Crump is crunching crisps'. Groups of Year 5 pupils supported each other identifying rhyming words in limericks which had different spellings. Good quality poetry is enjoyed and gives the pupils valuable experiences of fiction work whilst promoting their cultural development well. In a few classes, when the pace of the lesson does not hold pupils' attention well, they are slow to complete tasks.
88. Most pupils made good progress in the lessons seen during the inspection. The rate of pupils' learning over time has been steadier. Those with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. They are supported well through detailed Individual Education Plans, which are used to provide activities targeted at the development of specific skills.
89. Teaching overall is good. During the inspection it was good or very good in seven out of ten lessons. This indicates that teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was judged satisfactory. Very good and good lessons are characterised by a brisk pace and high expectations demonstrated by challenging questions like that in Year 3 on prefixes, 'How does 'mis' change the root word?' In Year 5 the teacher refers to a sentence and asks, 'Can we improve that?' One pupil does and states, 'Poverty lies in the dark corners in town'. In independent work, pupils understand that learning time is valuable. All teachers plan lessons well and make clear what pupils are to learn. These learning objectives are shared with pupils and reviewed well at the end of the lesson. This helps pupils to focus on what it is they are to learn or practise and enables them to develop an understanding of their learning. In the very best lessons it is clear in the planning what each ability group is going to learn and these intentions are finely tuned to ensure the maximum progress for all pupils.
90. Teachers have secure knowledge of the subject and are good at teaching basic skills. Year 3 pupils, for example, are becoming familiar with suffixes and prefixes and Year 5 are being taught how to identify abstract nouns relating to emotions. Teachers' use of specific vocabulary to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of such concepts is sound overall.
91. The majority of teachers have very good working relationships with pupils and in the best lessons there is a light touch of humour used to motivate and maintain pupils' interest. This is very effective. Most teachers deal with pupils' responses to questions well, even when inaccurate. This is supportive to pupils and gives them confidence to try again. Pupils are organised and managed very well. This leads to good behaviour. Assistants help teachers in most classes, particularly with those pupils with special needs, and they give good support. In some classes more productive use could be made of their time during lesson introductions.
92. Pupils' work is marked and positive and affirmative comments are written ('Your story is well planned with a main event') indicating to pupils that they have achieved what was expected of them. Guidance on how work can be further improved is often lacking. Good examples are seen, nevertheless, in Year 6 ('try to use other connectives rather than 'and' ') and in Year 3 ('next step – use a dictionary or word bank to make sure you spell words correctly'). Another area for development is the planning of on-going and systematic assessment opportunities that will inform day-to-day plans and focus teachers more closely on pupils' progress in lessons.
93. The management of English is sound. The priorities in the School Improvement Plan are being addressed and monitoring of the subject is satisfactory. While lessons have been observed and plans monitored, strategies are not sufficiently in place to give greater emphasis to the monitoring of pupils' progress and attainment in lessons, year groups, and across the

school if standards are to be raised.

94. Termly assessment and target-setting systems are good but can be refined. The school is using a combination of standardised tests and Teacher Assessments which will, over time, enable them to track pupil progress across the year and year-on-year. While pupils' performance in tests is being analysed, there is no strategic plan for addressing the areas of weakness discovered. The home-school reading records provide very little evidence of diagnostic assessment to support pupils' progress and inform parents. The school's portfolio of written work illustrates pupils of different ability work in all year groups but is not marked with National Curriculum levels. This limits its use in supporting teachers to have a shared understanding of what constitutes a National Curriculum level and how these levels progress.
95. Good use is made of the school's grant for Additional Literacy Support to raise standards in the lower school where a significant number of lower attaining pupils get extra support in basic literacy skills and in the upper school where 'Booster' classes allow for smaller teaching groups. Resources are adequate for meeting the demands of the curriculum. There has been a satisfactory improvement in classroom books since the last inspection. There is a good range of information books but there is a shortage in the quantity of these, as the school's library audit recently highlights.
96. The use of literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory in subjects such as geography and history but could be further developed to increase pupils' fluency and understanding. Information technology is used in a variety of ways, for instance, to word-process poems, create newspaper formats, check spelling and to edit stories to improve them.

MATHEMATICS

97. In the 1999 national tests for Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils gaining Level 4 or above, at 61 per cent, was below the national average. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 was also below the national average. This combined to give a performance which was well below the national average overall, since fewer pupils reached the higher levels than nationally. In comparison with schools in similar contexts, the pupils' performance was below average. The trend has shown marked variation over the past four years, though with improvement that is slightly above the national trend. Indications are that the proportion of pupils gaining Level 4 or above in the test this year is close to last year's national average.
98. The observations of the inspection broadly reflect the test results. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is average and matches the school's expectation for the cohort. The pupils' ability with number is also average. The school has made good improvements since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be below the national average. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is below average, so the pupils are making good progress through the school to Year 6. The higher attaining pupils are reaching standards that indicate above average performance by the end of the key stage. There are no significant variations in attainment between boys and girls, or among pupils of different backgrounds. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
99. In Years 3 and 4, most pupils name numbers and count to 100 correctly. They recall addition facts to 10 and most simple addition and subtraction sums are correct but attainment overall is below average. Pupils are beginning to understand place value, for example that $70 + 9$ is 79. The teachers give good emphasis to recording calculations so that most pupils understand the process. Pupils apply number to simple everyday contexts, such as in physical education counting activities. They know how to represent information in simple graphs and tables. They recognise several shapes, such as squares and hexagons, and understand a few simple properties such as having equal angles. Pupils are beginning to explain their methods of working with numbers and the higher attaining pupils demonstrate a growing confidence with mental calculation.
100. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have made sufficiently good progress as a result of the good teaching to reach average standards. Pupils perform addition and subtraction with two and

