

INSPECTION REPORT

Elmsleigh Infant and Nursery School ERS
Swadlincote

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique Reference Number: 112694
School Inspection Number: 188857

Headteacher: Mrs. C Matthews

Reporting inspector: Mrs. R J Andrew

Dates of inspection: September 27- 30 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707167

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Nursery

Type of control: Community

Age range of pupils: 3-7

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Queens Drive
Swadlincote
Derbyshire
DE11 OEG

Telephone number: 01283 216883

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. Andrew Mason

Date of previous inspection: March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs. R Andrew, RgI	Mathematics Information technology Music Physical education English as a second language	Attainment and progress Teaching Curriculum and assessment
Mr. E Marshall, Lay Inspector		Attendance Support, guidance, and welfare Partnership with parents and the community Efficiency
Mrs. C Jarvis	English Religious education Art	Leadership and management Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Equal opportunities
Mrs. M Palmer	Special educational needs	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mrs. B Rimmer	Under fives Science Design and technology Geography History	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

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The Office for Standards in Education
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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The headteacher gives very strong leadership. A committed staff team and governing body support her well.
- The school makes very good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the pupils' personal development. The inclusion of pupils with special educational needs contributes strongly to this.
- The quality of education the school provides for all its pupils is very good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Throughout the school teaching is good and leads to good progress.
- There is a strong commitment to continuous improvement.
- Throughout the school adults and pupils relate very well to one another. The atmosphere is purposeful.
- The school takes very good care of its pupils.
- Amongst the parents, there is a strong core of support for the work of the school.

• Where the school has weaknesses

- I. There are no significant weaknesses.

The full report identifies some areas for improvement for the governors to consider when formulating an action plan.

A copy of the plan will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils in the school.

• How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made a highly effective response to the last inspection and through its own improvement procedures has raised standards in the core subjects. The school has given more responsibility to subject leaders to develop and monitor their own subjects and to implement improvements. This has resulted in weaknesses being identified and remedied. The headteacher monitors teaching and learning closely. This has contributed to the sharing of teaching strengths and an improvement in overall quality. Schemes of work have been developed for all subjects and provide effective guidance for teachers' planning, which is consistently good. Teachers now usually provide appropriate challenges for higher attaining pupils, although this is not always secure. More detailed guidance in medium-term plans would further strengthen this aspect of lesson planning. In plans for individual subjects, more detail about how information technology could support the learning would help teachers to make better use of computers and pupils' skills.

The school has clear and realistic targets. There is a school-wide commitment to high standards and the procedures to implement developments are effective. The school is well placed to sustain improvements and to continue to move forwards.

•

Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds in Year 2 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools		Key
			well above average	A
			above average	B
			average	C
Reading	D	C	below average	D
Writing	C	B	well below average	E
Mathematics	C	B		

The “similar schools” in the table above refers to schools with a similar level of free school meals entitlement. They do not take account of the relatively high number of pupils with special educational needs admitted to Elmsleigh because of its enhanced resource status. Taking this into account, comparisons of standards in reading, writing and mathematics are likely to underestimate overall achievement. At the time of the national tests, eight pupils in Year 2 had statements of special need, most of these associated with learning difficulties. In the current Year 2 there are far more pupils with statements, amounting to 25 per cent of the year group. As a result overall attainment is likely to be lower than that in the table. Evidence from the inspection indicates that by the time they leave the school standards of attainment for pupils in Year 2 are likely to be below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

Attainment on entry to the nursery is low. In spite of good progress in the nursery, pupils’ attainment on entry to the reception class is below average. The standards achieved in information technology by the time pupils leave the school are similar to those found in other schools. The standards in religious education are in line with expectations. Standards in art are high.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years
English	good	good
Mathematics	good	good
Science	-	good
Information technology	-	satisfactory
Religious education	-	satisfactory
Other subjects	good	good

The quality of teaching is good with a significant amount of very good teaching. Across the school at least two out of three lessons are good or better. This contributes to pupils’ good progress. Teaching was very good in 16 per cent of the lessons, good in 57 per cent, and satisfactory in 27 per cent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The main strengths of the teaching lie in teachers’ planning and use of assessment. Teachers have high expectations and good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. Special needs teachers and support staff ensure that the work is appropriate to the pupils’ needs. As a result pupils with special educational needs also make good progress.

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

• **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
Attendance	Below the national average. This arises because of the number of occasions when pupils with special medical needs are hospitalised or recommended to attend school on a part-time basis. There is no unauthorised absence.
Ethos*	There is a strong commitment to high standards in all aspects of the school's work. Priority is given to personal development. Teachers form constructive relationships with pupils and each individual is valued. This raises pupils' self-esteem.
Leadership and management	Very strong leadership and clear vision from the headteacher. Strong support from a well-led governing body. A very effective senior management team.
Curriculum	Appropriately strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Worthwhile experiences in other subjects. Promotes good progress. Relevant to the needs of the pupils and preparing them well for the next stage of their schooling. Very good range and quality of extra-curricular activities.
Pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision enables these pupils to participate fully in, and contribute successfully to the life of the school and make good progress towards individual targets.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good provision.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Generous staffing complement, with sufficient experience and expertise to cater for the diverse needs of the pupils. Effective staff development. Good accommodation, valued and cared for. Good range and quality of resources.
Value for money	Good. Enhanced resources used efficiently.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

- II. Teachers are approachable.
- III. Parents are well informed about their children's progress.
- IV. The school enables pupils to achieve good standards.
- V. Parents appreciate the values and attitudes the school promotes.
- VI. Children like school.

What some parents are not happy about

- VII. A very small number of parents feel unsure of
- VIII. A similarly small number feel that their school activities.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views of the school.

The school procedures for informing parents about their children's progress are good. After-school activities are restricted to pupils in Year 2. The school encourages all pupils in Year 2 to attend; at least half of them do so. Provision exceeds that found in most school for this age group.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

There are no key issues for action.

The following areas for improvement were identified and should be considered for inclusion in the governors' action plan. The paragraph numbers indicate their location in the report.

IX. The information provided for parents in the prospectus and governors' annual report is incomplete. There are a few omissions from the statutory requirements. (51)

X. Information technology is not used systematically to support work in other subjects. It is not given sufficient prominence in subject planning. (30,38,118)

XI. There is insufficient emphasis on the involvement of teachers in the play activities of children under five. (23,33,81,84)

XII. Guidance for extension activities in medium-term plans for higher attaining pupils is not detailed enough. (29,38,107)

XIII. The length of lessons for music and religious education is too short to allow for opportunities for development to be explored. (12,39,121,140)

XIV. Pupils sometimes sit for too long and their concentration wavers. (28,99)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1.Elmsliegh Infant and Nursery School provides for boys and girls from three to seven years of age. There are currently 134 full-time pupils and 52 children attending the nursery on a part-time basis. The school admits pupils into the nursery from the age of three and in to the reception class at the beginning of the autumn and spring terms as they approach five. There has been a change in the admissions procedures since the previous inspection when pupils transferred to reception at statutory school age at the beginning of each term. This means that one of the reception classes is now a dedicated under-fives class. The other reception class contains pupils who have turned five. The majority of the pupils is drawn from a large council estate. The proportion of parents with higher education qualifications is less than half the national average. Only a very small number of pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. There is one pupil in the nursery with English as a second language and one older pupil who is bilingual. Attainment on entry to the nursery is very mixed and covers a very wide range. Assessment procedures indicate attainment on entry overall to be well below that expected nationally, with a significant number of pupils of very low attainment. A significant minority of pupils, excluding those with or awaiting statements, has delayed language development.

2.The school has enhanced resource status. It is designated by the local education authority to receive additional funding for 30 places to support pupils with special educational needs. This includes 22 statemented infants and 8 diagnostic and assessment places in the nursery. The range of special needs provided for in the school includes a majority of pupils with learning difficulties, some severe, pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, pupils with speech and communication difficulties, autistic pupils and three pupils with physical disabilities or visual impairment. The high number of statemented pupils and other pupils with special needs educational needs affects the overall standards of pupils' attainment. Attainment from year to year also varies significantly as a result of the varying numbers of pupils with statements in each year group.

3.The school aims to integrate all pupils into the school community and provide equal access to the curriculum. Within this framework it aims to build confidence, instill moral values and set high standards. It seeks to build good relationships with parents and the community to support its work.

4.Taking into account the range of attainment represented in the school, realistic but challenging targets have been set for pupils in each year group. These include targets set in agreement with the local education authority for the end of key stage tests.

4. Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	33	33	66
4. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics	
Number of pupils	Boys	26	26	27	
At NC Level 2 or above	Girls	27	30	26	
	Total	53	56	53	
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	80(80)	85(86)	80(81)	
	National	N/A(80)	N/A(81)	N/A(84)	
4. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Number of pupils	Boys	26	27	26	
At NC Level 2 or above	Girls	28	26	27	
	Total	54	53	53	
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	82(84)	80(86)	80(84)	
	National	N/A(81)	N/A(85)	N/A(86)	

4.

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed			%
Through absence for the latest complete Reporting year:	Authorised	School	9.5
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

4.

Exclusions

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

4.

¹

¹ Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

%

Very good or better	16
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

4. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

4. **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

4. **Attainment and progress**

5. Attainment on entry to nursery is well below that expected nationally for three year olds. There is a wide range of attainment and experience. Most children have poor communication and speaking skills and this has an impact on their attainment overall. Detailed records and baseline assessments show that by five years of age children are making good progress towards the Desirable Learning Outcomes. They are still reaching standards below those expected of this age group in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Their creative development is in line with expectations.

6. Evidence from national tests in 1998 indicate that the number of pupils attaining level 2 or above is close to the national average in reading and mathematics and above the national average in writing. The number of pupils attaining the higher level 3 is close to the national average. The standards in reading are below the average for all schools in reading as a result of the higher than normal number not achieving level 1 because of their special needs. Standards for writing and mathematics are in line with all schools. Comparisons with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds show reading is in line and writing and mathematics are above average. The results in 1999 are similar to those in 1998. Standards, including those for pupils attaining higher levels, have improved since the previous inspection, particularly in writing and mathematics. Taking into account the high number of pupils with special needs, including 25 per cent with statements in the current Year 2, results are likely to be below average at the end of this school year. Evidence from lessons and from the scrutiny of pupils' work in the current Year 2 confirm that the overall standards of attainment are likely to be below average by the time these pupils leave the school. A similar number to last year, however, are on course to attain higher levels. Results in science last year were in line with national expectations. These are also likely to be below average this year. Overall standards of attainment vary significantly from year to year as a result of the uneven distribution, through the school, of statemented and other pupils with special needs.

7. Evidence from completed work and from lessons shows that pupils in Year 2 write well constructed sentences and complete a good range of writing. Their writing is clearly formed and shows accurate spelling of common words. They read with understanding from a range of texts and higher attaining pupils read poetry fluently and with expression. In mathematics they order numbers to 100 and beyond, recognise patterns, construct graphs and charts and measure carefully. Higher attaining pupils calculate accurately by addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and recall number facts. They are beginning to explain their answers well. In science, pupils know about living things and demonstrate an awareness of scientific enquiry skills. Higher attaining pupils ask pertinent questions and suggest lines of enquiry.

