

INSPECTION REPORT

Chaucer Junior School

Ilkeston

LEA area : Derbyshire

Unique Reference Number : 112709

Headteacher : Mr R Sharman

Reporting inspector : Mr P Laverick
22259

Dates of inspection : 1st – 4th November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707169

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Junior
Type of control :	County
Age range of pupils :	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Cranmer Street Ilkeston Derby DE7 5JH
Telephone number :	0115 9324 387
Appropriate authority :	Governing body
Name of chair of governors :	Mr P Chapman
Date of previous inspection :	June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr P Laverick, RgI	English Art	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management
Mr M Romano, Lay Inspector	Equal opportunities	Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Mrs V Brittain, Team Inspector	Science Design and technology History	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mr J Fairclough, Team Inspector	Mathematics Physical education Information technology (support) Special educational needs	Curriculum and assessment The efficiency of the school
Mr G Longton, Team Inspector	Information technology Geography Music Religious education	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

The standard of teaching in mathematics is good.

- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work are good.
- The school makes good provision for the pupils with special educational needs.
- There is good provision for extra-curricular activities and pupils' social development.
- Pupils are well cared for and the school successfully promotes good behaviour.
- Teachers work hard to make the best use of the accommodation.

Where the school has weaknesses

The strategies for promoting higher standards are not rigorous and higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently.

- I. The procedures for monitoring the progress of the school and teaching are not satisfactory because the management roles of the governors and senior members of staff are not developed sufficiently.
- II. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory.
- III. Planning in science and some subjects, including art, lacks detail.
- IV. The accommodation is not fully suitable for whole class teaching.
- V. Parents are not involved sufficiently in their children's learning and the homework policy is not implemented fully.

The strengths are not outweighed by the weaknesses. How the weaknesses are to be tackled will form part of the governors' action plan, which will be sent out to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school is making satisfactory progress and is better than it was at the last inspection. The school has made good progress towards improving the provision for information technology. Some schemes of work have been written for example in history and geography but more still needs to be done to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' learning. Standards have improved in mathematics and on this issue the school is making progress. On other aspects only slow progress has been made. Assessment is not fully used and monitoring procedures in a number of areas remain weak, including financial procedures. There is still work to be done on the site though some good work has been done in this area. The quality of teaching has improved and the school is in a satisfactory position to continue improving especially when more ambitious targets are set.

Standards in subjects

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

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

The table shows that the school is reaching national standards in English and mathematics but is below in science. Inspection evidence shows that improvements have been made since 1998 and standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly in line with national expectations by the age of 11. In other curriculum areas pupils reach national standards in information technology and reach the standards expected for pupils of this age in art, history, geography, music and physical education. There was insufficient evidence in design and technology upon which to make a judgement. In religious education, pupils reach the standards laid down in the Agreed Syllabus by the age of 11 and they make good progress.

Quality of teaching

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

Ninety one per cent of lessons were satisfactory or better in which two per cent were very good, 43 per cent were good and 45 per cent were satisfactory. Teaching in nine per cent of the lessons was unsatisfactory. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection.

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 are polite and friendly and the standard of behaviour in class and around the school is good.
Attendance	Satisfactory. In line with the national average.
Ethos*	Pupils have a positive attitude towards learning and relationships are good. However, expectations are not high enough.
Leadership and management	The day-to-day management of the school is satisfactory. However, the governors, headteacher and senior members of staff are not systematic or rigorous in their monitoring and pursuit of higher standards.
Curriculum	Sound, with good planning in English and mathematics. Many visits to local places of interest and sporting opportunities. Some weaknesses in assessment.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision and the teachers are well aware of the individual needs of pupils.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Mainly good, especially moral and social development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory with a sufficient number of teachers and good level of support staff. Resources are generally adequate but the large teaching units in Years 3 and 6 are not wholly suitable for class teaching.
Value for money	Satisfactory.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
VI. Their children like coming to school. VII. It is easy to approach the school. VIII. The values of the school. IX. Opportunities for pupils to be involved in extra-curricular activities.	X. Not enough homework. XI. The school does not keep them well informed XII. Some complaints are not handled well. XIII. There are some incidents of bullying. XIV. The suitability of some reading books.

The inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. There is a positive atmosphere and pupils are happy in the school. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. The staff are caring and supportive to the pupils. The setting of homework is not consistent and not enough is set on a regular basis. A homework policy is being introduced. Information for parents is satisfactory, but there is insufficient guidance provided on how parents can help their children at home. There was no evidence to support the view that complaints are not handled well. Relationships between pupils are generally good and behavioural problems are dealt with effectively by the staff. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection. The reading material for a small proportion pupils is not sufficiently challenging and sometimes not at the right level of interest.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

For the school to improve the quality of provision and raise the standards of education, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- * set more ambitious targets for pupils to reach at the end of Key Stage 2; (paragraph references: 23, 60 and 86)
- * implement effective strategies to promote higher standards in English, mathematics and science by:
 - i. using assessment data to set individual targets; (paragraph references: 11, 28, 33, 38 and 45)
 - ii. providing more challenging activities for the higher attaining pupils; (paragraph references: 9, 10, 23, 33, 80 and 86)
 - iii. strengthening procedures for the monitoring of pupils' progress; (paragraph references: 6 and 100)
 - iv. improving methods for the monitoring of teaching; (paragraph reference: 62)
- * increase the involvement of the governors and senior members of staff in the strategic planning and monitoring of the school's performance; (paragraph references: 61, 63 and 74)
- * implement the homework policy as soon as possible and involve parents in the pursuit of higher standards; (paragraph references: 53 and 54)
- * improve the quality of planning so that all subjects, especially science are clearly related to the National Curriculum and include opportunities for assessment; (paragraph references: 10, 30, 34 and 99)
- * continue to tackle and complete the issues outstanding from the previous inspection, including financial monitoring; (paragraph references: 29, 64 and 73)
- * continue to seek ways of improving the accommodation for class teaching. (paragraph references: 68, 121)