three digit numbers using decomposition of tens in standard layout and, with practice, most are correct. They understand the value of numbers in differing positions and recall early multiplication facts, although many pupils resort to using fingers for working out. Despite a general lack of confidence in talking to the whole class, many pupils explain their methods satisfactorily for mental calculations. Higher attaining pupils have a good knowledge of two and three dimensional shapes, such as hexagons and triangular prisms, and many pupils identify the shapes from given properties well. Pupils know how to represent the results of surveys, for example of favourite pizza toppings, and set out the data in a block graph. They use their knowledge of shapes in entering commands into the information technology program LOGO to form triangles and squares and the most able complete an extension to this exercise as a problem solving activity.

101. Teachers provide good learning experiences for the pupils in the great majority of lessons, with worthwhile tasks that promote attainment. Pupils develop skills of mental and written calculation steadily, showing increasing accuracy and knowledge of the methods. They enjoy applying their skills to problems such as finding the evaporation of puddles and use their skills in several subjects such as science and geography. Teachers' planning is usually carefully structured to give progressive skill development, so that pupils build well on previous learning. Pupils make good progress through the school overall, helped by their interest and willingness to take part. Their development of investigational skills does not feature much at present as the numeracy work becomes established and is a main focus.
102. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are good. They quickly become interested in the tasks following the teachers' introductions. Most pupils keep concentration well and want to give answers, although there is a small minority in most classes who do not respond well. By Year 6, many pupils work well independently and want to complete their work within the time given, so that they often make good progress in lessons. A few pupils require constant help and they make appropriate progress through the carefully targeted support. Pupils with special educational needs receive perceptive and thorough support so that they maintain their effort and make good progress. Occasionally, learning support assistants' time is underused in the introductions to mathematics sessions.
103. The quality of teaching for mathematics is good, although there are aspects to improve in the lessons observed. The teachers plan from and use the nationally recommended numeracy materials appropriately. Their planning is usually effective and leads to a good choice of tasks and strategies in most lessons. For example, the pupils were highly motivated in one lesson to get four coloured disks in a line by getting multiplication facts correct. Teachers identify learning objectives carefully and share these with the pupils. However, these are usually common for the whole class and do not identify, for example, how the higher attaining pupils may be extended. Most teachers are skilled in using a range of teaching methods that are matched well to the learning needs of the pupils and promote attainment. Teachers explain clearly and give direct demonstrations with materials that have a positive impact on pupils' learning, for example in the use of tens and units activities with an overhead projector. They often use a skilled questioning style that focuses on the main ideas and challenges pupils to think carefully and explain their methods. Several use good interactive teaching to ensure understanding and secure progress. All teachers have good relationships with the pupils and listen carefully to their answers to make assessments of their understanding. Teachers' management of the pupils is good, establishing a good working atmosphere with high expectations. A few pupils are easily distracted and have short concentration spans and teachers use effective behaviour strategies that are direct and clear so that pupils are kept on task well. The teachers usually have a good selection of mathematical apparatus available that is suited to pupils' needs. However, at present, teachers make insufficient notes on a daily basis on the teaching methods they will use so that on a few occasions, for example, the use of structural number apparatus to represent number operations is not considered insufficiently. On a few occasions there is too much emphasis on mental calculation without the support of number apparatus. The teachers are observant of the pupils, make on-going assessments of them and are beginning to keep written records of pupils' attainment in class activities.
104. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the National Numeracy Strategy materials are used appropriately, providing suitable progression in subject content

and skill development. The staff are currently over-dependent on a published scheme that is not always appropriate and they recognise this. Problem solving and investigational work is seldom evident in lessons and is not well established to promote the skills required for using and applying mathematics consistently. This was an identified weakness in the previous inspection and should be addressed through the subject action plan. The co-ordinator provides good subject management overall. She has a good understanding of the role and supports colleagues well. There is agreed time for her to monitor teachers' planning and standards through observing lessons and she uses the information about provision and standards thoughtfully to discuss aspects for development. She makes a very good analysis of pupils' test results, which is used well to inform teaching and 'setting' arrangements, although regular sampling of pupils' work is not yet well established. The school has a good range of resources for mathematics, which supports pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