8. In religious education pupils' attainments meet the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. In information technology pupils have a range of word processing skills and use computers to enter data on simple graphs. In art, standards are high as a result of consistently good teaching.

9. There are no significant differences in the attainment of pupils of different gender, ethnicity or background.

10. Children under five in the nursery and in reception make good progress in all the areas of learning from a well below average base. Expectations are high and most individual targets are met. Children make particularly good progress in personal and social development through the high expectations and the good example that all the adults set for them. Language and literacy skills develop well, particularly children's listening skills. Teachers use questions skillfully to extend the children's responses, particularly in the focussed teaching sessions. Opportunities to develop children's language and skills through play activities are sometimes missed and this limits progress at these times. Children make good gains in number skills through action rhymes and songs, counting and sorting activities. They develop their knowledge and understanding of

the world, through the opportunities made for them, for example, to grow things. Physical development is also good. Children show increasing control in out-door play activities and in physical activities in the hall. There are good opportunities in the nursery and reception for the development of manipulative skills, through using a variety of tools. Creative development is good. Teachers provide a range of activities for children to use musical instruments, to sing and move. Art skills are developed particularly well.

11. Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress as a result of good teaching and careful planning of the curriculum. The last report indicated underachievement amongst higher attaining pupils. The school has implemented a number of procedures to address this and there has been considerable improvement. There is room for further improvement in medium-term planning, however, to indicate more clearly how to extend the learning of these pupils. Most pupils build successfully on earlier learning, and acquire literacy and numeracy skills quickly. The many opportunities provided for pupils to ask and answer questions and to talk about their work, ensure good progress in speaking and listening. The literacy hour provides good opportunities for pupils to practise letter sounds and to build words, to develop their understanding of punctuation and increase their ability to spell accurately. The wide range of different types of writing attempted by pupils as they get older develops skills well. The daily numeracy lesson and time spent on mental mathematics ensures pupils make good gains in their understanding of number patterns and the number system and increase their ability to calculate accurately. Pupils develop their ability to apply mathematical skills to problem solving and interpreting graphs and charts. They progress from measuring by simple comparisons and non-standard measures to estimating and measuring in metric units.

12. Progress in religious education is sound but because of the short length of the lessons, opportunities are missed for developing discussion and this inhibits further progress. The short length of lessons also affects progress in music. This applies particularly in Year 2. In information technology, pupils' skills develop soundly as they move through the school but there are too few opportunities for them to use their skills in support of other subjects.

13. Progress in most other subjects is good. In art it is particularly good. Pupils become adept at colour mixing and in observational work. They learn well from studying the work of famous artists and different traditions. In design and technology although progress is sound, the design aspect is under-developed.

14. The school places a strong emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils use reading skills to find out information, for example in history and science. There are many opportunities for pupils to put their writing skills into practice. Pupils apply numeracy skills in geography when they interpret graphs and in science when they measure.

15. There is no significant variation in the progress of pupils of different gender, ethnicity or background. Pupils with English as a second language and bilingual pupils are given appropriate support to enable them to make good progress in acquiring language skills and in other subjects.

16. The school, with its enhanced resource status, is well placed to support pupils with a wide range of special needs within mainstream classes. The number of pupils with statements of special educational needs is well above average. Pupils on the school's register of special needs and those with statements make good progress overall, particularly in language acquisition, mathematical understanding and scientific skills and in personal development. Pupils are very well supported and often make very good progress towards the targets identified in their individual education plans.

16. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

17. The very positive findings from the previous report have been maintained. Pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour are a strength of the school.

18.Children in the nursery settle quickly to the clear routines and expectations of staff and develop in confidence and willingness to co-operate. They listen carefully and follow instructions. They are learning to relate appropriately to adults and to one another, though the majority finds it difficult to share and take turns. Children behave well and begin to show initiative and independence when selecting activities and managing their dressing and toilet arrangements. There are limited opportunities for children of different ages and abilities to work and play alongside one another to develop their communication skills because of the increasingly structured timetable.

19.Pupils have good attitudes towards their work. They enjoy coming to school, showing interest and enthusiasm for all of the activities provided, in lessons, assemblies and out of school events. They usually listen carefully to their teachers and readily apply themselves to given tasks. When they listen to music during assemblies, many show intense levels of concentration. They are eager to please and respond well to the high expectations and positive praise that is an integral part of school life. During special assemblies, completed work in books, displays and through interactions in lessons, pupils show great pride in their own and others' achievements. A strong feature of the school is its commitment to integrating pupils with special educational needs into the full life of the school. This enables these pupils to develop confidence and maintain a positive self-image. Pupils with special needs approach their work with interest. They put effort into their work and behave well, although a few find it difficult to sustain their concentration throughout a lesson.

20.Pupils' behaviour is good at all times during the school day. Pupils know and understand the sensible school rules and procedures and happily respond to polite requests and instructions from adults. They show respect for one another, school property and their surroundings. The high percentage of pupils with special emotional and behavioural needs leads to inevitable incidences of inappropriate behaviour. These are handled with sensitivity by all members of staff and accepted with growing understanding by pupils, causing minimal disruption or disturbance.

21.Relationships within the school are very good. The excellent teamwork and mutual support between teachers provide a good example for pupils. Pupils are friendly and caring towards one another. The head teacher and staff show genuine respect to all pupils equally and this is reflected in pupils' high levels of confidence and self-esteem. Pupils co-operate well with one another during lessons when they work in pairs, for reading, for example and in small and large groups. This was particularly evident during well-planned lessons using a parachute.

22.Pupils make very good progress in their personal development. In the sure knowledge that their contributions, both oral and written, are valued, pupils are confident to ask questions and express their thoughts and ideas, often with delightful spontaneity.

23.Assemblies and good questioning by teachers, give pupils opportunities to consider moral issues in some depth, resulting in considered and thoughtful responses. The school is successful in achieving its aims to develop self-reliance and independence. From the earliest experiences in the nursery, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves. They organise their own equipment in the playground and take care of themselves and their belongings when changing for physical activities. Pupils are given increasing responsibility to deliver messages and in Year 2, older pupils help staff and work with younger pupils in their valued roles as lunchtime helpers.

23.

Attendance

24.Attendance at the school is below the national average for similar schools. Unauthorised absence is insignificant. Authorised absence is declining and moving gradually towards the national average figure. The main cause of the high rate of authorised absence is the requirement for some pupils to spend long periods in hospital or to attend school on a part-time basis temporarily for medical reasons. The school discourages parents from taking family holidays during term time with some success.

25.Registration conforms with statutory requirements and registration periods often incorporate useful mathematics activities for pupils. There is no truancy and no patterns of lateness. The school day starts and finishes promptly and lesson changes are carried out with no significant loss of time.

25. QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

25. Teaching

26.The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teaching was described as good in the previous inspection report. There is even more good teaching now. There are examples of very good teaching in each year group. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection and minor weaknesses are few. Collectively teachers have experience and expertise in the full range of National Curriculum subjects and religious education. They have a good understanding of the needs of the age group. Teachers give useful introductions to lessons and explain tasks well. They plan activities that are purposeful and consolidate and extend pupils' learning well. Teachers in all classes have high expectations and pupils respond well by settling to work quickly, concentrating on their tasks and trying hard. This contributes to the good progress they make.

27.The teaching of children under five is good. The quality of teachers' planning and organisation shows thorough knowledge and understanding of the needs of the age group. The staff in the nursery work very well as a team. There is productive liaison with reception to ensure sound continuity and progression. All adults effectively promote high standards of behaviour by their example and high expectations. They ask skilful questions, encouraging children to listen and focus on their learning. Teachers develop the children's vocabulary well and provide very good models for spoken language, including mathematical vocabulary. Teachers are most effective during direct, focused activities and do not always have such clear learning objectives for children's independent play activities, which sometimes lack purpose.

28.In Key Stage 1, teachers use a variety of methods and organisation to capture the pupils' interest and promote their learning. They use direct whole-class teaching effectively and follow this up with activities which give pupils the opportunity to apply new learning and practise new skills. Teachers use mental mathematics work daily to sharpen recall and pupils' facility to handle numbers. There is appropriate concentration on the shared text in the literacy hour that develops effectively pupils' reading skills, knowledge of spelling and punctuation. Teachers share with pupils what they are to learn, provide good opportunities for choice and experimentation when appropriate, for example in art, and allow time at the end of the lesson to share discoveries, to show good work and to move the learning on. Occasionally the organisation of lessons leads to pupils sitting for too long. They become restless and the rate of progress drops. Sometimes opportunities are missed to introduce more physically active learning when this is appropriate, for example when music lessons are timetabled in the hall, to encourage expression and rhythmic ability through movement. There are a few occasions when teachers concentrate on pursuing their planning too closely and miss the opportunities which arise for valuable incidental learning.

29.Teachers manage pupils successfully. They have very good relationships with pupils and value the efforts they make. This results in pupils who are confident enough to put new learning into practice without fear of failure. Teachers encourage pupils to learn from mistakes by reviewing thinking processes and considering alternatives. They use marking well to recognise good work and to identify individual and more widespread difficulties. They modify their planning to remedy them. Small amounts of homework are set, for example regular reading and spelling, and other work as appropriate to support learning in the classroom. Pupils benefit from this, especially when parents support them. Teachers assess pupils regularly and match the work to pupils' needs well most of the time. They are skilled at recognising when pupils require more challenging work and respond appropriately. This was identified as a weakness in the last inspection report. Although the challenge for high attaining pupils has improved overall, there are still a few occasions when planning fails to take this sufficiently into account and opportunities are missed. The pace of lessons is usually well judged to maintain good progress. Teachers use resources well to interest pupils, to demonstrate important teaching

points and to encourage pupils to find out more.

30. Some strengths and a few minor weaknesses in teaching relate to individual subjects. Art is particularly well taught. Pupils are taught to mix colours from an early age and to make careful observations. This promotes some very good progress in lessons and leads to high standards. These are evident in pupils' completed work and in the quality of their discussions about techniques. Some very good mathematics lessons were observed where the teachers' questioning skills and response to pupils' answers improved their thinking skills substantially. In physical education teachers develop pupils' ball handling skills well and provide valuable opportunities for teamwork. In science first hand observation and meticulous planning for supporting activities resulted in very good gains in knowledge of living things and the development of scientific enquiry skills. Pupils will long remember the unexpected abilities and dietary requirements of snails! Teachers miss opportunities to use information technology to support the learning in other subjects. The design element of design and technology is not planned as rigorously as the making element.

31. Teachers generally make good opportunities to develop pupils' skills in listening and speaking in many subjects of the curriculum. Particularly good examples were observed in religious education, personal and social education, history and music. Literacy skills are developed well, for example in science, when pupils use books to extend their knowledge of snails. Teachers make opportunities in physical education and music for pupils to consolidate counting skills and in geography their data handling skills.

32. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is consistently good. Work set in class is closely related to pupils' individual targets. Teachers adopt a good range of strategies to maintain motivation. Teachers successfully create an atmosphere of trust and encouragement and set high expectations. There is close teamwork between teaching and support staff. Education care officers are very well deployed in working with small groups and individuals and make a positive contribution to their learning. Teachers and education care officers are aware of the needs of bilingual pupils and those with English as a second language and provide effective support.

32. The curriculum and assessment

33. The school provides a high quality curriculum that is broad, balanced and relevant for its pupils. It makes a substantial contribution to the quality of education the school provides. It promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares them very well for the next stage of their education. The curriculum successfully reflects and supports the school's aims, especially those that strive for high standards and the inclusion of pupils of different attainment, gender, background and those with special educational needs. It includes all National Curriculum subjects and religious education and meets statutory requirements. Co-operative learning is encouraged. Appropriate aspects of health education are taught in science and physical education lessons. Personal and social education are carefully planned and taught, forming an integral part of classroom life. For example, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to work together co-operatively.

34. Pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Their literacy and numeracy skills allow most pupils to gain access to a wide range of written resources. Where pupils experience difficulties, teachers give good support to enable them to benefit from the full curriculum. The setting arrangements for English and mathematics, whereby groups are arranged by prior attainment enable teachers to provide closely matched work. This ensures that pupils work at the appropriate level of difficulty. The smaller size of these groups also allows for more individual support.

35. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The school is committed to enabling pupils with special educational needs to have access to the whole curriculum, wherever possible. This is successfully achieved by means of detailed, thorough planning at all stages. Pupils with special needs benefit from the provision of small group work, a high level of classroom support and work tailored to their specific needs. This enables them to make good progress. Their needs are thoroughly assessed in the nursery and the

level of support required is identified. Pupils' progress is consistently monitored, meticulously recorded and very well supported throughout the school. Individual education plans are carefully drawn up with specific, achievable and manageable targets for teaching and learning, which are regularly evaluated and reviewed. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into the life of the school.

36.The curriculum for children under five is good. There is provision for a wide range of activities to provide experiences in all the areas of learning. A carefully planned programme promotes good progress towards the attainment of the Desirable Learning Outcomes. The good quality planning and preparation, remarked upon in the last inspection report, have been maintained. There is careful planning of group teaching. There are insufficient details in the planning of purposeful play activities to ensure that children's skills are developed further, for example through adult involvement in role play activities.

37.There are very good assessment procedures for children under five, particularly for those with special educational needs, that accurately identify their attainment. Daily activities are planned with these in mind. Opportunities are sometimes missed, however, to observe and assess how children apply new skills as they play.

38.The planning weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report, related to schemes of work, have been successfully addressed. The planning and organisation of the Key Stage 1 curriculum is very good. There are thorough and detailed policies, schemes of work and medium-term plans in all subjects. These are carefully linked to the National Curriculum and set out clearly the skills and knowledge to be taught to each year group. They provide a sound basis for teachers' planning. Work builds on what has already been learnt in previous years and contributes to the good progress pupils make. Planning ensures that pupils in different classes in the same year group do similar work. There is insufficient detail, however, in medium-term and subject plans to indicate how best to provide extension activities for higher attaining pupils and how information technology skills can support the learning across a range of subjects. There is a strong emphasis on English and mathematics and this is reflected in the amount of time given to these subjects. This makes a substantial contribution to the satisfactory standards the pupils attain. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented carefully and successfully.

39. The school remains committed to the full breadth of the curriculum. This results in planning for other subjects that ensures that pupils' experiences are worthwhile, in spite of the eroded amounts of time available. The length of some lessons, for example music and religious education are, however, too short to allow the full development of pupils' skills. This is a pity as the high quality of teaching in these lessons has the potential for raising standards further. Careful attention is given to starting points that are relevant to the pupils' experiences and interests. This engages the pupils' interest and contributes to the positive attitudes to learning and levels of concentration throughout the school. Pupils' skills in literacy are effectively developed in other subjects, especially religious education, history and personal and social education. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in science, physical education and geography.

40.There is a wide range of curriculum enrichment initiatives that benefits the pupils. The school holds special events, for example an annual culture week, that contribute strongly to the promotion of the arts and multi-cultural aspects of pupils' learning. There are regular out-of-school visits and work in the immediate area that support pupils' learning, particularly in history and geography. The many visitors to the school also make an important contribution, especially to religious and to personal and social education. Teachers provide a variety of good quality sporting, academic and musical extra-curricular activities, which provide opportunities for pupils to extend what they learn in the classroom. Pupils attend these with enthusiasm and develop a wide range of skills.

41.Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. Teachers know their pupils well, keep careful records of pupils' attainments and share much information on a formal and informal basis. A range of tests, including baseline assessment on entry to the school, screening tests in Year 1 and national tests and teacher assessment in Year 2 provides further accurate information about what pupils know, understand

and can do. Results of tests and assessments are recorded on pupil tracking sheets. The information gained from these assessments is used effectively to improve planning. This has resulted in changes being made to the curriculum, for example, setting pupils by attainment for English and mathematics that has resulted in the raising of standards. Information is also used to set targets for individuals and year groups and, with the local education authority, for the end of the key stage. Teachers track pupils' progress towards these targets. They have assembled portfolios of pupils' assessed work using national guidance on standards. This has raised their expectations of what pupils can achieve and contributed to the standards attained. There is close liaison with the receiving junior school to ensure that assessment information is passed on and that pupils make a smooth transition. The teachers' records of pupils' achievements are also used to provide good quality information for parents about their childrens' progress.

41. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

42.The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual development. The daily acts of collective worship are broadly Christian in character and make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. They are of a good quality and planned carefully to cover relevant themes and issues. Listening to music quietly helps to create a special atmosphere. Pupils experience a range of stories from the bible, from other faiths and traditions and of a moral nature. They sing songs together using the Makaton signing whilst singing. Religious education gives pupils time to reflect on the beliefs and practices of Christianity and Islam and to consider special things, such as caring for the world and looking after pets. Pupils have good opportunities to wonder at the world around them, for example, when examining and handling snails in science or looking at a rabbit in English. They learn to consider the special relationship between Alan, the blind visitor, and his guide dog. Teachers encourage, accept and respect pupils' ideas and opinions and value pupils' achievements highly, in and out of school.

43.Provision for pupils' moral development is good. There are few school rules and pupils understand them clearly. The very positive ethos of the school helps to build the framework for good behaviour. Pupils have many opportunities to reflect on and discuss moral issues. They begin to understand their rights and responsibilities. The very good relationships amongst adults, and between adults and pupils, help to develop a clear sense of right and wrong. Adults in the school trust and respect pupils and through this, foster honesty and fairness.

44.Provision for pupils' social development is good. Teachers give pupils opportunities to work independently and take responsibility for their own work, such as visiting the library and selecting poems in English. Pupils are encouraged to help each other and to work co-operatively in lessons. Adults encourage pupils to consider the needs of others. The successful integration of pupils with special needs in the life of the school is a very good example of this. Teachers encourage pupils to take responsibilities around the school, such as collecting dinner money, putting out resources or older pupils helping in the nursery. Music and sports clubs help pupils to develop a sense of teamwork. The social interaction of pupils with special needs is a high priority. Initiatives, such as the involvement of all staff and pupils in Makaton signing at assembly, enable all pupils, including those with specific needs, to strengthen their communication skills and gain confidence.

45.Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Teachers help pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions through visits to museums, historical sites and local places of interest, such as Coventry Transport Museum, Ashby Castle and Burton canal. Books, the artworks of Monet and Matisse for example, and the music of Saint Saens, enrich pupils' knowledge of other cultures and times. Religious education and assemblies make a significant contribution to pupils' cultural development through the study of world faiths. A visit to a cultural centre, a mosque and Hindu temple further enhances pupils' understanding of other beliefs and practices. The culture week held every year makes a very positive contribution to pupils' cultural development. Pupils encounter the traditional music, dance, drama, art and food of different cultures. The school encourages visiting speakers from these cultures, which contributes to pupils' development of respect and tolerance.

45. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

46. The school has very good procedures for the support, guidance and welfare of its pupils. Particular care is taken to ensure that the school meets the diverse requirements of the many pupils with special needs. They receive very good support in their daily learning and clear, sensitive guidance on points of behaviour. Induction into the nursery is planned to introduce pupils gradually into a school environment and quickly build up their trust and confidence in the staff. The overwhelming majority of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that their children like coming to school. Procedures for care and support are a strength of the school and contribute significantly to children's learning.

47. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic and personal development are very good. Baseline assessments of children's abilities and personal characteristics are carried out both on entry and on leaving the nursery. Individual record sheets then track each child's progress through the school with regular testing and assessment leading up to preparation for national tests. In Year 2, individual targets are set for each pupil and actual achievement comparisons made in order to identify any additional support needed. Pupils with special educational needs are monitored on a continuous basis and well supported by qualified classroom assistants and a wide range of visiting specialists. Individual educational plans are prepared where appropriate and parents are involved at each stage. Notes on the assessment of personal development are recorded for later entry onto pupils' annual reports. The school's attention to monitoring helps ensure all pupils receive the individual support they require.

48. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour. The behaviour code is implemented consistently and fairly across all age groups and staff successfully use a range of strategies to maintain a calm and purposeful environment in the classroom. Parents are informed of any persistent disruptive behaviour and invited into school to discuss the incident and agree remedial action. There are separate procedures for promoting good behaviour in assembly and in the dining hall. Lunchtime behaviour is monitored and recorded. Pupils are aware of the standards required and respond accordingly. Individual classes are rewarded for their contribution. There are no recorded exclusions. As a result of the good standard of behaviour achieved teachers are able to make the most of teaching time.

49. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are very good. There is a documented attendance policy and all teachers are aware of the procedures to be followed. Each pupil has a separate record card with each absence noted and the reason given by parents to justify it. Class attendances are monitored weekly and recorded separately to help identify any patterns of absence. The school makes effective use of the services of the educational welfare officer to carry out home visits and interview parents who appear to have particular problems. Holidays taken in term time must be requested in writing and considered by the headteacher. The school is aware of the attendance difficulties that sometimes affect pupils with medical problems, and tries to arrange the appropriate support. Pupils with extended absence are given work to complete and return for marking, thus minimising lost classroom learning time.

50. The school has very effective policies and procedures in place to promote children's wellbeing, health and safety. The procedures for child protection are known to all staff and classroom assistants. Members of staff are aware of the procedure for physical restraint of pupils. Sex education, drugs awareness and health education, appropriate to the age group, are included in the curriculum. Parents are aware of the content of taught material. A trained staff member is in charge of conducting risk assessment and hazard analysis and has comprehensive records that are regularly updated. The governing body takes an active role in health and safety inspections and in the reporting of inspection findings. Eight members of staff, including three mid-day supervisors are qualified to administer first aid. Equipment and records are up to date. Fire drills are regularly carried out and evacuation times recorded for review. Fire equipment, portable electrical equipment and physical education equipment are tested and current certificates are in place. The school's approach to health and safety is an extension of its caring attitude.