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

- * review pupils' progress in the reading scheme and ensure that books match pupils' reading ability and interest; (paragraph references: 80 and 85)
- * continue to promote pupils' higher order reading skills, including the speedy use of dictionaries; (paragraph references: 7 and 80)
- * provide consistency of discipline in all classes; (paragraph references: 4 and 26)
- * ensure that formal risk assessment procedures are carried out; (paragraph references: 48 and 51)
- * make sure that all required information is in the governors' report to parents; (paragraph references: 54 and 65)
- * develop the appraisal system to meet the professional needs of the teachers. (paragraph reference: 67)

iv. **INTRODUCTION**

Characteristics of the school

- 1 Chaucer Junior School is situated in Ilkeston, in the county of Derbyshire. There are 294 full-time pupils on roll with 151 boys and 143 girls. It is of an average size for a school of this type. There are 64 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, with seven pupils having statements for their needs. This is well above the national and local authority average. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is 49, which represents 17 per cent of the number on roll. This is in line with the national average but the school's figures are variable. The houses surrounding the school include some council owned properties and others which are owner occupied. The majority of pupils entering the school in Year 3 have previously attended the nearby infant school. Less than two per cent of the pupils are from non-white ethnic groups. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. The most recent data on the percentage of adults in the ward with experience of higher education shows the level to be well below the national average.
- 2 When children first enter the school their overall level of attainment is broadly in line with national expectations for pupils of this age though there are some weaknesses in writing and a significant proportion receive additional support for literacy.
- 3 There are spacious playgrounds, including grassed and hard surfaces. A distinctive feature of the school is the two large separate teaching areas, which are used for three classes of Year 3 pupils and two classes of Year 6 pupils. The school's central aim is to provide, 'a stable and stimulating environment which enables each pupil to grow in happiness, confidence, self reliance and discrimination.' This statement is supported by a set of aims relating to the social, physical and academic development of its pupils. It seeks to fully develop pupils and enable them to play an active part in the life of the school. The targets set for the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 are for 58 per cent to reach the expected standard in Literacy, and 60 per cent in mathematics.
- 4 The school was previously inspected in June 1996. Since then a number of staff changes have taken place as well as improvements to the school site.

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 2¹

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	37	29	66

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	25	27	28
	Girls	20	15	19
	Total	45	46	49
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	68	70	74
	National	70	69	78

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	20	26	27
	Girls	20	15	19
	Total	40	41	46
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	60	62	70
	National	68	69	75

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	5.3
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.48
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	15
Permanent	0

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	2
Satisfactory or better	91
Less than satisfactory	9

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

- 1 In the 1998 National Curriculum tests, the results in English and science were well below the national averages and very low in mathematics, when compared with all other schools. Compared with similar schools, the results were also below the national average. However, in the most recent tests of 1999, the schools results have improved significantly. There is therefore, evidence of an improving school, although inspection findings show that this position is not yet fully secure as there is variation in pupils' progress across the key stage.
- 2 When pupils first enter the school in Year 3, their overall level of attainment is broadly in line with national standards in most curriculum areas. There are some weaknesses, for example in handwriting and the number of pupils reaching above average level of attainment is less than usually expected. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have made generally satisfactory progress and reached national standards in English, mathematics and science. The overall progress of pupils with special educational needs is good in relation to prior attainment. Standards of literacy and numeracy are satisfactory but there is less evidence of numeracy progressing across the curriculum.
- 3 At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is in line with national expectations. Pupils usually listen attentively and most speak clearly, for example during assemblies or when explaining how to find books in the library. Reading standards are broadly in line with that expected for pupils of this age. Some higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently by the reading material, and a few lower attaining pupils are reading books which are too easy. There are some weaknesses in the use of dictionaries, and the pupils' ability to talk about books and authors is limited, however, the literacy strategy is beginning to improve this situation. Most pupils can locate books in the library, although their knowledge of the index system is restricted.
- 4 Standards in writing are generally in line with national expectations. At the end of the key stage, lower attaining pupils are consolidating their knowledge of adjectives and verbs and higher attaining pupils can write extracts from books for older audiences. Pupils at all levels of attainment can create acrostic poems, for example relating to the Victorian period. Pupils in Year 3, make good progress in developing a cursive style but this is not always well maintained throughout the key stage. The standard of presentation of work is not consistent across the key stage. Pupils' knowledge of grammar and punctuation is generally secure as well as standards in spelling. Although progress is generally satisfactory in English, there are examples of higher attaining pupils not being challenged fully. This is reflected in the results of national tests, where the school's record in reaching above average standards, is below that of similar schools. Pupils who are receiving teaching under the additional literacy support scheme, are making good progress in relation to their prior level of attainment.
- 5 Standards in mathematics are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of the key stage and pupils make satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs. However, progress is varied throughout the key stage. For example in Year 4, pupils make good progress when developing additional methods of calculation for adding two digit numbers. Slow progress was made in a Year 3 lesson dealing with odd and even numbers, because the pupils became confused over the rules of the game. By the end of the key stage, higher attaining pupils have a secure understanding of number, for example by using multiplication tables to calculate square roots. Pupils have an adequate knowledge of fractions and use the correct terminology when describing shapes or discussing the properties of quadrilaterals. Lower attaining pupils are not secure in their understanding of negative numbers, but can use simple methods for addition of numbers. Overall, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of averages, decimals, graphs and probability, but higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently, for example in percentages or problem solving.

- 6 In the National Curriculum tests, standards in science have declined since 1996 and in 1998, only 58 per cent of pupils reached the national average. The 1999 results have risen to 74 per cent, but this is still below the national average, especially for the number reaching higher levels of attainment. Inspection findings indicate that pupils' knowledge and understanding at the end of Key Stage 2, is broadly in line with national expectations. . At the end of the key stage, pupils can use scientific instruments correctly and record results in different formats. They can talk confidently about dissolving substances and some understand the process of evaporation and condensation. Pupils are secure in their knowledge of plants, animals and humans, but less confident when trying to explain physical forces. One reason for the difference between test results and inspection findings is that pupils are more confident in talking about the subject than recording and answering test questions. Higher attaining pupils are not always challenged fully in this aspect of their work. Across the key stage, pupils generally make satisfactory progress. For example in Year 3, pupils develop an understanding of how sounds are produced and relate this to the vibration of musical instruments. In Year 4, pupils investigate the properties of soil and consider fair tests and predictions. Lessons in Year 5, do not always build upon pupils' understanding and knowledge and in two lessons observed, progress was unsatisfactory. Higher attaining pupils are not provided with sufficiently challenging opportunities and this restricts their progress.
- 7 In all the three core subjects teacher assessments are below the national standards and this is indicative of low expectations for the pupils' performance. Targets are based on pupils' prior levels of attainment but they do not reflect an ambition to promote high standards. Those previously set have been exceeded by the pupils' most recent performance.
- 8 At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in information technology are in line with national expectations and pupils make satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs. For example, pupils in Year 4 can create letters using their word processing skills and in Year 5, represent weather data in a variety of forms. Pupils in Year 6, use control technology to program lights and use their word processing skills to produce a newspaper broadsheet.
- 9 In religious education, pupils reach the standards laid down in the Agreed Syllabus and make good progress, for example in their knowledge of Old and New Testament stories and aspects of other religions and celebrations. In other subjects of the National Curriculum, pupils reach expected standards in music and make good progress. In art, history, geography and physical education pupils reach standards appropriate for pupils this age and make satisfactory progress. There was insufficient evidence in design and technology upon which to make a judgement.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