105. Over the three years since the previous inspection, there has been a steady improvement in standards of attainment in the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests. In the 1999 tests, the percentage of pupils in the school who attained the nationally expected score was below average. This is mainly due to the large number of pupils with special educational needs in the school. However, when compared to those in similar schools, results in 1999 were average. The number of pupils achieving higher standards was below the national average. The rise in standards over time is attributable to an improvement in the quality of teaching, further training for teachers on how to develop pupils' investigational skills, the adoption of the new national scheme of work and improved procedures for assessment.
106. Science was a key issue at the time of the previous inspection and all areas for development have been addressed; for instance, the low time allocation has been increased and pupils now receive three hours' teaching every week. The school has put so much effort successfully into developing investigational skills that this aspect has become a strength of the subject. Attainment targets are now covered in a two-year cycle following the adoption of the national scheme of work. Pupils achieve a good level of independence now when carrying out science investigations, such as when seen planning for themselves a test to discover which material muffles sound most effectively.
107. The findings of the inspection are that the current Year 6 pupils are working at expected national levels. Present Teacher Assessments demonstrate that the school expects 80 per cent to reach the nationally expected level, which is an above average percentage based on last year's national results.
108. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good understanding of life and living processes. They know the names of the parts of a plant and can suggest ways to solve plant problems appropriately. A strength of their knowledge is in how to carry out investigations to make them a fair test. Pupils describe their investigations into the special conditions yeast needs to grow well. They write predictions based on scientific knowledge, saying 'I think that when I exercise my heart will increase speed because my body needs more oxygen'. They form conclusions about their work. They analyse the properties of rocks accurately, know that light travels in straight lines and can draw clear diagrams of electrical circuits. However, there is insufficient emphasis placed on knowledge of forces, especially in the upper school.
109. The quality of teaching is good. When teaching is at its best, there is revision of the previous lesson's content and good questioning skills are used to discover the level of pupil knowledge at the start of the session. Teachers then use good subject knowledge to deepen pupils' understanding and set clear expectations, sharing the learning objectives. They use the school's resources imaginatively to make the lessons interesting and relevant. They value all pupils' contributions and ask them to check errors carefully. There is a good pace to many lessons, especially where pupils are told how long they have to complete tasks. However, marking rarely informs pupils about how they could improve their work. Teachers' day-to-day assessments do not record those pupils who need further reinforcement or challenge in the future. Teachers' short-term planning is rather brief and there is no specific learning objective

for the more able pupils at a higher National Curriculum level. Due to teachers' high expectations and management of behaviour, pupils behave maturely and handle equipment carefully when they carry out investigations in groups.

110. The management of the subject is good and is led enthusiastically by the co-ordinator. The local education authority and the co-ordinator have monitored several teachers' lessons. However, pupils' books have not been examined systematically and teachers' planning has not been monitored. The new co-ordinator is aware of the need for this and plans to do it. The school has adopted the new national scheme of work and has a good programme of formal assessments, which provides the school with useful information. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and is enriched by a sound range of educational visits. Resources are satisfactory, although there are few temperature sensors and CD ROMs for this subject. Resources are well organised and used effectively. There is a pond and environmental area, which the pupils are involved in developing at present. The subject promotes pupils' literacy skills through the introduction of a science vocabulary and through the written reports of scientific investigation and knowledge. Numeracy skills are consolidated through data collection and the drawing of graphs associated with pupils' work. Information and communication technology was under-used in science lessons seen during the inspection. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social development when they work together and share resources during practical investigations.

ART

111. Art is a strength of the school and attainment is above expectations by the end of the key stage. The high quality and wide variety of work displayed demonstrate pupils' achievements and improve the learning environment. These examples set the standard. The subject plays an important part across the whole of the curriculum, for example in English, geography, history, music and religious education. Attainment was judged average overall in the last inspection and therefore this subject has improved since then.
112. One strength of pupils' attainment is in observational drawing. Pupils produce beautiful sketches of Victorian Peterborough. They use fabric to good effect when they design and make landscapes and create three-dimensional scenes of the countryside. They use the example of famous artists thoughtfully when painting portraits in the style of Picasso or water scenes in the style of Monet. Pupils explore patterns in detail when they use batik to make tear drop patterns.
113. Teaching and learning are good with some very good features. Work is planned well and effective use is made of a variety of resources to give pupils a rich experience of art. In the best teaching, learning objectives are shared with the class. Pupils are encouraged to be adventurous, experiment and use their sketch books to develop ideas. Pupils show positive attitudes towards art and are keen to learn new methods and techniques. They are naturally inquisitive about new media when they are introduced. Pupils are taught a good range of skills, which are added to and developed as they move through the school. For example, they learn to use textiles when they design and make a theatre costume for a three-dimensional model inspired by reading the 'Rainbow Fish', as well as using stitches well to create a shell picture. Support staff work well with individuals in developing their skills and techniques. Teachers have good organisational skills, which enable them to give an input at the beginning of lessons, to help pupils throughout the session and to make effective use of the plenary time to reflect on and review learning. This means that pupils develop skills at a good rate. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and use examples of good work to show the rest of the class what is expected and what can be achieved. Pupils are engaged in tasks throughout the lesson due to the good management skills of teachers.
114. The headteacher is acting in a caretaker role as co-ordinator. He manages this subject well in the interim, drawing effectively on the good practice put in place by the subject manager in the past. The school has devised its own scheme of work and it is planned to combine this with the new national guidance. The school has made considerable improvements since the last inspection. It has developed an appropriate subject action plan, which is being used to

enhance aspects of provision. An impressive up-to-date portfolio of work has been produced. Resources have been improved and are supplemented by artefact loans as required, for example, of historical objects used for detailed observational drawings.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