50. Partnership with parents and the community

51.The school's partnership with parents and the community is good overall. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory and parents feel well informed of the activities of the school and the progress of their children. The regular newsletters are informative and give details of topic work at the start of each term. The parents' notice board is a useful addition to procedures for sharing information but it is not used as effectively as it might be. Pupils' annual reports cover all core and foundation subjects and give parents information on the personal development of their child. The governing body's annual report to parents requires review to ensure coverage of all statutory information. Parents' evenings are held twice per year and parents can visit by appointment to inspect children's work and discuss any concern they may have. Particularly appreciated by parents is the ready availability of staff after school to discuss at first hand any problems arising.

52.Parental involvement in children's learning is very good and makes a positive contribution to their progress. A significant number of parent helpers attend school on a regular basis and provide valuable and appreciated assistance in class. Parent governors play an active part in the management of the school and together with the staff form a team dedicated to providing the best possible opportunities for the pupils. A group of parents and staff form the school's fund-raising committee. This group is actively and enthusiastically engaged in the organisation and administration of a programme of events that result in additional funding for the school. Recent improvements to the hard-play area and equipment storage illustrate the success of the group. Many, but not all, parents help with homework. Where parents support homework well, it makes an important contribution to individual children's progress. Most parents regard the recently introduced home/school partnership as a commonsense approach to mutual support for the children. Workshops provided for parents are being evaluated with the objective of continually increasing participation and raising the awareness of parents not yet involved in helping their children at home. The parents of children with special educational needs value the school's work and support. They are appropriately involved and informed at the identification, target setting and review stages. Parental attendance and support at special assemblies is significant and shows the strength of the partnership.

53.Links with the community are good, varied and productive. Involvement with several further education establishments results in regular attendance by students who can gain teaching experience and provide further classroom support in the process. Work experience and practical training in the school is given to undergraduates studying at the local university for Bachelor of Education degrees. All teachers at the school are now trained mentors. In addition to providing effective support for students, they have developed expertise in reviewing and evaluating their own and each other's practice.

54.Links with local services such as the community police and the fire service provide the pupils with instruction on personal safety, home safety and drugs awareness. Regular contact with the health service contributes to pupils' wellbeing and visits by the road safety officer and crossing patrol warden add to the safety instruction provided. Class discussion with a visiting member of the Royal National Institute for the Blind, a charity to which the school subscribes, is a fine example of the school welcoming an extra resource to deliver personal safety teaching.

55.The school has established links with commercial organisations that have resulted in sponsorship of sports kit and the donation of funding for computer hardware. A local tenants' association uses the school premises for meeting purposes and in doing so increases the public's awareness of the nature of the school's work. Close links with the church by attendance at special services provide pupils with the opportunity to broaden their spiritual knowledge and approach to good citizenship.

55.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

55. Leadership and management

56.The strong and positive ethos of the school is excellent. The headteacher, staff and governing body have a clear vision for the school and are fully committed to raising standards and high achievement. This commitment and a well-organised action plan have enabled the school to meet all the key issues in the previous inspection and move onto new developments. The values of the school are clear and reflected in all aspects of its work. All policies incorporate the aims of the school very effectively directing it towards improving standards. A very positive approach to the equality of opportunities for all pupils is the foundation of all work in the school. There is a strong commitment to providing the best possible learning environment for all pupils and to supporting pupils with special educational needs and fully incorporating them into the life of the school. This system of integration has the strong support of parents.

57.The management and organisation of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The teacher-in-charge of special needs and the special needs teaching and support staff, including the special education needs co-ordinator, ensure that the school's policy and practice meet the requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice. The co-ordination and administration of procedures are thorough: pupils' assessments are meticulously recorded, individual education plans are kept up to date and pupils' progress is carefully monitored. The governing body successfully maintains an appropriate overview and active interest in this aspect of the school's work. The nominated special needs governor helps in school frequently and the special needs committee meets and reports back to the governing body regularly.

58.The headteacher provides very strong leadership. She is committed to raising standards through effective teamwork and good relationships. She has set in place a very good programme for monitoring teaching and the curriculum. The headteacher and curriculum co-ordinators monitor teaching in English, mathematics and science and very effectively identify weaknesses in teaching and the curriculum. This provides good information for staff and links to professional development for individual teachers and the whole school. These, and other systems, also ensure very effective monitoring of the curriculum. There is a good partnership between the staff and governors. The governing body fulfils its statutory requirements and its roles and responsibilities well. There is a good system of committees to oversee the work of the school and they are fully involved in decision making. Many governors visit the school regularly, some acting as voluntary helpers. Through this and good information from the headteacher and staff, they are fully informed of current developments. The governors' policy on sex education is stated clearly in the school brochure and is known to parents.

59.A very good senior management team supports the headteacher. It has a range of responsibilities and works very effectively to meet the needs of the school. It plays an important role in analysing test results and assessments, identifying issues and facilitating support in the school. Curriculum co-ordinators effectively monitor and evaluate standards in their subjects, a further development since the last inspection. They identify areas for development and relevant training needs, and provide good support for colleagues. There are excellent relationships between all staff and they work very effectively in teams. The headteacher, staff and governors work together to ensure the successful implementation of the school's aims, values and policies.

60.The school development plan provides a very good guide for the work of the staff and governors. It is based on good information from analysis of test results and assessments and co-ordinator evaluations. There is a well-defined process for producing the development plan, involving staff and governors at all stages. Initiatives identified in the plan relate to the needs of the school and appropriate strategies are designed to bring about improvements and raise standards. The plan has clear objectives and identifies budget implications, the time-scale and responsibilities. Targets continue to link with issues identified in the last inspection as well as to identify new targets to move the school forward and make improvements. Success is rigorously monitored and evaluated by the headteacher, staff and governors and focuses on what has been achieved. All the systems are in place to ensure the school continues to raise standards and improve further.

60. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

61.Members of staff are well qualified and experienced to teach nursery and infant school age children,

including those with special educational needs. Teachers have sufficient knowledge and understanding to teach areas of learning for children under five and the subjects of the National Curriculum. The ratio of pupils to teachers and support staff is maintained at a high level, in line with its enhanced resource status. This enables very effective support to be given to pupils with special educational needs, supporting the school's commitment to integrating these pupils into mainstream classes. An experienced teacher, who also acts as the special needs co-ordinator, is used to teach small groups of pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 in English and mathematics as part of the setting arrangements in these subjects. This allows the work to be more closely matched to the needs of all pupils and has a positive effect on the progress of all pupils. The number of qualified teachers also allows the two reception classes to be kept small to allow for their different needs. One of these accommodates children under five who still need a curriculum closely allied to that in the nursery, and the other pupils who have already turned five who follow the National Curriculum. Support staff are used very effectively to support individuals, where necessary, or groups of pupils as required when classes are not set and are therefore larger. They understand their roles clearly and carry out their responsibilities very well. The level of effective liaison between teaching and support staff successfully promotes the learning and progress of all pupils and underpins the school's support for pupils with special educational needs. There is a successful induction and mentoring policy for newly appointed teachers and student teachers and nursery nurses. The school has a well-established appraisal scheme, which is well linked to staff development and the school development plan.

62.The school secretary is efficient and helpful. Her work enables the teaching staff to concentrate on educational matters. Other members of staff, including the midday supervisors and caretaker, add positively to the ethos of the school.

63.Accommodation is in a clean, well cared for building. The size of classrooms, bases and hall allow for the full range of curriculum activities. Very useful teaching and learning areas were added in 1997, with the building of the special needs base and additional Year 2 special needs / quiet room, as well as the conversion of store rooms to create the school library. This is a welcoming, well-used room, although it is too small to accommodate a whole class. There are appropriate facilities throughout the school for pupils with physical disabilities. The pleasant, well-maintained site supports the very positive atmosphere that the school promotes. Classroom walls are covered with stimulating displays of pupils' work, representing the high regard given to their efforts. The nursery has an adjacent, secure outdoor play area with a safe surface beneath climbing and balancing equipment.

64.Resources are good overall. English is well resourced for the National Literacy Strategy and pupils benefit from ready access to a wide range of good quality books, both in classrooms and in the library. Mathematics resources are good and include additional materials purchased through fundraising. Good quality equipment supports the National Numeracy Strategy. Science is well resourced. Materials are well organised and accessible, in both the central store and in classroom areas. There are sufficient information technology resources and pupils' access to good quality computers is carefully planned. However, some difficulties are currently being experienced with the use of some software on the new computers. Good resources support teaching and learning in religious education, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education. There are sufficient art resources. The nursery is well resourced, with both indoor and outdoor equipment. There are sufficient special educational needs resources in the special needs base and throughout the school. A wealth of visits and visitors successfully enrich the use of the resources within school. They particularly enhance pupils' learning in science, religious education, history and a range of topic work. The schools' library service is also well used for borrowing topic books and artefacts to support work across the curriculum.

65.The school's enhanced resource funding enables staffing for special educational needs to be maintained at a high level. Special needs teachers are well qualified and experienced and all teaching and support staff are well trained and committed to supporting pupils with special educational needs. The school has a special needs base and rooms available for the teaching of small groups of pupils with special educational needs, as required. These are used well and pupils' benefit from this facility. There is a sufficient range of resources

available for teaching pupils with special educational needs. The provision of a computer in the special needs base and additional appropriate software to be used on computers throughout the school would further support pupils' learning.

65. The efficiency of the school

66. Financial planning is very good. All financial needs are identified in accordance with the aims of the school. Curriculum development planning is reviewed annually by the curriculum co-ordinators and is scheduled on a three year rolling programme. Professional development funding is allocated selectively to support school improvement initiatives in addition to meeting the needs of the individual teachers. The school's senior management team decide the priorities for development and all funding sources are identified in advance to ensure adequate funds will be available. All items are costed and included in the school development plan. Medium and longer- term items are included to help financial forecasting. This is illustrated by the school being able to forecast the effect on funding of a reduction in pupil numbers in a particular year group. Prudent use of balances has overcome the short- term difficulties and restored financial stability.

67. The governing body plays an active part in the budget-setting process and all committees are given budget timetables to adhere to. There is close liaison between the school, the governing body and the local education authority accountancy staff. Twice-yearly budget planning meetings are held at the school. Capital spending is itemised on a priority basis and the school's fund raising committee is informed at an early stage to enable the committee to decide where it will contribute and plan its activities accordingly. The budget relating to special needs is delegated to the school by the local education authority and managed appropriately by the senior management team.

68. Teachers are deployed effectively and their individual and teamworking skills are used appropriately to secure maximum contribution to pupils' learning and improve the efficiency of the school. Support staff for special needs are carefully deployed throughout the age groups. The numbers of these staff ensure that all pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate levels of support. By integrating pupils with special need into mainstream education, the presence and work of the support staff benefits all pupils. Where one-to-one support is needed, the school draws very effectively upon the services of a wide range of visiting specialists. The head teacher gives practical support by including sessions of teaching time.