- 10 Pupils' attitudes to their learning are good. They enjoy school and are eager to learn; inspection evidence is confirmed by parents' responses to the questionnaire where the majority stated that their children liked coming to school. In class pupils settle quickly to work. They listen well to the teacher and are always willing to answer questions and discuss their ideas. Pupils show good levels of concentration; Year 3 pupils are completely engrossed in their work when investigating musical instruments to find out how sounds are made. They show an enthusiasm for what they are doing. Year 4 pupils work well in groups as they investigate the composition of types of soil and are keen to communicate their findings. Pupils are developing a capacity for organising and taking responsibility for their own learning. Pupils are starting to develop research skills in Year 3, using simple texts to find information for history topics. Year 6 pupils use information from national and international news to write their own reports.
- 11 Behaviour in class and around school is good; pupils respond well to the high standards, which are expected. There are several pupils who have emotional and behavioural problems but this has usually been handled well by staff and has no effect on the learning of other pupils. There have been some short-term exclusions from school last year involving four boys and the number is rising. Children play and work well together, sharing equipment, and there is no evidence of bullying or inappropriate behaviour. Pupils are polite and friendly to each other, staff and visitors. There is no damage or litter around the school buildings and pupils

use resources with care.

- 12 Relationships amongst pupils and between staff and pupils are consistently of a high order and the school is a harmonious community. Pupils new to school are well looked after by other pupils. In a literacy class pupils are keen to work in the teacher led group.
- 13 Pupils respond well to the encouragement for them to reflect upon their own values and beliefs. In religious education they are beginning to respect the values and beliefs of others. Pupils in Year 6 have a sound understanding of the differences between the values and beliefs of Victorians and their own.
- 14 Despite the lack of a formal policy, personal development is good. When pupils are provided with opportunities to exercise responsibility in class they respond well. Older pupils perform duties sensibly around school such as preparing for assemblies and running the school tuck shop. The majority of Year 6 pupils show initiative in putting together appropriate clothing for a Victorian day.

Attendance

- 15 Attendance is satisfactory and in line with the national average and pupils arrive at school on time.
- 16 Unauthorised absence and attendance are both broadly in line with national averages for junior schools. Attendance was also judged to be around national average at the last inspection.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

- 17 The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Ninety one per cent of lessons were satisfactory or better. Of these, 43 per cent were good and two per cent were very good. Some unsatisfactory lessons were observed and these amounted to nine per cent. This overall performance is a considerable improvement upon the findings of the previous inspection in which 29 per cent of the lessons were unsatisfactory.
- 18 Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum. They have worked hard to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In some age groups, the teachers have a good understanding of religious education. There were some lessons where teachers did not have an adequate knowledge of a subject, especially science in Year 5.
- 19 There is variation in teachers' expectations for what their pupils can achieve and this prevents consistency in the progress which pupils make. Overall expectations are satisfactory and high in Year 3 in the development of pupils' skills in writing. However, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are not always challenged fully, for example in reading. This applies to both lower and higher attaining pupils. In other lessons in Year 6, for example, a mathematics lesson taken by the headteacher, pupils were expected to work at a brisk pace, build upon their previous knowledge of quadrilaterals and use the appropriate terminology. This style of teaching promoted a high standard of attainment and ensured that pupils made good progress.
- 20 Since the last inspection, teachers have improved their planning and overall it is satisfactory. In the best lessons, the objectives are clear and the tasks match the pupils' level of understanding. This was seen, for example in a Year 3 science lesson on the topic of sound. Occasionally however, the lessons contained too many aspects for pupils to comprehend fully and this reduced the progress which they made, for example as seen in a Year 3 English lesson.

- 21 The method and organisation of lessons, especially in Years 3 and 6 is a strength of the teaching. These two age groups are in teaching areas without partitions, between the various classes. In the case of Year 3, this results in almost 90 pupils in one area. The teachers use the staffroom, library, hall and small bays at the side of areas for teaching their own class or group. The movement of pupils is well organised but takes time, and it is a credit to both the teachers and pupils, that they are able to teach and learn successfully under difficult circumstances. In other classes, teachers prepare their lessons well, as seen, for example in the Year 6 Victorian day and the Year 3 music lesson relating to fairground sounds.
- 22 The overall management of pupils is good. However, some lessons were unsatisfactory due to the teacher's weak strategies for maintaining discipline. In most lessons, teachers maintain an orderly learning environment in which pupils are polite, positive in their attitude to work and relate well to each other and the teacher. This was seen, for example, in a very good lesson for Year 4 higher attaining pupils in mathematics. A further example was seen in a Year 5 creative writing lesson on Diwali. However, in a minority of lessons, teachers were not assertive in their discipline and this resulted in pupils' inappropriate behaviour and them not concentrating on their work. The overall result was low standards of attainment and slow progress. This was seen in a Year 4 lesson on water safety and in a Year 5 science lesson. Relationships between teachers and pupils are usually of a good and positive nature as seen, for example in the Year 6 Victorian day.
- 23 Teachers use lesson time satisfactorily, although occasionally the oral introduction to some sessions is too long. This results in pupils becoming restless or not having sufficient time to complete the set activities. The teachers use the school's resources efficiently. When classroom assistants are provided they are deployed well to support lower attaining pupils. The literacy learning support assistants are well trained and give good support to the pupils, including those with special educational needs.
- 24 The teachers' marking of pupils' work is inconsistent, but satisfactory overall. During oral parts of lessons teachers listen to pupils' replies to questions and make good assessment of the pupils' levels of understanding. However, the teachers' knowledge of pupils is not used sufficiently to set individual targets or to ensure that their progress is adequately maintained. This results in the under achievement of some pupils, including those of higher attainment. The provision and teaching of pupils with special educational needs is usually good. There is not a consistent approach to the setting of homework and some parents were unhappy about the situation.