115. Only two lessons in design and technology were observed during the inspection and further evidence was taken from talking to pupils, from teachers' planning and a scrutiny of pupils' work. On the basis of this evidence, the standards achieved are in line with expectations. This is an improvement on the judgement made in the last inspection when standards of work seen were below national expectations.
116. At the time of the last inspection design and technology was a key issue. The school has addressed all the areas for development well. The co-ordinator and staff have increased coverage and have planned a wide range of activities using the satisfactory resources available. They have increased teachers' confidence through training courses so that investigation activities now allow pupils to explore different materials and processes. Pupils use their independence when they select their own tools and materials.
117. Pupils plan their work carefully and produce designs with lists of the tools and materials to be used. They produce some high quality products such as fabric slippers, shoes for a snow queen and cam toys. A strength of pupils' knowledge is in how they evaluate their own work and other commercial items. For example, prior to making their fabric slippers, they evaluated types of slippers, discussing and recording aspects such as appearance, function and the target age-group. Pupils drew labelled diagrams but did not consistently include dimensions in these. They made patterns and prototypes before they accurately cut out fabric. However, they did not add diagrams to their step by step instructions of how the products were to be made.
118. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers successfully plan at least one design and technology project each term linked to other subjects such as literacy. The best teaching revises previous activities and knowledge as an initial assessment of pupils' levels of understanding. The good organisation of pupils and the clear instructions given by teachers have a positive impact on the good progress made by pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs. Pupils respond well to the good teaching and work very hard to produce good quality products of which they are proud. The good subject knowledge of teachers enables pupils to make complex electrical products, for example torches and burglar alarms. However, more able pupils are not always extended by more challenging activities or resources. Teachers have consistent behaviour management strategies, which enable pupils to work safely and at a good pace. Finished products are highly valued by both teachers and pupils and are displayed prominently in classrooms and around the school. This contributes to the self-confidence and self-esteem of pupils.
119. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject soundly. She has written an action plan which forms part of the school's Development Plan. However, she does not regularly monitor the planning of each year group to ensure that the subject is being taught and has not yet monitored teaching to ascertain the quality of the provision. A new national scheme of work has recently been introduced and teachers are starting to use this to introduce new ideas and teach subject-specific skills in a more structured manner. The subject policy is undated and requires review in line with recent developments. There is some assessment of pupils' knowledge based on National Curriculum levels of attainment but these are not recorded on the pupil profiles. The resources are adequate, although some of the tools for working with food technology and resistant materials are insufficient. Health and safety aspects are suitably addressed in lessons and pupils are well supervised when using potentially dangerous tools or equipment.

GEOGRAPHY

120. Overall, pupils make good progress in their learning and the quality of their knowledge and understanding of the subject is in line with that expected for pupils when they leave school. Standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection report. A particular strength is the development of pupils' skills in using maps and plans.
121. Year 3 pupils create an accurate plan for their age of a familiar environment such as the classroom. On a street map of Peterborough they locate specific buildings. On a world map they record geographical terms such as 'desert' and 'mountain' and complete a key accurately. Year 4 use atlas maps to locate cities in the British Isles and Europe. Comparing homes in St Lucia and England, they ask appropriate geographical questions like 'What language do they speak?' and suggest sensible sources of information. Year 5 pupils compare maps of Britain and the World, classifying countries in terms of high, medium or low rainfall. In work on the local area, they use four figure co-ordinates in map readings. By the end of Year 6, pupils locate the continents and identify mountainous regions and rivers on a world map, and towns and cities on a map of Britain. In work on tourism, they give examples of what attracts people to different places - landscape, historical aspects, theme parks – and describe the flow of a river from source to mouth when studying physical geography.
122. Pupils' work shows that lower attaining pupils and pupils with special needs are well supported. While it is not always apparent that higher attaining pupils are attaining the higher level skills in geography, there are some good examples of this. In one class of Year 4 pupils, the higher attaining pupils working on St Lucia made very good use of geographical terms such as 'weather', 'destination' and 'journey'. In a Year 6 class doing map work, higher attaining pupils not only label river features - source, confluence, ox-bow lake - but also accurately and precisely state their meaning.
123. No geography teaching was seen during the inspection. Evidence was taken from pupils' previous work and teachers' plans. Work is marked and positive comments used well but comments rarely inform pupils of how to make improvements. In the upper school, work is disjointed by the mixing of history and geography pages within workbooks.
124. There is a portfolio of work which gives examples of work of pupils of different abilities in each year group. While there is a statement of intended learning, there is no explanation of how work matches this and National Curriculum levelled assessments are not used. This limits its use in supporting teachers to have a shared understanding of levels and how progress across levels can be measured. Building assessment opportunities into planning is a key issue in the School Improvement Plan that has yet to be addressed. At present, one formal assessment is made in geography in each year. This measures attainment but not pupils' progress across the year.
125. Geography is well managed and the school's priorities in the action plan are clear. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' medium-term and short-term plans across the school. In the lower school, teaching and pupils' books have been monitored but this is not sufficiently extended to the upper school.