69. The school makes good use of its accommodation and learning resources. A newly added teaching area and the special needs withdrawal space have improved the quality of the overall accommodation. The school has overcome the difficulties of a sloping site with careful planning and construction work. The open plan aspect has been significantly improved by effective work in the provision of partitions and screens. Classrooms and corridors are well provided with attractive and interesting displays of children's work and other artefacts. The hall is used well for assemblies, physical education and dining. The library area, provided by the parents' fund raising committee, is well stocked, attractive, easily accessible and used well by groups of pupil in lesson time and after school. Resources for all areas of the curriculum are used effectively and are of a good quality. Subject co-ordinators identify their needs and the school plans accordingly. The parents' committee has been instrumental in meeting some of the identified needs.

70. The efficiency of financial control and administration is very good. The school uses the principles and guidance published by the Audit Commission. The local education authority's audit staff carries out external auditing. The last audit of the school was completed with no significant issues arising. Computer networking and use of the education authority's budget software ensures that the school has ready access to updated financial information. The head teacher and the administrative officer carry out regular weekly monitoring. Governing body committees receive a monthly statement for information and discussion as necessary. The school places importance on obtaining value for money and seeks several competitive quotations for many of its services, such as grounds and building maintenance, insurance and supply teaching cover. Energy use is monitored to ensure the best tariff is applicable.

71.The administrative officer provides very effective support for the daily needs of the school. There are well established procedures in place for the checking and processing of accounts and invoice payment procedures ensure the school benefits from all discounts available. The officer also controls the school fund and the accounts of the fund raising committee. Both these accounts have had recent audits with no matters arising.

72.Enhanced resources are available to the school. These are used very effectively to support the school's priorities for special needs. Education care officers are very well deployed and make an effective contribution to pupils' learning. The quality of the education the school provides for all its pupils is very good and contributes to the good progress they make. This includes pupils with special needs. Taking into account all these factors, the school provides good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

72. AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

73.Children enter the nursery at the age of three, attending either mornings or afternoon sessions of 26 children. There is provision for eight children with statements of special educational needs, supported by the local education authority. Children are cared for by an experienced team of two teachers and two nursery nurses, one of whom is a special needs support assistant. Children start full time school in an adjoining reception class whilst they are still under five, where they begin to follow a programme based on both the National Curriculum and the recommended Desirable Outcomes for Learning. The other reception class contains pupils who are already five. These pupils are reported on elsewhere in the report as belonging to Key Stage 1.

74.There is a wide range of attainment and experience when children start the nursery at the age of three. Overall attainment is well below that expected of this age group. Most children's communication skills are less developed than is usual for their age and this has an impact on their attainment overall. Detailed assessments show well below average attainment in language, particularly their speaking and listening skills. Attainment in mathematics is below expectations and personal and social development skills are low. By the time they are five years old, the majority of children are making good progress towards the Desirable Learning Outcomes. They are still reaching standards below those expected of this age group in some aspects of personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Their creative development is in line with expectations.

75.Provision and teaching for children under five is good and as a result they make good progress in all areas of their learning.

76.Children make significant gains in their personal and social development in the nursery. Although some children, at this early stage in the term are still anxious away from parents, they soon become confident and secure in their surroundings. They are familiar with routines such as registration, drink time and outdoor play and know it's Monday 'because they are going into the hall.' They follow instructions and behave well. Younger children are still learning to relate to others and usually choose to play alone. With the adults' help they co-operate well and share new experiences, such as rotating and lifting a parachute together. Small groups join hands to run underneath it, with great excitement. With outdoor equipment children learn to take turns and share wheeled toys. They use their initiative to adapt equipment to suit their needs. Children demonstrate their growing independence in dressing and personal hygiene when they prepare to go outside or in the hall but many need a lot of help.

77.By the time they are in reception, they show increasing confidence and independence. Many are still reluctant to involve others in their activities but, with encouragement, are willing to co-operate and relate appropriately to adults and one another. They respond well to the teacher's high expectations and concentrate and persevere with given tasks. A significant minority of children in both classes has difficulty in communicating and receives additional support. By the time they are five many have still not reached the standards expected.

78.The quality of teaching of personal and social development is very good. Adults establish good relationships. They effectively promote high standards of behaviour by their good example and high expectations. They are calm and friendly and treat children with respect, developing trust and confidence. As a result, children's behaviour and self-help skills improve considerably. The support given to individuals with special educational needs is of a particularly high standard. Since the introduction of the more formal, structured activities for older children in the nursery, there are fewer opportunities for children of different ages and abilities to work and play alongside one another, slowing the development of social skills.

79. In language and literacy development, children make good progress in the nursery. They listen attentively and enjoy stories and rhymes. A minority express themselves confidently and is eager to respond to questions from adults. However, most children are reluctant talkers and speaking skills are below those expected for their age. Children's speech is in the main, indistinct and they use single words or gestures to communicate their wishes. Children rarely initiate conversations with adults or with one another. In reading, children enjoy looking at familiar picture books, predicting what comes next and making exclamations of delight as they turn the pages. Their ability to recognise letters of the alphabet by shape and sound is particularly well developed. Some children are beginning to recognise some familiar words. They are developing suitable pencil control when they trace patterns and draw pictures. A few are able to write their own names. The pupil with English as a second language is given good support, plays happily with other children and shows a growing ability to communicate. By the time they are five many have still not reached the standards expected for pupils of this age.

80. In reception, children concentrate for long periods of time during literacy sessions, enjoying their language work. They delight in the teacher's introduction of objects beginning with 'r' from her red bag. Children enjoy sharing their chosen books and talking about the pictures. Only a minority is able to recognise familiar words and letter sounds. They are beginning to copy words that are written for them and a few attempt some words independently. The more able begin to recognise and understand simple punctuation, including question marks.

81. The quality of teaching for language and literacy is good for all under fives. Adults listen carefully to children and draw out responses through good use of praise and skilful questioning, giving them confidence to contribute. They encourage children to listen carefully and to concentrate on the books they are reading, developing good attitudes to literature. They provide very good role models for speaking and develop children's vocabulary well. However, they are missing opportunities to develop and extend pupils' spoken language sufficiently, especially during play activities, for example when pupils are involved in role play. In the reception class the teacher provides a variety of stimulating and interesting activities to engage children's interest and develop their knowledge of letter sounds. Formal reading tasks are sometimes started too soon resulting in pupils who are beginning to know letter sounds but are unable to tell the story.

82. In mathematical development children make good progress. In the nursery, children have little knowledge of numbers or shapes when they start. Their mathematical vocabulary is limited. They participate in number rhymes and games and by the time they leave the nursery, the majority has a secure knowledge of number symbols to five. Children are beginning to recognise simple shapes such as squares and circles. Many are able to recognise simple patterns and predict which shape or colour will come next in a given sequence. They count on their fingers and an abacus and the more able children begin to show an understanding of the principles of addition and subtraction. A few still struggle to count accurately. They are beginning to sort objects according to colour and shape and are able to match numbers in a domino game. In the reception class children have a wide variety of mathematical experiences. They continue to experience sorting and matching activities and develop their recognition and recording of numbers to ten through appropriate games and work sheets. They begin to estimate and compare numbers, checking their guesses to understand the principle of 'more' and 'less'. A significant minority has not achieved the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the time they are five.

83. Children enjoy the range of activities provided for them and co-operate well in singing games and sorting activities, although some do not persevere until the task is completed. They listen well to the teacher when they work with her in a group. A few are confident enough to offer suggestions.

84. Teaching of mathematical development is good. Teachers in both the nursery and reception make good use of a wide range of resources to reinforce the specific number of the week. During sessions targeted at a specific group, the teacher keeps children clearly focused on mathematical learning and takes every opportunity to use number language. Adults in the nursery develop children's counting skills and number language during other activities, such as sand and water. During focused sessions in reception, the teacher also develops number vocabulary well. This is not reinforced or extended sufficiently, however, through

appropriate practical or play activities where children can apply their learning to everyday situations.

85.Children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They see living things grow and care for plants and animals. In both the nursery and reception they experience a wide range of materials, such as sand, water and dough. They show particular absorption in the unusual texture of lentils in the nursery. With encouragement, the more able talk about their families and their homes and know the times during the day that certain events take place. For the majority, however, this is difficult. Children use information technology to support their learning of shapes, sequences and language. They operate simple controls to dress a figure from a choice of clothing. Opportunities are provided for children to learn more about the area in which they live through local walks and visits to places of interest, such as the Fire Station. They enjoy all the activities provided for them, especially when they work on computers. A significant minority of children has not achieved the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the time they are five.

86.Teaching is good. Well-planned activities have a clear purpose based on a whole school topic that provides interest and relevance. Teachers and adults take advantage of opportunities to add valuable first hand experiences as they arrive. For example, in autumn, fallen apples are used in cooking activities and to develop the scientific ideas of floating and sinking. Children enjoy activities in the snow in winter- time and grow in awareness of the world in which they live.

87.Children in both the nursery and the reception class make good progress in the physical area of learning. They show increasing confidence and control as they scoot and pedal their wheeled toys at varying speeds around the safe, well planned nursery outdoor play area. Children have a growing awareness of space and although in the nursery they show little regard for one another during their outdoor activities, by the time they are five their awareness has improved, though a significant minority does not achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes. Children throw, catch and bounce balls, hoops and beanbags with increasing skill. In the hall they develop control and co-ordination when they run, bend and stretch to lift and turn the parachute together. They use their imagination when they climb and balance on a variety of suitable equipment and use building blocks creatively. There are sufficient opportunities to develop skill in handling a variety of small tools and equipment. Children are learning to use crayons, scissors, glue spreaders and brushes appropriately. Most are able to cut along a given line with some help.

88.Children enjoy opportunities to be more physically active both in-doors and out-doors. They use a range of equipment with growing confidence and inventiveness. Many children persevere with small equipment even when they find it difficult to handle.

89.Teaching is good in the nursery and satisfactory in reception. There is a good balance between structured activities, such as the very good lesson with a parachute, and outdoor activities, where children use their imagination and develop independence. Teachers make good use of the good accommodation and resources to provide ample opportunities to develop physical skills. Teaching is most effective where there is purposeful intervention to develop and encourage improvement of skills.

90.In the area of creative development, children make good progress. They experiment with paint, crayons, paper and card as they colour and stick a suitable range of materials. They learn to mix colours and produce their own orange paint in the nursery and move on to recreating the colours and texture of a closely observed owl in reception. Progress is particularly good in artwork. In the nursery, children join in singing rhymes and enjoy experimenting with percussion instruments. They are able to create a regular rhythm as they march to the sound of their own 'band'. In the nursery, children participate in role-play activities in the home corner and shop. Some lose themselves in imaginative play as they recreate domestic situations with small dolls. Most pupils achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the time they are five.

91.Children show their pleasure when they sing and dance. They take care with equipment when they paint and make things. Many take time over their paintings until they achieve the desired result.

92. Adults provide suitable opportunities for children's creative development and teaching is good. When children paint, teachers give good guidance through careful planning and organisation of materials whilst encouraging free expression and imagination.

92. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

92. **English**

93. The results of the statutory tests for seven-year-olds show that the number of pupils reaching expected levels in reading and writing is close to other schools nationally. However, more pupils attain level 2 or above in the writing test than in other schools nationally. In comparison to schools with similar characteristics, pupils at Elmsleigh attain higher results in reading and writing. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs in Year 2 at twenty five per cent is likely to affect test results in the current school year. In view of this, the school has set a target with the local education authority of 65 per cent of pupils to attain level 2 or above. The school is likely to meet this target. Evidence from the inspection indicates that the number of pupils on course to attain expected levels in reading and writing by the end of the key stage is below last year's figure and standards are below average. The number of pupils on course to achieve the higher level 3 in reading and writing is close to the national average.

94. Standards in the writing tests have risen over the last three years but have remained close to the national average in reading. This year's overall attainments go against the general trend. The improvement in writing standards is due to the emphasis on raising standards through the provision of extra opportunities to develop pupils' writing for a range of purposes. The successful implementation of the literacy hour has helped to develop pupils' reading and writing skills further. The very good support given to pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good progress towards their targets in their individual education plans relating to English. Teachers have regard to these targets and match work appropriately. They deploy education care officers and support assistants very effectively to encourage these pupils and build their confidence and self-esteem.

95. Standards in speaking and listening are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of the key stage. Pupils enter the school with poor communication skills. Their skills are developed appropriately as they move through the school and consequently, they make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils express their opinions and talk confidently in front of the class. They listen carefully and are eager to answer questions. Higher attaining pupils explain their ideas thoughtfully, in discussion about damaging the environment, for example. Pupils in Year 1 ask sensible questions and listen with increasing concentration. Teachers provide motivating experiences, such as the visit of the blind person and his guide dog, which encourage pupils to ask and answer questions.

96. Pupils make good progress in reading. The shared reading sessions in the Literacy Hour develop pupils' understanding of book features and give pupils confidence to read aloud. Pupils in Year 1 build on the knowledge of letter sounds they have been taught in reception, and use these and pictures to aid their reading. Pupils in Year 2 read familiar books confidently and use a range of skills to help them tackle more complex stories. They read with some accuracy and developing expression. They discuss favourite books and explain the story they are reading. Higher attaining pupils read fluently and with expression. They show understanding of texts by inserting rhyming words in a poem, for example. They use the library to find poetry books and select poems according to their preferences.

97. There is clear evidence of improvement in pupils' writing over time and they make good progress in lessons. As they move through the school they develop their ability to use punctuation and to spell more complex word. By the end of the key stage, pupils write for a range of purposes, including an information book about hamsters, an imaginary letter from an evacuee and imaginative stories. They use descriptive vocabulary to interest the reader. Handwriting is neat and clearly formed and spelling of simple words usually correct. They write their sentences correctly using full stops and capital letters sometimes. Higher attaining pupils make good use of punctuation and bold writing to add excitement to their stories. Their spelling is usually accurate and sentences extended well. Lower attaining pupils show they are beginning to be aware of story structure through retelling familiar stories but spelling and punctuation are weak.

98. Pupils' attitudes to English are good. They listen carefully to their teachers and one another and answer

questions eagerly. They enjoy the shared text sessions particularly but show interest in all their activities. Their behaviour is very good and they have good relationships with adults and one another. They are polite and show respect for the work of others. Pupils use the library well to research, select books and work in groups very effectively, helping each other when necessary.

99.The quality of teaching is good. In Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are arranged in smaller classes for English, according to their levels of attainment. This ensures that the work is well matched to their needs and contributes to good progress. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and use probing questions to challenge pupils' thinking. They set challenging activities to extend reading comprehension and writing skills relating them to real situations. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when some underachievement was identified. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of English and this helps pupils to develop their knowledge of book features, interpret texts effectively and extends writing skills. The National Literacy strategy forms the basis for teachers' planning. They use it well and plan activities that meet the needs of all pupils so that they approach their tasks confidently. All teachers make good use of the Literacy Hour although sometimes pupils spend too long sitting during the introductory session. Pupils become restless and this erodes their concentration. Teachers organise their lessons effectively. They use the introductions to lessons to reinforce previous learning and extend pupils' understanding of new ideas. They use a wide range of resources and activities that motivate pupils and enable them to make good progress. The good use of praise builds pupils' confidence and encourages them to succeed. They interact well with pupils to check their understanding and assess their knowledge. Teachers accept and respect pupils' answers, so they gain confidence and concentrate effectively.

100.Teachers' management of pupils is good. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and maintain good discipline through high expectations of behaviour and a brisk pace of lesson. Support teachers, education care officers and classroom assistant work very effectively alongside class teachers. They know the pupils well and support them very effectively to enable them to make good progress. All pupils take books home and teachers have useful dialogues with parents through the reading diaries. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. There is good planning and teamwork between teachers and education care officers. All adults have regard to pupils' individual education plans and monitor pupils' progress carefully. Specialist teachers have good knowledge of how to meet the needs of these pupils and to motivate them. As a result, pupils make good progress towards their targets in individual education plans.

100. Mathematics

101.The results of the last school year's national tests show that pupils' attainment is in line with the national average when they leave the school. The number of pupils attaining the higher level 3 is also in line with the national average. The standard of pupils' attainment is above that in similar schools. Results have risen over the last three years whereas the national results have remained steady. Teachers' assessments indicate that pupils' attainments are higher in number than in shape, space and measures and in using and applying mathematics. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs in Year 2 at twenty five per cent is likely to affect test results in the current school year. Evidence from lesson observations indicates that the number of these pupils on course to attain level 2 or above by the time they leave the school is below last year's figure and standards are below average. As last year around one third of pupils is on course to achieve the higher level 3. In view of the high numbers of statemented pupils, the school has set lower targets with the local education authority than those set last year and below what is expected nationally. Nevertheless, at 65 of per cent of pupils to attain level 2 or above these are ambitious. The school is determined to meet them.

102.Pupils in Year 2 can recall number facts to ten and know some doubles. They count and order numbers to at least one hundred and add 10 to any given number. Higher attaining pupils use their knowledge of number facts to calculate when using addition and explain their thinking. They are beginning to understand and use place value. Some of the key objectives in the National Numeracy Strategy have already been achieved. Lower attaining pupils identify missing numbers from a sequence. They name numerals to 20 and

most count reliably. Evidence from the work sample indicates that by the end of the school year most pupils have a good grasp of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They use a range of graphs and charts to display data and answer questions about them. Pupils measure accurately using standard measurement, for example centimetre and metre. They know the properties of shapes, find a half and a quarter of shapes and recognise right angles. There is evidence of pupils using their skills to solve problems successfully and to carry out number investigations. Pupils use their numeracy skills successfully to benefit work in other subjects, for example data handling in geography and measuring in science. Opportunities made in other subjects, for example to count in physical education and in singing games, consolidate work in mathematics. Information technology provides some useful opportunities to practise calculating skills, to consolidate number recall and to enter numerical data.

103. Pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress over time and in many lessons. Pupils in the older reception class are consolidating their ability to count, order and write numbers, though not all do so reliably. They are increasing their mathematical vocabulary. In Year 1 pupils build on their knowledge to count on and back from any given number up to twenty. They add and subtract accurately. Higher attaining pupils extend this to numbers up to a hundred and count in twos. They show a growing ability to respond to ideas for number investigations, for example finding the pair of dominoes with the biggest total. Lower attaining pupils use the number line and 100 square well to consolidate and extend their ability to count and order. Pupils in Year 2 improve their ability to calculate through their growing understanding of the value of tens and units. Pupils in all year groups make good progress in mental skills in lessons. As they get older, higher attaining pupils particularly, become more adept at explaining their thinking. Most pupils grow in confidence and skill in using their knowledge of the number system and the pattern of numbers to apply to calculations and problems with bigger numbers. Evidence from pupils' completed work shows particularly good progress over time in number work and steady progress in shape, data handling and measures.

104. Pupils have maintained the positive attitudes to mathematics and ability to concentrate identified in the previous inspection report. They respond particularly well in the mental session which are an important part of the Numeracy Strategy. They are keen to answer questions and explain their answers when asked. They are willing to have a go even if they are uncertain and show no fear of failure. They enjoy mathematics. Older pupils offer ideas for investigation. They participate willingly in activities and use equipment well. Many work independently and complete tasks with little intervention. Lower attaining pupils in Year 1 take care to check that they write numbers the right way round. Some pupils find concentration difficult but respond well to reminders.

105. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. It is good overall with a few very good lessons seen. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well. Teachers are confident with the structure of the lessons although occasionally the direct teaching session goes on for too long and levels of attention drop. Pupils' progress slows when this occurs. It picks up quickly when they move to the activities. The setting arrangements are similar to those for English although pupils' particular needs in mathematics are taken into account when forming groups. This allows for the work to be more finely pitched, and teaching groups to be smaller, contributing to good progress.

106. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of mathematics and the needs of young children. They ask questions that encourage pupils thinking. They respond well to wrong answers and use them skilfully to move the learning on. They plan lessons very well, are sure about what they want pupils to learn and what strategies and activities will help them to achieve the targets they set. They manage pupils well, encourage them to try hard and praise them when they do. This results in pupils who persevere and make good progress. Teachers encourage pupils to check their work. They have high expectations of standards of behaviour and presentation and pupils rise to the challenge. Sometimes teachers miss opportunities to allow pupils to devise their own methods of recording activities and calculations. This limits their ability to approach tasks in different ways and build understanding. Occasionally teachers do not choose the recording of the activity carefully enough and it adds little to pupils' understanding of new concepts, for example comparing long and short objects.

107. Teachers use resources well to help pupils to see patterns in numbers and to understand the number system. They are building a sound base for future work in algebra. They explain tasks carefully so that pupils can make a prompt start. They support them well whilst they work. This is particularly true of the support given to pupils with special needs. Pupils are arranged in sets based on their prior attainment. This allows teachers to match the work closely to pupils' needs and provide work that challenges higher attaining pupils. Extension activities are not, however, always shown in planning. This leaves open the possibility for missed opportunities, although during the inspection teachers reacted promptly to provide further challenges for pupils who needed them. The arrangements for setting also ensure that teaching groups are relatively small, particularly for pupils with special needs. This allows teachers to plan work in small steps, to spend more time with individuals where necessary, to ensure understanding and to deal with misconceptions. Support staff provide essential, additional help for individuals and groups of pupils who experience the most difficulties.

108. Teachers continuously make informal and, at planned intervals, more formal assessments of what pupils' know, understand and can do. They use the information well to modify planning, to track pupils' progress and to indicate areas requiring further work

108.

Science

109. Teacher assessments in July 1998 indicate that pupils' standards of attainment are in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. Standards are above those for similar schools and show a significant improvement over the last three years. There has been an increase in the number of pupils reaching National Curriculum Level 3. The scrutiny of work completed by pupils during the last school year confirms these results. There is high proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs in the current Year 2. As a result of this standards of attainment overall are lower than in previous years. The proportion of pupils likely to attain level 2 or above by the time they leave the school is below average this year, although the number of pupils on course to attain the higher level is similar to last year.

110. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils carry out a number of well-planned investigations and experiments on a wide range of scientific topics. They have a good understanding of life processes and living things. They make thorough and detailed observations of small creatures, such as worms and snails in their own environment. Pupils have a secure knowledge of how these creatures eat, breathe and reproduce and the more able pupils can accurately describe an animal life cycle. They develop a good awareness of the importance of caring for living things. Pupils sort, classify and compare a variety of materials. They investigate the effects of water, heat and cold on every day materials. In a project on healthy living, pupils learn about the effects of exercise on their bodies. They know that exercise makes the heart beat faster. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of physical processes. They know the effects that forces such as pushes and pulls have on various materials and objects, such as water on a water wheel. They experiment with magnets. Pupils learn about simple electric circuits and find out about the conductivity of materials. Most pupils understand the principles of fair testing and the need to maintain controls, for the results to be accurate, such as when they create different conditions for the growth of seeds. They record their conclusions well in a variety of ways, such as charts, diagrams, pictures and extended writing. They make limited use of information technology, however. Most pupils have a sound knowledge of scientific principles.

111. Pupils make good progress. They make evident gains in their learning in all aspects of the science curriculum through systematic enquiry and good first hand experiences. In reception, pupils begin to learn about living things when they sort animals into groups and use the results to make a block graph. They examine the conditions required for growth and the changes that take place when they grow beans and keep a 'Bean Diary'. This is developed in Year 1 when they make simple drawings of a plant and label the main parts. From this good foundation they go on to investigate the best conditions for growing their seeds in Year 2. Similarly they add systematically to their knowledge of forces. In the older reception class, pupils learn the difference between push and pull and investigate which objects slide and roll. In Year 1 pupils experiment with objects that can be moved by pushing and pulling and by blowing. They add significantly to their scientific

understanding and vocabulary. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into lessons and receive good support so that they also make good progress.

112. Pupils' respond positively to science activities. They behave well in lessons and in most cases listen attentively to their teachers. A few are easily distracted when the focus of their attention is divided. Pupils pose good questions to give a clear focus to their first hand investigations. They show interest and enthusiasm during activities and come to thoughtful conclusions in response to challenging questions. They show delight and excitement in discovering facts about snails in Year 2. Pupils co-operate well when they work in small groups. They enjoy experimenting with their senses as they explore taste in Year 1, although some lack the confidence to do so. Pupils show pride and enjoyment in their finished work, which is well organised, carefully presented and illustrated in a vibrant manner.

113. The quality of teaching is good overall. In the few lessons seen, teaching is at least satisfactory, with excellent examples in Year 2. In the best examples, teachers have high expectations and give clear instructions. Planning is very good, with clear learning objectives. Lessons are very well structured and provide a rich variety of interesting, challenging activities to promote scientific enquiry and stimulate thought. Teachers pay close attention to safety. Year 2 teachers work very well as a year team. and make maximum use of time and resources available. Scientific principles are reinforced by well-judged and pertinent interventions during investigative work and by good use of thought provoking questions. An effective plenary session consolidates pupils' learning. Teachers establish very good relationships. This gives pupils confidence to make contributions they know will be valued. Occasionally the focus of a lesson is unclear and teachers miss opportunities to reinforce learning objectives and develop scientific vocabulary. The emphasis on developing vocabulary and the wide range of methods of recording make a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills. Teachers make good use of assessments during lessons, through questioning, and listening to pupils' responses.

113. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

113. Information technology

114. The standards of attainment in information technology are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1.

115. By the end of the key stage, pupils use the tools on a computer graphics program to design a repeating pattern. They use their word-processing skills to write stories, poems, and captions. Pupils know how to print their work. They collect information, store it and use a data-handling program to draw graphs and charts. Problem solving is developed when pupils use a variety of simulations to read information and make choices. They have a growing awareness of how computers and control technology are used in everyday equipment.

116. Pupils' progress is satisfactory over time. Computers are in regular use in all classrooms and pupils take it in turns to practise new skills. For example, pupils in the reception class practise their reading skills and write their names. In Year 1 they develop these skills further to write simple stories. They learn how to use shift key and space bar. As they move through the school, pupils use mathematics programs of increasing levels of difficulty to sharpen mental skills and to aid recall of number facts. Pupils in the older reception class learn to use graphics programs, to draw pictures of their own choosing. In Year 1, pupils build on these skills to draw butterflies as part of their topic on living things. Pupils in Year 2, use information handling programs to produce graphs of information they have collected about traffic. They extend their word-processing skills in longer pieces of writing. They still find it difficult to correct mistakes and editing skills are slower to develop than drafting skills. Pupils in all classrooms use tape-recorded stories and headphones to listen to stories. They operate machines themselves and become more adept at following the text, as they become more competent readers. This contributes to the development of expression in their reading. The school uses robotic toys to teach pupils control technology skills.

117. Pupils enjoy their work and concentrate hard, co-operating well when they work in pairs. They treat the equipment with care. Many pupils work independently of the teachers' help and some who have computers at home manage computer systems and programs confidently. More experienced pupils are pleased to pass on their skills to others.

118. The teaching of information technology overall is satisfactory. As they introduce new programs, teachers teach the skills that pupils require to operate them. They organize the work effectively so that all pupils have opportunities to work on the computer and give good support to individuals or small groups as they work. Teachers keep running records of pupils' skill development and use the information they provide to ensure progress. Training ensures that teachers have the skills they need to teach all the relevant elements of information technology, although the recent updating of equipment has placed heavy demands on their time and caused some delays in implementing planning. The school has developed an effective scheme of work to support teachers' planning. It identifies, clearly, skill development for different year groups. It contributes to the teaching of skills and the sound progress pupils make. Medium-term plans in other subjects, however, do not indicate in sufficient detail how to develop particular aspects through the use of computers. As a result, insufficient opportunities are made for pupils to use information technology to support other subjects of the curriculum. Information technology is used satisfactorily to support pupils with a range of special educational needs.

118.

Religious education

119. Pupils' attainments in religious education meet the expectations of the current Agreed Syllabus by the end of Key Stage 1. The school now has a good scheme of work and medium term plans to guide teachers very effectively in their planning. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

120. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound understanding of the basic beliefs and practices of Christianity and a range of other religious faiths. They visit local churches, a mosque and a Hindu temple. Through these visits, they confidently compare a Hindu wedding with a Christian one and the Muslim way of prayer with that of Christians. They learn to respect these special places, special books and symbols of religion. Pupils understand the significance of Christmas and Easter and the importance of baptism to Christians. They discuss caring for our planet thoughtfully and begin to appreciate how they can be responsible for the earth.

121. Pupils make sound progress as they move through the key stage. They develop an understanding of stories from the bible, such as Moses in the bulrushes and Noah's ark. Pupils understand the differences between the Old and New Testament and they learn about Christian and Islamic religious leaders. They consider their feelings and make sound progress expressing them. The short length of lessons in Year 2, however, restricts the considerable potential provided by the quality of the teaching, for promoting pupils' progress further.

122. Pupils' attitudes to religious education are good. They listen carefully to their teachers and one another and are keen to take part in discussion. They offer opinions and show respect for each other's ideas when, for instance, discussing how the people damaged the world in the 'Giant' story.

123. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. However, evidence from this lesson, from discussion with teachers and pupils and from the scrutiny of teachers' planning, indicates that the quality of teaching is sound. Medium-term plans set out clearly what pupils are to learn and build on previous learning. There are good assessment procedures with regular assessment opportunities identified for each major concept. The curriculum is broad and there is a good balance between the teaching about different religious beliefs and practices and pupils' opportunities to explore and reflect on ideas and concepts. Teachers use a range of approaches and artefacts well.

123.

Art

124. Pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress in art, so that by the time they leave the school, standards are high. Pupils' attainment in art is a strength of the school. Teachers provide a wide range of experiences of artists and art techniques. This ensures pupils develop knowledge and understanding of the work of others whilst extending their own skills. Throughout the school, pupils develop observational skills very well. In Year 1, they discuss the basic shape and colours of a puffin and then mix paint confidently and accurately for their own paintings. They paint landscapes of bluebell woods and make detailed drawings of bluebells. In Year 2, pupils study the work of Henri Matisse and extend their style of painting to still life pictures of geraniums. They develop an understanding of shape and shadow and use darker shades of colour to achieve them. They mould and carve clay to create the shape and texture of a pot hen. The discussion of art has a positive effect on pupils' speaking and listening skills.

125. Pupils' attitudes to art are good. They persevere, often over several weeks, to complete and improve their work. They listen attentively to their teachers and each other and show respect for each other's work. They handle resources confidently and carefully and responsibly clear away at the end of tasks. All pupils enjoy art and discuss it enthusiastically.

126. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers explain activities clearly and reinforce previous learning through effective questioning and demonstrations. They organise groups of pupils well to enable them to experiment and develop art skills. Teachers make good use of the education care officers, who help pupils develop art techniques and appropriate art language. Brisk pace of lessons allows pupils to practice and refine their skills effectively. Good interactions with pupils enable them to evaluate their own work. Teachers plan very well, using the guidance given in the medium term plans.

126. Design and technology

127. Pupils use their imaginations well when they work with a variety of materials to make original designs. They make good progress. Pupils are encouraged to generate ideas through the reassembling of familiar materials. Basic skills of designing and making are firmly established in the reception class. Inspired by a visit from a clown, pupils design a face and use their original pictures to choose materials from a rather limited range to make a 'grass man' from a growing medium and seed. They assemble, join and combine materials using glue, sticky tape, paper fasteners and paper plates to make simple stick puppets. In Year 1 they choose suitable materials to create a hedgehog. They practise cutting and sticking and produce imaginative and original results. Pupils talk about how they will make the wheels go round on their vehicles during a topic on transport, gaining knowledge of basic mechanisms at an early stage. By the end of Year 2 they can produce a moving model that will travel, using materials to include cocktail sticks, elastic bands and straws. They appraise the strengths and weaknesses of their designs by trying them out. They have experienced a variety of techniques such as cutting, folding, bending, curling and crumpling, to produce finished products of a high standard. A particularly impressive display of hot air balloons to support a topic on flight demonstrates their making skills well. When they make paper planes they evaluate their designs and alter them following 'test flights'. Pupils have the opportunity to use commercial construction kits to develop skills. They build on their previous experience and gain in confidence. Pupils apply skills, knowledge and understanding of science and mathematics when they follow recipes to make pizzas or biscuits during cooking and baking activities.

128. Pupils thoroughly enjoy designing and making and listen intently to their teachers and follow instructions well. In Year 2 they show real interest in demonstrations of new techniques when they ask questions. They are confident to explore and experiment with materials and tools but still need constant reminders about safety with scissors in Year 1.

129. Teaching is good overall. Planning, based on the sound scheme of work, is at all times detailed and thorough and teachers usually prepare resources well. They make good use of assistants to support pupils with

special educational needs and rely on parent volunteers to help with cooking activities. Teaching is most successful where pupils are given opportunities for discussion and planning before the making takes place, such as a Year 2 lesson. The teacher provides challenging, open-ended activities, enabling pupils to express opinions and ideas. Generally, the design element of their work is less well developed than their making skills. Finished models and some aspects of the teaching seen, indicate that pupils have limited opportunities to initiate their own designs.