The curriculum and assessment

- 25 The school provides a satisfactory curriculum overall for its pupils. Since the last report the school has made progress with the key issues and has completed schemes of work for all subjects except music and mathematics, and these schemes do ensure progression and continuity of learning. However there has been little progress on the development of effective systems to monitor the curriculum and procedures for short-term planning still do not identify assessment opportunities which could influence future teaching and raise levels of attainment.
- 26 There is a policy for music and a scheme of work is in preparation. The school has relied on commercial schemes of work for mathematics and is now using the framework from the National Numeracy Strategy. Schemes are progressive in content and cover all requirements of the National Curriculum. However, the policies and schemes do lack clarity about skill development and assessment opportunities. There is an excessive allocation of time for English and there is a significant reduction in allocation for swimming as a result, and this has an adverse effect on attainment in swimming. Although information communication technology is integrated into other class work it is not clear that this is a satisfactory arrangement. As a result of staffing constraints it is not possible to monitor the teaching of the curriculum, or to provide support for the teachers. The provision of homework is not satisfactory, because there is not a consistent approach. The school is looking to develop a homework policy that will provide a sufficient and consistent amount of homework and allow parents to support pupils and prepare them for the next stage of education.

- 27 All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and each part of the programmes of study is represented in some form. Provision for out-door adventure activities is made through games, the teaching of investigative science is weak and the opportunities for investigative mathematics are few. But religious education is taught well and the school delivers its policy of teaching sex education as part of the programme of health education and this includes drugs and solvent abuse under the heading of harmful substances. All statutory requirements are met.
- 28 The equality of access and opportunity to the curriculum is satisfactory for all pupils including those with special educational needs. Teachers plan together for classes in the same year group to ensure that the same opportunities are offered to each pupil. Although there is no co-ordinator for equal opportunity and there is little reference to equal opportunity in curriculum policies the teachers do in fact show a good awareness in practice.
- 29 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The Code of Practice is followed well and the plans for individual pupils are appropriate. They are reviewed each term and updated each half term. Parents are invited to initial assessments and to reviews and are expected to sign the individual education plan for their child. The teachers are very much aware of the needs of individual pupils, but there is no reference to special provision in the short term and lesson planning. Some targets in individual pupil's plans are general objectives such as, 'fulfil Year 3 objectives' or 'participate without causing distraction'. But the targets do change and the parents are kept informed. However the provision for pupils who could be high achievers is weak and there is a lack of awareness, by many teachers, of the benefits of setting demanding levels of challenge that will extend these pupils.
- 30 Teachers' planning is unsatisfactory overall. Planning in English and mathematics benefit from the structure required by the national projects for literacy and numeracy. Some good planning was seen in mathematics with clear objectives and teaching points for a lesson on addition of two digit numbers and for work on the equivalence of fractions. Short term planning includes specific detail of work to be covered, good records of pupil's progress and half term assessment of work covered. In particular the use of the Friday lesson for teaching of points that need reinforcement is a clear example of assessment being used to influence future teaching. However planning in other subjects lacks detail of objectives, skills, and assessment opportunities. Planning in science is particularly poor with little detail given beyond the activities for the pupils. Lesson content is brief and there is no reference to attainment levels or requirements of the programme of study. These are, however, recorded in half termly plans.
- 31 The school provides many experiences that enrich and support the curriculum for the pupils. They visit places such as Woollaton Hall and Elvaston Castle in support of history, local sites in support of work on the environment and churches from the local community. There are a good number of opportunities for involvement in competitive sport for both boys and girls with football and netball prominent in a list that includes swimming, tennis, choir and athletics. There is a valuable initiative in physical education where each year group benefit from sports coaching in sports such as rugby, tennis, basketball and cricket.
- 32 The overall procedures for assessment are unsatisfactory. Since the last inspection the school has developed a system to record pupils' progress and has developed procedures for short term planning but there is little evidence found to suggest that this system is effective in identifying skill development or the learning needs of the pupils.

- 33 The effectiveness of the systems for assessing pupils' attainment is also unsatisfactory. The assessment, recording and reporting policy refers to identifying the next steps in pupils' learning. The principles of the policy are good and include differentiation, pupil involvement, and transfer of information between schools, consistency, recording and reporting. There is a calendar of assessment for the year, and intentions to level the work at the end of the year. There are assessment sheets for all subjects that include a progressive sequence of subject specific skills. There is also an end of topic assessment evaluation sheet for the pupil. This policy is good in its structure and provides a very good foundation for the development of a tracking system of pupil attainment. However, in practice the information collected is not structured to give prominence to core subjects. It is maintained in such a way as to show only recent samples of work and it is not using a manageable and brief tracking sheet to show progress over time. Most of the assessment information is based on tasks and content of work and does not take into account skill development or learning needs. A record of attainment has just commenced which follows the progress of pupils through the school and which will use information from the optional national assessments for each year group. The system for pupils with special educational needs is good. It maintains a valuable record of their progress and modifies their individual plans as a result of half term assessments. One purpose of the assessment for all subjects is to improve the end of year report writing and this objective has been achieved. The reports are informative and descriptive of the pupils and parents should be able to form a reasonable view of their child's ability and progress.
- 34 Unsatisfactory use is made of assessment information to influence future teaching. There is some good practice in the school where clear use of assessment is used. The responses of pupils are used well in a lesson on mental calculation of two digit numbers in response to the strategies developed by the pupils. Friday is reserved for reinforcing the points from the week that need further attention. However most marking is not constructive and most teacher planning does not make any provision for assessment opportunities. There is evidence of pupils using a reading book that is significantly below their ability and of the same science lesson being used in different year groups. Teachers credit the recent improvement in attainment to the use of the strategies for literacy and numeracy, the use of setting in English and mathematics, the use of booster classes and the focus on mental work in mathematics. There is no evidence of the use of analysis of pupil performance in national tests. The tracking system is in its first cycle and so has not yet had any impact on the raising of standards.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

- 39 The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The aims of the school feature this aspect of pupils' development and it is well supported by staff.
- 35 The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. It is promoted through the daily acts of collective worship where pupils are encouraged to reflect on the meaning of life's experiences as well as on religious issues. Pupils are encouraged to consider principles such as friendship and kindness to others which are common to all faiths. Pupils also visit local churches, and clergy come into school to take part in assemblies. Pupils celebrate the Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter but are also made aware of those of other faiths such as Diwali. The video of the Christmas celebration showed that pupils enjoy performing the Christmas story and parents support these events very well. In class the award of Merit Stamps for good work or good behaviour and the sharing of good work help pupils to realise their own talents and capabilities. This is reinforced in assemblies where pupils are awarded their merit certificates. Religious education teaching makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual development.