126. Resources support teachers' current planning well although they are currently being supplemented to meet the needs of the revised curriculum in the future. Good use is made of residential visits to Stibbington, Burwell and Scarborough, providing opportunities for pupils to develop a wider knowledge and understanding of physical and human geography through river studies, land use, traffic surveys and the use of weather recording stations. Information technology is used to find out about countries such as St Lucia and pupils' literacy skills are satisfactorily developed through activities like postcard writing.

HISTORY

127. The progress that most pupils make with their learning in lessons is generally good. By the time they leave the school, the quality of their work is at a level expected for pupils of this age. This level has been maintained since the last inspection. The use of time-lines and pupils' sense of chronology is well developed. Less able pupils are achieving a good standard for their abilities.
128. By the end of the key stage, pupils formulate historical questions and satisfactorily answer them by doing their own research on, for instance, Ancient Greece. When researching Greek temples and architecture, they design a temple. On a time-line they sequence events and historical periods. Using appropriate historical terms - 'highly civilised' 'ancient people' - they write a reasonably succinct account of Greek life and compare it with life today. In their study of the decades since the 1930s they record changes. There is little evidence, however, of able pupils drawing on conflicting evidence or pursuing their own research in depth.
129. Pupils show positive attitudes to history and usually settle to work quickly. When the task is relatively undemanding they work slowly, as was seen in Year 6. While pupils do not show confidence in some situations, a class in Year 5 was prepared to get involved in role play in a lesson seen and noticeably grew in enthusiasm and confidence. They moved from no-one wanting to speak in front of the whole class to all wanting to speak. As yet they are not skilled in turn-taking and are unaware of others.
130. Most of the teaching seen was good. Pupils are taught to record their knowledge and understanding of historical concepts in a wide variety of ways, using a variety of sources of information. Teachers make explicit in their planning what pupils are to learn. In Year 3 pupils are learning 'to be able to select and record information' about the Romans and compare them with the Celts. Occasionally these learning objectives are too general: 'to carry out their enquiries about life changes since 1948'. In these cases it is not clear what specific skills are to be learnt or practised. This lack of focus limits pupils' awareness and development of appropriate skills and historical concepts. When pupils know precisely what is expected of them, they make good progress. This was seen in Year 5 lessons requiring pupils to role-play a given point of view in a class debate on the impact of the coming of the railway to Peterborough in Victorian times. They take the perspective of groups of people at that time, such as railway workers and farmers, and argue 'for' or 'against'. Probing questions are asked by teachers to stimulate the debate and reinforce pupils' understanding of historical terms and Victorian perspectives. They come to understand that pollution is mainly a twentieth century concept. This approach works well, enabling pupils to draw on and develop their skills in speaking and listening as well as the skills needed to present historical evidence. By the end of the lesson they are effectively presenting key arguments. Their growth in confidence is partly as a result of the teachers' good subject knowledge and high expectations for a quality debate. Less confident pupils are well supported. Teachers' good classroom control enables pupils to focus on tasks. In good lessons, the pace is sharp and pupils' attention is held. Work is marked and positive comments are made but rarely are pupils informed of how they could improve their work.
131. Pupils with specific learning needs are well supported by learning support assistants. Extension work is planned for higher attaining pupils but does not always develop higher level historical skills, as seen in Year 6 work requiring them to rewrite an event in an historical text in the form of a news page. These pupils were not set specific goals to ensure that they were challenged by the task. There is evidence of extension work for higher attaining pupils where

high standards *are* achieved, for instance, in Year 3 and Year 6 where questions are focused and answered precisely and in Year 5 when pupils present information from texts well. Pupils' work across the school suggests that where teachers plan explicitly for the development of higher level skills, rather than only providing different activities or leaving it to pupils to work at a high level, this is more effective in raising the standards of the more able pupils.

132. The management of history is good. Through monitoring planning, and also teaching and pupils' work in the lower school, the co-ordinator is knowledgeable of what needs to be addressed. The action plan, which relates closely to the school's Improvement Plan, highlights the need to build assessment into planning. This aims to improve the use made of assessment information. While current assessment is satisfactory overall in recording the work covered and pupils' general attainment, there is no on-going assessment of pupils built into daily or weekly planning. The annual assessment made does not allow for monitoring of how much progress pupils make or what gaps there are in their knowledge and understanding. The school's impressive portfolio of work shows what different ability groups achieve across years and includes a statement on what pupils are learning. However, there is no information on how it relates to National Curriculum levels to support teachers in having a shared understanding of each level.
133. Pupils' literacy and oracy skills are satisfactorily developed through history. Particular aspects are making a good contribution to pupils' performance skills and their ability to express feelings – for example by developing debating skills - in addition to reading comprehension and research skills.
134. There is a good range of historical resources including those involving the use of information technology, but the school has rightly identified that these will be barely satisfactory to support the revised curriculum and intends to supplement them as necessary.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