129. **Geography**

130. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. Other evidence is taken from school documentation, examination of pupils' books, displayed work and conversations with pupils.

131. Pupils make good progress. By the time they reach the end of the key stage pupils have had suitable opportunities to investigate their own local environment and begin to examine places further afield. In Year 1 pupils use geographical terms and can name buildings and places they pass on their way to school. They make good progress in Year 1, when they plot where they have been on holiday on a map of the British Isles. Pupils in Year 2 develop ideas about the quality of their environment to a good extent when they compare the towns of Ashby and Swadlincote. They express their opinions about their various merits and drawbacks. There is clear progression in map work as pupils learn to follow directions and become increasingly familiar with maps, plans and aerial photographs. In reception pupils take a 'bird's eye view' of objects, going on to plot 'Rosie's Walk' in Year 1 and produce a simple map of their route to school. They use increasing detail in Year 2 to create a map of the local area that includes the school and their homes. All pupils have opportunities to find places on globe and maps. Many pupils can locate Swadlincote.

132. The strengths of the teaching seen include careful planning and preparation of resources for map-work. The education care officer and volunteer helper were used well to lead a group of pupils in gathering information about the school buildings and immediate environment and discussing likes and dislikes. They and the teacher ensured that all pupils had an opportunity to give their opinions and provided help in recording their findings. The teacher drew together successfully at the end what pupils had found out.

133. Pupils enjoy geography and talk with interest, especially about visits they have made and about map making.

134. Detailed planning provides for good coverage of the National Curriculum. The scheme of work provides clear guidance for teachers. Well-chosen topics give pupils' learning a clear and relevant focus and provide good cross-curricular links. For example, pupils use mathematical skills when they make frequency graphs of various types of houses and create charts to record their findings from a traffic census in Year 2.

134. **History**

135. Thorough and detailed planning provides for good continuity and progression in pupils' learning about history.

136. Pupils make good progress in finding out about the past and develop a good sense of chronology. Their learning is based around well-chosen topics, making it relevant to their own lives. The youngest children are just beginning to understand the passage of time. Their vocabulary to describe events that took place yesterday or a long time ago is generally limited. The teachers work hard to make frequent use of appropriate vocabulary in a focused way. Pupils sequence the growth of a plant and stages of human development using picture clues. In Year 1 they draw and write about their growth and the change that has taken place in their lives since they were babies. They learn about how people lived in the 1930s. They show a growing awareness of the past and present. This is further developed in Year 2 when they learn about aspects of the culture, work and leisure of people who lived during the and in Victorian times. They compare schools, clothes and life styles through a good variety of sources and draw pictures, complete work sheets and produce imaginative writing to develop

their knowledge and understanding. By the time they leave school, pupils have examined the lives of famous people in the past, including Grace Darling, Louis Braille and Guy Fawkes.

137. Pupils are interested in the past and in the main, they listen attentively. They concentrate well and talk sensibly about their work. They show curiosity about peoples' lives and ask thoughtful and sensitive questions during a video recalling the life of Louis Braille. When they imagine what life would be like as an evacuee, pupils produce some thoughtful writing.

138. Evidence from pupils completed work and from lesson observations indicate that teachers plan their lessons effectively. They successfully bring the past to life through good story telling skills and very good use of a variety of resources. Through good questioning techniques, teachers encourage pupils to share their opinions and listens to their responses. Good questioning skills are also used to develop a sense of chronology by involving all pupils in discussing how they have grown since birth. Occasionally the focus is too narrow however, and does not maintain pupils' interest sufficiently and they become restless. Teachers use a 'Culture Week' and a good range of visits and visitors to make a valuable contribution to the subject.,

138.

Music

139. Music has a high profile in the school. There are effective plans for music which listening, appraising, composing and performing. Good use is made of music in assembly to introduce pupils to classical music, to encourage them to listen for specific elements and to reflect on the mood of the music. Pupils sing well in assembly, listening carefully to each other and enjoying making music together. There are opportunities for each year group to lead the singing for the awards assembly when parents and friends are invited. This encourages them to practise and refine their performance. Pupils take part in the South Derbyshire music festival. This provides opportunities for them to sing with other infant schools and to improve their performance. End of year and Christmas performances and celebrations provide further opportunities for all pupils to perform together. These occasions are greatly appreciated by parents and the local community. Music is also used well in some physical education lessons to accompany warm-up sessions. This contributes to pupils' developing sense of rhythm. Visiting instrumentalists, including ex-pupils enrich the school's musical life and capture the pupils' interest Music contributes strongly to the school's annual culture week and the pupils' spiritual and cultural development including an awareness of other cultures.

140. The teaching of music is good. Teachers have received training in the use of puppets to encourage listening skills. This is done very successfully. At least one teacher in each year group is a competent pianist. They use their skills well to develop pupils' singing, sometimes combining classes to good effect, making good use of their individual strengths. Teachers establish a joyful learning environment and select a range of songs from different traditions and cultures to extend the pupils' repertoire. They incorporate appropriate teaching points to develop a sense of rhythm and to refine singing skills. They use their own voices well to demonstrate how to sing new songs and to correct inaccurate tuning or timing. In the lessons seen there were few opportunities for pupils to evaluate or compose but these are evident in planning. The school is anxious to retain a valuable musical experience for pupils in the shorter time now available following the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. By providing regular weekly lessons, this is partially successful. The short length of lessons, however, is insufficient to allow for the development of a range of skills. Considering the expertise of the staff and the quality of the teaching and planning, there is unrealised potential here for excellence. When lessons for the younger pupils are timetabled for the hall, opportunities are missed to incorporate movement

141. In spite of the length of lessons, pupils are developing musical skills and progress overall is good. Younger pupils make good gains in listening and rhythm skills. Older pupils make good progress in maintaining a rhythmic accompaniment to their singing. All pupils are adding successfully to their repertoire of songs. Pupils with special educational needs take an active part in music lessons and some make significant progress in listening and responding through musical activities. The after-school recorder club provides further opportunities for Year 2 pupils to learn to play instruments. The quality of the teaching is good. A small group

of boys and girls learn to follow standard notation and improve playing skills. They are encouraged to practise at home to refine their skills.

142. Pupils respond with enthusiasm in music lessons and when they sing in assemblies. They enjoy their music making. They listen well to each other, to teachers and to recorded music. They take good care of instruments. They talk about the music they like, including the music played in assemblies. They listen with rapt attention to the contributions the puppets make.

142. **Physical education**

143. The school's planning documents show that all the areas of activity in the National Curriculum are provided for and ensures that the work planned for each year group builds on previous experiences and learning. The emphasis on co-operative play and teamwork makes an important contribution to the pupils' social development. All pupils have the opportunity to learn to swim, although the time for this is short, depending as it does on available pool time. Extra time is available for those special needs pupils who benefit most from this provision.

144. In the lessons observed pupils made generally good progress. In the reception class they develop skills in aiming, bouncing, retrieving and travelling with a ball. They are becoming more aware of other pupils' movements and use the floor space well. They practise and refine their skills. In Year 1, pupils improve their ability to co-operate and work as a member of a team, co-ordinating their movements closely to control the behaviour of the parachute. They show an increasing understanding of the purpose of each activity and other pupils' needs and achievements. They increase their ability to follow instructions carefully. In Year 2 pupils are becoming more competent in devising their own small-sided games.

145. The teaching overall is good with some very good teaching seen. Skills are taught well, for example when bouncing a ball, how to position the feet and how to control the height of the bounce. There are clear targets for pupils with special needs. Teachers make good use of pupils to demonstrate particular skills and encourage others to improve their own. They use praise effectively to reward effort and concentration. The quality of teaching contributes to the good progress pupils make. In the reception class, the teacher makes good opportunities for pupils to practise counting skills as they bounce the balls. A period of warm up is used effectively at the beginning of each lesson to emphasize the need to prepare the body for vigorous exercise and to demonstrate its effect on the heart, lungs and circulation. A period of cool down follows vigorous exercise and music is sometimes used to very good effect to help relaxation and prepare pupils well for a return to the classroom. Occasionally there are too many different activities taking place in a lesson to ensure the skills in each are developed well.

146. Pupils enjoy lessons and their enthusiasm is evident. They listen well to instructions, co-operate in pairs and small groups. They are eager to participate. They use small apparatus sensibly, getting it out and putting it away carefully. Some very young pupils put a lot of effort into improving skills and show very good self-discipline in an active situation for pupils of this age.

147. The school has built up small apparatus resources well, partly through the Top Start Scheme. This was identified as weakness in the previous inspection report. Resources, including large gymnastic equipment, soft play equipment and small apparatus are now good. They are of good quality, accessible and used well.

147.

147. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

147. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

148. The inspection of Elmsleigh Infant and Nursery School was undertaken by a team of 5 inspectors, who spent a total of 15 inspector days in the school. The evidence in the report is based upon:-

- . the inspection of 49 lessons or parts of lessons over 31 hours;
- . four hours observing the daily act of worship, registration, playtimes, and dining arrangements;
- . three hours listening to the reading of pupils from each year group to represent the full range of ability;
- . eight hours inspecting pupils' completed work selected by the school to represent the full range of ability
- . talking to pupils outside lesson time about their work in religious education;
- . discussion with teaching, ancillary and non-teaching staff;
- . discussion with parents and governors;
- . the scrutiny of registers, school policy documents, the school development plan, pupils' records, teachers' planning files and the school's financial records;
- . the views of 6 parents who attended the parents' meeting;
- . analysis of the views of 50 parents who responded to the questionnaire.

1.DATA AND INDICATORS

149. Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y2	134	20	62	41
Nursery Unit/School	26	8	13	N/A

149. Teachers and classes

149. Qualified teachers (YR – Y2)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	14.8

149. Education support staff (YR – Y2)

Total number of education support staff:	6
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	195

149. Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	1.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	17..3

149. Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of education support staff:	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	65
Average class size:	23

149. **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998/9
	£
Total Income	474,287
Total Expenditure	472,408
Expenditure per pupil	2,282
Balance brought forward from previous year	28,385
Balance carried forward to next year	30,264

149. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out: 200
 Number of questionnaires returned: 50

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	40.0	54.0	6.0	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	68.0	32.0	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	35.0	62.5	2.1	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	42.0	54.0	4.0	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	56.0	36.0	4.0	4.0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	68.0	30.0	2.0	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	34.7	55.1	6.1	4.1	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	46.9	53.1	0	0	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	48.0	46.0	6.0	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	46.0	48.0	6.0	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	74.0	24.0	0	2.0	0

149. **Other issues raised by parents**

Parents are strongly supportive of the school's procedures for integrating all special needs pupils, including those with statements, into mainstream classes.

They expressed the view that the school constantly seeks ways to improve.

They appreciate the efforts made by the staff and the happy caring atmosphere created,