- 36 The provision for the pupils' moral development is good. The school shows a high level of concern for the moral development of its pupils through the establishment of good relationships and explicit teaching about the principles which encourage them to tell right from wrong. Pupils are encouraged to be sensitive to the values, beliefs, and feelings of other people. Assemblies and religious education contribute to the pupils' moral development and effectively promote values such as honesty, fairness and respect for truth. This, together with the implementation of a sound behaviour policy across the school, provides a good basis for good behaviour and encourages pupils to be aware of what is acceptable and unacceptable. Any incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with swiftly and appropriately.
- 37 The provision for pupils' social development is good. Pupils are helped to develop politeness and consideration for others in their lessons. This is particularly noticeable in Year 3 where pupils discuss and agree their class rules which help them to work effectively with three large classes in one unit. Teachers provide good role models by showing respect for all pupils; this attitude is adopted by the pupils, who relate well to one another. Pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility through monitoring duties which help in the daily running of the school. Older pupils prepare the hall for assemblies, take charge of the school tuck shop and distribute registers. Older pupils help pupils in Year 3 when they first enter school. Pupils are encouraged to consider those less fortunate than themselves and raise funds for national charities. The school does not provide opportunities for pupils to take part in a residential visit.
- 38 The cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate and celebrate their own culture through art, and listening to and appreciating music. The Literacy Hour is successfully introducing pupils to a range of authors which, over a period of time, will enrich pupils' knowledge of literature. Through history and visits to Elviston Castle to enjoy a Victorian Christmas and Woolaton Hall to experience a Tudor Day pupils appreciate how life has changed. During the inspection Year 6 spent a day in costume as pupils at school in Victorian times. This was very successful in promoting understanding of life in times past. The school took part in work for the Save the Children Fund and also raised money for the National Children's Home. The school has good links with the local community. The choir sing carols in the town square at Christmas and visit homes for elderly people. The school will take part in the town's Armistice Day service planting crosses to commemorate those men from Ilkeston who died in the wars. Since the last inspection, when the pupils' awareness of other cultures was identified as a weakness, the school has worked hard to improve. This is mainly achieved through geography and work in religious education.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

- 39 The school makes good provision for the educational and personal support of pupils and for their guidance. Whilst the school gives the high priority to pupils welfare which was evident at the time of the last inspection - two issues raised then have not yet been addressed.
- 40 Academic progress is still not monitored effectively to enable teachers to plan for individual pupil's needs and what they need to do next. Risk assessment has not recently been carried out; there are no formal records to show that this is regularly done, and what action has resulted.
- 41 Although monitoring of academic progress is still unsatisfactory, pupil's personal development is well monitored by teachers who know them well. Assemblies are used well to reinforce a pupil's attitudes towards taking responsibility for their own behaviour, caring for each other, being honest, and respecting all in the school community.

- 42 The school has a good behaviour policy, well structured, with a rewards and sanctions system designed to promote good behaviour. All staff monitor and discuss disciplinary issues regularly, involving parents at an early stage if appropriate. School rules are discussed by the head teacher in assembly, with the classroom rules agreed between pupils and their class teacher at the beginning of each school year. Pupils are clear about the rules and can quote the rewards and sanctions which are consistently applied by teachers. On occasions where the school has identified bullying, the incidents were dealt with well. Midday staff are recognised by the school to have a key role in monitoring lunchtime behaviour, and deal sensitively with pupils' needs, raising concerns with class teachers as needed.
- 43 There are good arrangements in place to ensure a high standard of child protection. The special needs co-ordinator is the designated person and she has excellent contact with the relevant statutory agencies. Health and safety procedures are generally good, although formal risk assessment is not carried out and recorded. Fire, medicines, first aid, illness and accident are dealt with effectively. Children are taught about safety within the curriculum, which also includes health education and sex education. Outside agencies including police, school nurse and local authority are well used to support these aspects.
- 44 Attendance and time keeping are well monitored, with involvement of the Education Welfare Service as appropriate. Through the prospectus and regular letters to parents, the school promotes the virtues of regular attendance.
- 45 Staff are caring and sensitive to pupils' needs, who say they feel secure and confident in approaching any member of staff when troubled. Parents are pleased with the support their child receives. The standard of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Overall, the standard of pastoral care provided for pupils is good. This makes a significant contribution to their academic and personal development.
- 46 Failure to carry out and record risk assessment is a breach of legal requirements (HASWA, 1974).
- 51 **Partnership with parents and the community**
- 47 The partnership between the school, its parents, and the community is satisfactory overall. This represents an improvement on the last inspection; the links with the receiving secondary school have been developed and are now very good. In addition, end of year reports are more specific in identifying areas for improvement and in setting targets. Links with the Infant School are being developed, but there has been no progress in developing links with business.
- 48 Although the school has endeavoured to encourage parents to help their child at home, this involvement is still insufficient. Most parents responding to the questionnaire, attending the parents meetings and met in school, said their child liked school, and they found the school approachable when they had concerns or wanted information. Most parents of the children with special educational needs are supportive and positive in their relationship with the school. Excellent links with the support agencies have been established.
- 49 Information for parents through reports, letters home and the termly parents meeting is satisfactory. The governors report to parents is generally satisfactory, but contains insufficient information on special needs provision and arrangements for disabled pupils. Both of these are legal requirements. The school recognises that information for parents on homework is insufficient. Some parents feel there is insufficient homework also and the school has begun to address this by discussing a homework policy with parents during a recent consultation on the home/school agreement. Inspection supports the parents' view on homework. Homework is inconsistently set from teacher to teacher and there is no homework or reading diary to inform and encourage parental involvement.
- 50 There is an active Friends Association which raises funds for resources through running social events. Teachers are fully involved in this. Parents' attendance at three open evenings each year, school assemblies and productions is very good. A small number regularly help in class and on trips, but their contribution to pupil's work at home is very limited.

- 51 The school has good links with the immediate and wider community. Although there are currently no business links, pupils gain significant understanding of their own surroundings through the many visitors into the school, including school nurse, sports coaches, various Church representatives, students, police and the numerous opportunities they have to visit parks, libraries and Sherwood Forest.
- 52 They also perform in St Mary's Church at a Brass/Choral festival, and visit the Church for an religious education project. Most visits are directly linked to topics the pupils are studying. Pupils collect for charities and visit OAP homes to sing to them. Liaison with the secondary school is very good with excellent arrangements for pupils to transfer. Links with the infant school which are developing, are satisfactory at this time.
- 53 Overall, the school's partnership with parents and the community, makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. There is evidence of some improvement since the last report, but there are areas which have to be developed, particularly in communication and provision of homework.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