135. The school has maintained standards since the previous inspection when they were judged to be in line with the national expectations by the end of the key stage. The improvement in facilities for information technology is very good and the good learning experiences recently offered are promoting standards well. The higher attaining pupils generally have good skills and understanding. Progress is satisfactory over time through the school.
136. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are developing the skills to generate and communicate ideas using text and pictures. They use the mouse neatly and with satisfactory skill. They know how to open a program and use features of programs by clicking on the mouse. They have the early keyboard skills to enter simple text but are slow in finding letters and their typing skills are poor. Pupils understand the commands to step through the records of a database and read the information. Several pupils, particularly the higher attaining, use more advanced features such as the search procedure and are beginning to understand the logic to make a specific search such as for the number of 'Bugs' with more than six legs. Within Year 4, pupils develop their experience of working with a programmable turtle by entering LOGO commands. Pupils understand the basic idea and copy instructions from a prepared sheet but their keyboard skills are slow. The most able complete an extension to this task in the form of a problem-solving exercise.
137. By Years 5 and 6, pupils demonstrate satisfactory progress overall in their understanding and skills from those shown in Years 3 and 4. Their knowledge of how to access information from a database, for example, is more assured. They log on, load programs and work with them confidently. By Year 6 pupils are developing satisfactory skills in the preparation of a multi-media presentation. They use drop-down menus and select colours easily from a palette to produce a background colour. The majority of pupils use the mouse correctly to make a caption box, adding text as required to make the caption. They use specific icons and commands such as 'scale to fit' with growing confidence. Pupils have good experiences in using a variety of subject related programs that support subjects such as language and mathematics work. Overall the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of computer operation

and know the steps to take to produce a finished piece of work. However, many pupils remain slow with keyboard skills and are almost entirely dependent on the mouse to enter commands.

138. The new information technology suite provides excellent learning opportunities for the pupils. The video projection of the computer screen improves the visibility of teachers' explanations to the whole class very well. The teachers' choice of tasks is good, providing interesting and challenging activities. For example, the work with a multi-media package in Year 6 had good purpose since it was to be used ultimately for younger pupils. The pupils are gaining in skill and understanding through the school, so that progress is satisfactory overall. The high attaining pupils frequently make good progress and respond well to their teacher's challenge. Pupils apply their skills to tasks that give good purpose to the development and consolidation of skills.
139. Most pupils quickly become interested and are keen to use the computers. They are very motivated by the use of information technology and usually sustain concentration well to produce their work. There is very good equality of access for all pupils. Pupils mostly work together well, taking turns to enter information and sharing ideas, showing a maturing personal development. A very few pupils find co-operation difficult. The majority work independently of the teacher in pairs at machines, although several are quick to ask for help. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and fully integrated into the classwork, receiving effective support. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall throughout the school.
140. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan carefully for relevant tasks, so that at times pupils make good progress, for example in learning how to save drawings. They make a good choice of task, such as searching the 'Bugs' database that challenges and extends them. There is a good focus on direct teaching for understanding and skill development. Teachers use their time well by first giving direct instruction about the facilities to use but also by moving round the class to ensure that pupils develop the skills themselves. The teachers' class management is good in the suite, balancing good use of the facilities with consolidation and class discussion. While the suite becomes established, there is less use of information technology in classrooms or to support classwork and the school is aware of this. Teachers make assessments of the pupils as they work and note points to reinforce but the assessment and recording procedures are underdeveloped.
141. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management and good support for colleagues in the preparation of their lessons. She has taken on the work of the role very well and has applied herself diligently to strengthening her management capability. She has clear, appropriate targets for subject development and has a good understanding of areas for development. The school has a subject policy and uses national guidance for a scheme of work. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, with appropriate breadth, balance and progression through the school. The school has made good progress in providing well-chosen tasks that promote achievement well but the subject is still at a development stage. It has made very good investments in information technology resources and has a clear continuing action plan to extend the facilities to the library and to continue to improve pupils' attainment.

ITALIAN

142. The school, in common with other schools locally, provides lessons in Italian under a scheme organised and funded by the Italian government. They are led by a teacher who is herself Italian and she is supported by the class teachers. The school responded well to the recommendations made in the last inspection report and now gives short lessons to all classes rather than offering Italian as an optional subject. However, the lessons are only held once a week and this lack of more regular practice affects pupils' ability to retain what they are taught effectively.
143. Pupils make at least satisfactory short-term progress in lessons and at times their progress is good. Pupils in the lower school acquire a knowledge of common Italian words and phrases and are able to construct simple sentences. They read the language from books and worksheets. In the upper school, this knowledge and understanding is extended and the

vocabulary widened. In addition, pupils record their work in written form with increasing attention to spelling and grammar rules. They learn about Italian life and culture and, as a result, begin to gain appreciation of a wider European perspective. Pupils generally show positive attitudes to their work and maintain concentration well. They enjoy their lessons.