- 54 Within the leadership and management of the school, there are weaknesses and some strengths. Overall the position is unsatisfactory.
- 55 The headteacher provides a good role model for teaching and is supportive and concerned with the well being of all those connected with the school. However, the school is not managed in a systematic or rigorous style which actively pursues the raising of standards. The targets which have been set are not high enough and this reflects the school's low expectations for academic performance.
- 56 At the time of the inspection, the governing body were so few in number that they felt it inappropriate to have separate committees through which to conduct their business. The governors are committed to supporting the school and speak highly of the headteacher's dedication to the school. However, they too endorse the relatively low targets and a considerable amount of responsibility is left to the headteacher. The strategic view of the school and its future direction is not sufficiently developed in setting clear objectives and methods for raising pupils' standards of attainment. Curriculum co-ordinators are generally efficient in the day-to-day organisation of their subjects and in ensuring that the curriculum is followed and colleagues supported, for example in religious education and geography. A model of good practice is provided by the English co-ordinator, who has high expectations and is instrumental in promoting higher standards, especially in Year 3. The organisation of additional literacy support activities is very well managed. Generally co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in target setting or promoting higher standards. The co-ordinator for special needs effectively undertakes the implementation of the Code of Practice and ensures that the school makes good provision for these pupils.
- 57 The monitoring of the school curriculum and teaching is at an early stage of development and the headteacher's monitoring activities are on an informal basis. Curriculum co-ordinators have not had sufficient opportunity to monitor teaching but they scrutinise the curriculum planning. The exception to this is the monitoring of the Literacy Hour by both the co-ordinator and member of the governing body. The pupils' performance in standardised tests, including end of key stage National Curriculum tests are being recorded on a spreadsheet. However, the details are not being used to identify areas of weakness and to trigger strategies for improving the performance of pupils. From this evidence it can be seen that some pupils are not making satisfactory progress over a period of time.
- 58 The school fulfils its aims in a satisfactory manner, especially those relating to the balanced curriculum, creation of a stable environment and 'enabling' pupils to have a positive set of attitudes towards life. However, not all pupils are 'stretched to the best of their ability'. The school development plan includes relevant priorities, for example raising standards, but the strategies for achieving the tasks are not sufficiently developed. The governors are not sufficiently involved in the construction of the plan and rely too heavily upon the headteacher to monitor and evaluate the school's progress. On a day-to-day basis, the school runs smoothly and the headteacher is hardworking and committed to meeting the needs of the pupils and staff. He is also heavily involved in the financial management and although governors are more involved in the procedures than reported previously, there is still scope for improvements in their monitoring and involvement in this aspect. Overall, the procedures for monitoring are unsatisfactory.
- 59 The school has made a satisfactory response to the issues raised in the previous inspection report of 1996, although further work still needs to be done on some aspects. The issues relating to information technology, mathematics, planning and use of physical space have been tackled successfully. Part of the issue relating to the site has been successfully dealt with, but an important aspect still remains to be completed fully. The systems for monitoring and emphasis upon standards still need to be a priority, but the school is now better placed, due to an improvement in the quality of teaching. Overall the school is in a satisfactory position to continue developing and improving.

- 60 The school's ethos is satisfactory and has some good features. The quality of relationships in the school is good and pupils have a positive attitude towards learning. However, the commitment to raising standards and overall expectations for pupils' performance is not high enough. Not all statutory requirements are met in the school's documentation as there are omissions in the governors' annual report to parents.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

- 61 The school has a stable and experienced staff who generally have the expertise and subject knowledge to teach the whole curriculum, with the exception of music and science where there is some insecurity in teaching. The provision and deployment of support staff is good both for pupils with special educational needs and for additional literacy support. All support staff have an input into the planning and evaluation of pupils' work and make an effective contribution to pupils' learning. Staff co-operate well, particularly in year groups, and there is good liaison with the Local Education Authority teacher and support assistants for pupils with special educational needs; this team working has a positive impact on the progress which pupils make.
- 62 There is a system of appraisal of teaching staff by the deputy headteacher but it is not used to meet the professional development needs of staff. Induction procedures are in place for newly qualified teachers. The School Development Plan shows the school's response to national initiatives in its identification of recent school priorities; these have been staff training to implement and develop the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. In response to the previous inspection report there has also been training to strengthen staff expertise in the use of information technology. The deputy headteacher keeps a staff development record, which identifies the courses attended by both teaching and support staff. Professional development has been limited in subjects other than priorities because of the school's limited budget. This has had an adverse effect on science where staff need time to clarify and develop planning in order to provide support for all teachers.
- 63 The school's accommodation is well maintained by the site manager and cleaner. However it is not suited to present day whole class teaching, particularly for literacy and numeracy lessons, and despite the efforts of staff it does to some degree have an effect on pupils' progress. This is particularly noticeable in the two open teaching areas where three Year 3 classes and two Year 6 classes work together. Valuable time has to be spent moving pupils in order to minimise noise and movement intrusion. The school hall and library are used regularly for whole class teaching and this reduces time for other uses.
- 64 The school grounds are attractive. The large grassed and hard surface areas provide good facilities for sport and outdoor play. The school has partially tackled the issues relating to the site identified in the last report. The recent security fence has enabled the school to use the grounds as a learning resource, for example for growing plants and using instruments for weather monitoring.
- 65 Overall, resources are in sufficient quality and quantity to allow the curriculum to be taught effectively although they do reflect the limited budget spend available to the school. Deficiencies mentioned in the previous report have been rectified. Resources are generally well organised and easily accessible. The library has a limited number of both fiction and non-fiction however books for current topics are kept in classrooms because of the use of the library as a teaching area.
- 66 Visits and visitors to school are arranged regularly and these support and extend the curriculum.

The efficiency of the school

- 67 Since the last inspection the school has improved the physical organisation of teaching areas and now makes significantly better use of space and the storage of resources. The storage of resources for physical education is particularly well organised and effective. The school has made some progress in school development planning and does inform the governors of budgetary progress on a regular basis but educational priorities for the raising of attainment are still not clearly identified, supported or monitored.