144. In the lessons seen, teaching was generally good. The specialist teacher's own use of language provides a very good model for pupils. She speaks clearly and conducts most aspects of the lessons in Italian so that pupils come to understand simple instructions and conversational exchanges. She plans activities which build successfully on previous learning and which combine revision of previous work with new learning. Activities are varied and interesting. There is a good level of oral interaction so that all pupils have the opportunity to practise the spoken language in each session and many speak individually to the teachers or to other pupils. Good use is made of book and picture resources to reinforce learning and increase pupils' familiarity with the written language. Games and songs are used well to motivate pupils and encourage them to use the language independently. Considering the large numbers of pupils she deals with every week, the teacher knows the classes well. She has a friendly and encouraging approach, which helps the less confident to succeed. Behaviour is controlled well. Pupils benefit from the presence of their own teachers who support the overall management of lessons and help individuals and groups as required.
145. The subject is managed well by the specialist teacher who benefits from support from a regional office and resource base. Schemes of work are carefully planned and take account of recent national guidance for language teaching in primary schools. The teacher keeps appropriate records of coverage but, because of the very large numbers involved, is unable to keep close track of individual attainment levels. She also leads an after-school club, which is a valuable extra activity for those who wish to practise the language more regularly.

MUSIC

146. Pupils make satisfactory progress and, overall, achieve the expected standards by the end of the key stage. Their class lessons in music are supplemented by upper and lower key stage singing sessions and regular concerts and performances. A small number also benefit from additional guitar tuition from a specialist teacher. A choir, which provides the opportunity for extra vocal tuition, and a recorder group are currently not meeting because of the absence of the specialist teacher.
147. Pupils listen to and appraise a variety of music. Pupils in Year 6 were seen commenting on the similarities and differences between 'Mars' and 'Jupiter' from 'The Planets Suite'. In a study of contrasting pieces from around the world, a class in Year 5 defined the structure of modern Western pop, Indian traditional music and an African vocal arrangement. Pupils in Year 4 talked about how they felt when listening to jazz and compared it with other styles they knew. Pupils perform music in singing and by using pitched and unpitched percussion. In Year 6 they were seen creating a planned effect as a class group with a variety of unpitched instruments under the direction of one of their classmates. Most of the older pupils recognise conventional notation, know the names and lengths of notes and can follow a simple score. They compose their own pieces, recording them as 'graphical scores' or on tape. In the Year 6 lesson seen, it was planned that pupils would continue to refine their work in future lessons by transferring it to computer so that it could be further manipulated and extended.
148. Teaching and learning in music are satisfactory. Teachers plan an appropriate range of activities in line with the school's scheme of work. Their subject knowledge is generally secure. Lesson objectives are clear and appropriate but occasionally are not met by the activities provided. Teachers explain tasks clearly and use questioning well to extend pupils' thinking and check their understanding. Pupils' response is positive. They handle resources sensibly and show that they have been taught correct ways to play and store instruments. They co-operate well with others when needed. They enjoy the practical nature of activities and relate well to their teachers. They usually listen effectively but occasionally become inattentive and need to be reminded about expected behaviour by their teachers. Good use is made of the teachers and support staff who have musical expertise to lead large group singing

sessions and to provide additional support, for example, by playing the piano in singing practice.

149. The co-ordinator is currently seconded to another school. In her absence a member of staff is 'caretaking' the management of the subject satisfactorily but activities such as the choir are temporarily suspended. Teachers' planning is based on an appropriate scheme of work, which is gradually incorporating recent national guidance. Provision includes a planned programme of music for listening in assemblies. This is valuable but is not always fully exploited as a learning opportunity by those leading assembly – too often it becomes merely background music rather than being focused on or discussed by staff or pupils. Procedures for the assessment of pupils' progress are largely informal but the co-ordinator has promising plans to make these more informative. Resources are adequate and the school benefits from a specialist music room where many lessons are held. Effective use is made of visiting musicians such as a string quartet and steel band. When possible, pupils sing in other venues - recently the city centre, a local church and a residential home for the elderly. The regular large-scale concerts and performances are greatly enjoyed by both parents and pupils and provide valuable opportunities for skills to be practised and for performance to a large audience. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the school's cultural provision.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

150. The main activities during the summer term focus on games skills and swimming. The observation of these activities indicates that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with expectations and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils enter the school with below average skills in many aspects of their physical development. For example, in Year 3 pupils have undeveloped games skills. Their throwing and catching skills are uncoordinated and erratic. They do not anticipate where a ball will be after a bounce, or move to the ball ready to strike it cleanly with a bat. Similarly pupils are beginning to develop their swimming strokes and floating but few have gained them sufficiently in Year 3 to become confident and skilled in the practice tasks given.
151. By Year 6 pupils have made sufficient progress to demonstrate broadly average skills. A few pupils are well co-ordinated, with good control in throwing overarm. Pupils are less consistent and accurate in throwing a beanbag underarm to land in a hoop or in throwing a ball at a height for a player to strike with a bat. Teachers give clear demonstrations of the skills during their initial instructions and give praise but seldom arrange for pupils to watch the developing skills of other pupils. By Year 6, pupils are at ease in the water and have satisfactory swimming skills, focused on developing the crawl style in the lesson observed. The pupils' achievement in swimming is supported well by the focused teaching and frequent lessons on site. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress. Most pupils gain certificates and about 90 per cent usually are able to swim the 25 metres required by the National Curriculum by the time they leave the school.
152. The teachers provide carefully structured activities that encourage pupils to take part in lessons and, as a result, pupils have good learning opportunities and experiences. Their attitudes towards physical education are good. They behave well and listen to instructions. A few pupils work hard physically and demonstrate a growing level of independence through the school. Pupils enjoy working together in groups with healthy competition. Girls and boys co-operate together well at most times, although there are examples of occasional inappropriate, self-centred behaviour. Most pupils show enjoyment in physical activity. They encourage each other and, in games especially, appreciate the skills or batting of others. On a few occasions pupils are more interested in completing the task rather than developing the intended skills, so they are not extended.
153. The quality of teaching in physical education is good overall. Lessons are well prepared and focus on thorough instruction of skills and the movements involved. Teachers provide interesting learning opportunities, which are matched well to the pupils' stages of development and encourage consolidation of skills. In a few lessons, teachers give specific coaching to pupils, that has a marked effect on performance. The tasks require the pupils to use a suitable

range of resources. Time is generally used effectively in lessons and pupils move smoothly from one activity to the next. Teachers support sympathetically those pupils who encounter difficulties and those with special educational needs are helped to achieve. The teachers' oral assessment is good and, for swimming, a suitable recording system is used to note pupils' skills. In general formal recording procedures are undeveloped. The headteacher is holding the position of subject co-ordinator temporarily. He provides routine support and, with the teachers being mostly confident and experienced in the subject, there is good attention to safety and the subject requirements. For example, an experienced teacher gave a demonstration lesson on swimming to a newly qualified teacher. The school offers a suitable range of extra-curricular games and sports. Provision is supported well by the extensive outdoor site and the on-site pool.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

154. Pupils' attainment is below the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of the key stage. The school has not maintained the satisfactory standards identified at the time of the previous inspection.
155. In the lessons seen, pupils' learning was generally satisfactory and this included those with special educational needs. In Year 6, pupils showed a sound understanding of the main teaching points – that religious stories are portrayed in different ways by different artists and that artists use religious symbols in their work. Their previous work during the current year shows good coverage of topics from Christianity, Islam and Hinduism and appropriate attention to concepts such as prayer and feelings. However, conversations with pupils from both classes in Year 6 showed insufficient evidence that, over time, they have retained enough factual knowledge and understanding about the religions they have studied or that they are beginning to understand the meaning of religion in people's lives.
156. In work seen in other lessons and in the examination of past work from all year groups, there is evidence that several classes complete good quantities of relevant work. However, coverage is patchy and standards vary considerably from class to class. In the best examples, pupils learn about all the required aspects of the school's scheme of work and record their work in detail but this does not happen in all cases. The lessons seen during the inspection were all based on Christianity. Pupils in the lower school learnt the stories of Mother Teresa and Mary Jones and began to understand the place that faith played in the lives of these two women. In Year 5, pupils started to understand the place of Hebrew and Greek documents in the development of the Bible. In all these cases pupils' progress was at least satisfactory and often good but they were very limited in recalling their previous work, especially that on religions other than Christianity.
157. Teaching and learning in the lessons seen were satisfactory overall but evidence from work over time shows that there are significant unsatisfactory features. While several teachers present pupils with sufficient worthwhile activities, this is not the case in every class. In all year groups, teachers do not ensure that pupils retain their knowledge and understanding or start to draw generalisations from their learning. Teachers explain work clearly and question pupils well to check their understanding in the short term. Some use interesting resources such as pictures and artefacts to engage pupils' interest. A Year 5 class showed considerable enjoyment and excitement when acting as archaeologists in a hunt for ancient manuscripts. They commented sensibly on topics and reflected on the lives of other people in the past and present. Class management and control are good and promote the high levels of attention and good behaviour which are apparent in all classes. Pupils listen well. A pleasant learning environment is established. Teachers use their time well in giving high levels of individual attention where this is needed but occasionally learning support assistants are not fully used in sessions.
158. The co-ordinator and his colleagues have devised a long-term curriculum plan which covers all the units of work required by the Agreed Syllabus, although these are not always delivered in every class. There is an adequate range of resources and the co-ordinator makes an

appropriate contribution to the school's action planning procedures. The allocation of time given to the subject is low and relies on supplementary work taking place in class assembly times. This does not always take place and the subject appears to have a low status with some teachers. There are few formal links between the classroom curriculum and the programme of assemblies to reinforce pupils' attainment. The school has not explored possible links with literacy lessons to maximise the use of time for the subject. Assessment procedures are very limited and do not support teachers' ability to know what has been achieved over time. The school makes good use of visits to the city cathedral, to local churches and a mosque. It has recently established useful links with an interested governor who has visited and observed lessons. The co-ordinator does not monitor teaching, planning or pupils' work rigorously, although he has begun to compile a useful portfolio of pupils' work from all year groups. The subject currently makes a satisfactory contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision of the school but opportunities to improve this are not fully exploited.