- 68 There are some weaknesses in the school's procedures for financial planning. Although local authority officials are used for budget projections on a historical basis, there is little flexibility in a budget that is very low in comparison with national figures. School development initiatives are produced by whole staff meetings but strategies for raising standards are not fully satisfactory. The balances in reserve have fallen to a low level and there is neither provision for this serious situation nor any strategy for alternative matching of income to expenditure.
- 69 The allocation of teachers to class groups is satisfactory within the limits of the budget allocation and there is good use of classroom support for pupils with special educational need. However the requirement for teachers to collect dinner money and to account for total amounts is not a best use of teachers' skills or valuable teaching time. Neither is the practice of giving all co-ordinators accountability for provision in their subject areas without authority and responsibility for the development and improvement of attainment. The teaching staff is not organised into a management team that is responsible for the development of the school and can give constructive support to the headteacher in the identification of priorities and strategies in the decision making process.
- 70 Learning resources and accommodation are used satisfactorily. There is much improved use of the bays in both of the large teaching areas for the storage of equipment, but the use of time in movement around the school is not efficient and results in loss of significant teaching time during each day. The use of the large class areas by two/three class groups without any physical separation into identifiable sections allows for some conflict of interest in the concentration of the pupils. But there is little noise from class groups and there is some imaginative use of the four bays for teaching as a compact unit.
- 71 The school makes good use of the budget allocation for pupils with special educational needs and supplements the LEA support provided for pupils with severe learning needs with care assistants of its own. The grant for additional literacy support is used very well.
- 72 Overall efficiency of financial control and school administration is satisfactory. Cash handling procedures are secure and regular data is made available to the headteacher. Private school funds are secure and the recommendations of the recent audit have been implemented. However the recommendations to the governors that financial decisions should be minuted and that the budget and breakdown of expenditure should be certified are not implemented. Although limits of virement have been delegated to the finance committee, there appears to be no committee that oversees the running of the school budget. Although long term absence of the school clerk could be covered within the school there is no plan to cover long term absence of the headteacher. No evidence is offered to show if any teacher is sufficiently informed to be able to maintain initiatives in this situation. Teacher absences are covered by an insurance plan.
- 73 Income per pupil is very low in comparison to national figures, attainment on entry is considered to be just in line with national averages, class sizes are high and the socio-economic background of the pupils is below average. The attitude and behaviour of pupils are good, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is currently in line with national averages and the quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last report. Although the strategic and financial planning contains weaknesses, the school is considered to be giving satisfactory value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

- 74 When pupils enter the school at the start of Key Stage 2, their standards of attainment are close to those expected for pupils of this age. However, in handwriting, oracy and reading, there are few pupils who are above the national standards. The results of the 1998 National Curriculum English tests for eleven year olds, show that attainment is well below that of all schools nationally. Compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the results of the last three years show that standards fluctuate dramatically, and in 1999, the school reached national standards. The inspection evidence shows that pupils are broadly in line with national expectations and that they are making satisfactory progress. Standards of literacy across the curriculum are satisfactory.
- 75 At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is average. The pupils listen well, follow instructions and speak with reasonable clarity, for example when taking part in an assembly or when explaining how to find a book in the library. Most pupils throughout the key stage are able to read with expression which is appropriate for their age. They have developed a range of reading strategies, including word recognition and phonics. Their ability to talk about authors is rather limited, but most can locate the content, index and glossary of a non-fiction book. Their skills in using information books, including dictionaries are rather weak. Higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged to develop their knowledge of books and lower attaining pupils sometimes make slow progress. Year 6 pupils can explain confidently how to find a book in the library, but were less secure in their knowledge and understanding of the Dewey system. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
- 76 Standards in writing are generally in line with national expectations. Pupils in Year 3, are taught to use punctuation and speech marks and provided with opportunities for creative writing to apply their skills and knowledge, for example when writing about fair grounds and exciting rides. In Year 4, pupils learn about adverbs, pronouns and tenses and write about imaginary journeys. Pupils in Year 5, use their writing skills to write about the weather, for example cloud formation, as well as create stories about monsoons in India. At the end of the key stage, lower attaining pupils are consolidating their knowledge of adjectives and verbs and higher attaining pupils can write extracts from books for older audiences. Pupils at all levels of attainment can create acrostic poems, for example relating to the Victorian period. There is evidence that progress through the key stage is not consistent. For example, pupils in Year 3 make good progress in their spelling and handwriting and presentation. This is not always sustained throughout the key stage. Higher attaining pupils are not fully challenged, for example in a Year 5 class where pupils were not encouraged to use a thesaurus to develop their vocabulary. There are some good examples of handwriting at the end of the key stage, for example in the religious education work of pupils from the previous Year 6.
- 77 Pupils' response to the subject is good. They show an interest in their work and usually concentrate well. The exception to this is when they are expected to listen for periods over thirty minutes. This leads to some restless behaviour and decline in their enthusiasm. In some lessons, pupils were rather passive in their response to questions in oral parts of the lesson. However, pupils listen well and maintain good eye contact with the teacher. Pupils were pleased when it was their turn to work in a group with the teacher. They enjoy guided reading and sustain their interest in the text. In the few cases where pupils' behaviour was not satisfactory, it was due to the teacher's lack of effective strategies for the management of the class. This was seen in Year 5. However, the pupils were enthusiastic to share their poems with the class in the plenary session and their peers listened well during this part of the lesson. Pupils in Years 3, and 6 are good at avoiding distractions when working in the large teaching units.

- 78 The overall standard of teaching is satisfactory. Thirty eight per cent of lessons were good and 62 per cent were satisfactory. Teachers have a secure understanding of the Literacy Strategy and make good provision for the use of language in other areas of the curriculum. For example, in Year 5 pupils described the wedding at Cana in a religious education lesson and in Year 6 in history they wrote about life of the rich and poor. In Year 3, teachers hold high expectations for their pupils' performance and this has made an impact upon the standard of handwriting. There is, however, a lack of consistency in teachers' expectations and the standard of the presentation of pupils' work is not always maintained. Towards the end of Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently. This has resulted in previous years' national test results being below those of similar schools. Lessons are usually planned well and matched closely to the Literacy Strategy. Planning includes a range of activities for pupils of different levels of attainment. Pupils are organised into groups according to their reading ages. This organisation works well and enables teachers to focus more closely on the needs of pupils. The content of some lessons had too many aspects for pupils to understand fully. For example, in Year 3 speech marks, verbs and styles of speaking were all dealt with in the same session. This resulted in some pupils becoming confused and making slow progress. Targets are displayed and are used to motivate pupils. This works especially well in Year 3. Teachers make good use of literature and use it effectively to promote pupils' interest and understanding of books and authors.
- 79 Classes in Years 3 and 6 are located in large open teaching units. This makes it very difficult for teachers to address their individual classes without disrupting other groups. The teachers have adapted effective strategies for organising their groups and activities and use other parts of the accommodation efficiently, for example the alcoves (bays) and library space. Most teachers have effective techniques for promoting good behaviour and all teachers relate well to their pupils. Some teachers set strict time limits for the completion of work and this helps to promote pupils' progress. Some good, creative writing lessons were observed, but also some rather mechanical Literacy Hours. When pupils were not able to see the words of a shared text, the lesson lost pace and pupils became uninterested, as seen, for example in Year 6. Most lessons run smoothly, but on some occasions, the time for the oral part of the lesson was too long and this hindered pupils' progress, because they lost interest and did not have sufficient time to complete the activities.
- 80 Most of the pupils' work is marked on a regular basis, since teachers mark and monitor pupils' progress during lessons. This helps to maintain pupils' motivation. However, in the scrutiny of work from the previous academic year, there are examples of marking, which do not give pupils clear guidance in their performance or how to improve their work. In monitoring pupils' reading, some teachers keep pupils reading books, which are too easy for their attainment level and not fully appropriate for the pupils' level of interest. This was a concern expressed by some parents at the meeting before the inspection. This is particularly the case for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Homework is used to promote reading standards and spelling, but the approach of teachers is not consistent. This too was a concern of parents.
- 81 The subject co-ordinator has worked hard to promote the subject in the school. The arrangements for pupils' receiving additional literary support are co-ordinated very well and the provision is helping to raise standards. The Literacy Hour is well planned throughout the school and is contributing towards improving standards. Assessment procedures and record keeping are satisfactory and in some classes good. However, the assessment data is not always used to set individual targets for pupils and this has resulted in some pupils making slow progress. There is a good team spirit amongst the staff. The classroom assistants are well prepared and deployed effectively by the teachers. Most issues from the previous inspection have been tackled effectively, for example the improvement in pupils' handwriting and the organisation and quality of resources. However, the progress of higher attaining pupils is not always satisfactory in some classes. The co-ordinator has considerable skills in leadership, but has insufficient opportunities for monitoring the subject, tracking the school's performance and setting targets. The targets, which have been set are not ambitious and have been exceeded already. The school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum

Mathematics

- 82 At the end of Key Stage 2, the 1998 national assessments show the pupils' attainment to be well below national average results and well below the results of similar schools. The number of pupils who achieved above the expected level for their age was close to the national average but the number who achieved the average level was well below and the number who achieved below average was significantly high. The trend over the previous three years shows a steady decline in overall attainment although there is a significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls, with the girls showing a steady improvement. The school has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the socio-economic background of the pupils is low and these factors will influence performance in national assessments. The results for 1999, however, show a dramatic improvement to those of 1998.
- 83 Inspection evidence shows attainment by the pupils, at the end of the key stage to be broadly in line with national expectations. Higher attaining pupils use times tables to calculate square roots. They add and subtract decimals to ten and use the idea of direction to place a sequence of positive and negative numbers in order. Knowledge of fractions is used to convert vulgar fractions to mixed numbers and accurate language of shape, such as isosceles, vertex and parallel, is used when discussing properties of quadrilaterals. Lower attaining pupils are not yet secure about direction and use a counting system to place positive and negative numbers in order on a number line and to find differences between numbers such as -4 and 7 . The lowest attaining pupils use simplistic counting methods for addition and subtraction of numbers to 20, although some pupils can use quicker methods with ease. When discussing shape and symmetry there is little use of relationships and simple vocabulary is used such as angles and sides. In the lessons seen during inspection dealing with number and shape the pupils demonstrated satisfactory understanding in these areas. An interview with pupils found that they have sound skills in the use of number and that they were familiar with most aspects of mental calculation. However few could find 40% of 50 or multiply/divide 257.6 by 10 or 100. Scrutiny of pupils' work reveals satisfactory attainment on averages, fractions, decimals, long multiplication, graphs and probability. However there is little work on using mathematical knowledge on problems or investigative mathematics. Nor is there evidence of work at higher levels for the higher attaining pupils. There was some evidence of numeracy in other subjects of the curriculum, for example in geography
- 84 Overall progress is satisfactory for all pupils including those with special educational needs. However there are variations, with good progress most evident in the middle years of the key stage for, pupils with special educational needs, and for those who can achieve higher attainment. However at the end of the key stage pupils made slower progress. Pupils in Year 4 made good progress when developing additional methods of calculation for adding two digit numbers in a lesson that was structured well and used brisk pace in maintaining a high level of interest and enthusiasm in the pupils. Good progress for Year 5 pupils, including those with special educational needs, was made when using a worksheet that was graded well to explore the properties of reflective symmetry. This group was well supported by educational classroom assistants who gave good support to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Other Year 5 pupils made good progress in their understanding of the value of individual figures in large numbers with work that increased in difficulty and offered challenge at a high level. Work on triangle properties contained extended challenge for the higher attaining pupils and one pupil made excellent progress in measuring the base angles of an isosceles triangle to the nearest degree and discovering that the angles were not equal. He then checked the length of the sides to confirm his findings. However pupils in other year groups made less progress. Pupils in Year 6 made slow progress when the pupils were not using number facts to 10 when developing addition/subtraction to 20 and when pupils placed and found differences in positive and negative numbers without knowledge of the 'direction' involved in this number system. Less satisfactory progress was made in Year 3 when pupils lost the point of an activity on odd and even numbers because of confusion over the rules of the game that used dice to generate these numbers.

- 85 The pupils have good attitudes to mathematics. Older pupils work quietly and show a respect for accuracy in number work and an awareness of the value of properties of shape when classifying them. Younger pupils are keen to demonstrate their methods of calculation when adding numbers to 100 and others are very keen to learn about equivalent fractions. They concentrate well and reflect the enthusiasm of the teacher. However pupils do fidget and lose concentration when a sequence of individual questions follows a predictable pattern.
- 86 In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good overall with non seen that was unsatisfactory. In 12 per cent of the lessons, the teaching was very good, 63 percent was good and the others were satisfactory. Very good teaching was seen in Year 4 that used good planning with clear objectives, relevant activities and no use of commercial worksheets. Expectations of the pupils were high and the teacher promoted pupil's involvement in developing methods of calculation. Relationships were good; praise and encouragement were used well. The lesson proceeded at a brisk pace and answers from the pupils were used well to influence the course of the lesson. In some lessons pace of work and expectations of the pupils were low and resulted in loss of concentration for the pupils or left them with insufficient challenge to demand full concentration and so raise the level of attainment. Scrutiny of planning shows weaknesses for most teachers in the use of key points to identify skills and learning needs of the pupils.
- 87 Since the last inspection the school has endeavoured to raise attainment through the development of mental calculation but has made little progress in providing opportunities for investigational work. The current policy for mathematics is under review to incorporate the National Numeracy Strategy and to seek opportunities for introducing investigational mathematics but it does define curricular links for numeracy with other subjects well. However little evidence was seen of the use of numeracy in practice except for the use of co-ordinates in a lesson on water safety and the tabulation of information and its representation on graphs as part of information communication technology.
- 88 The implementation of the Numeracy Strategy has been satisfactory. The sudden improvement in attainment is attributed to outside initiatives such as a focus on mental calculation, booster classes, setting and the National Numeracy Strategy. The improved level of attainment cannot be sustained without raising expectations in this subject. There are encouraging signs that some teachers for Year 3 and Year 5 have appropriate expectations for the improvement of attainment in this subject. The policy for mathematics has clear and positive aims and is under review. The three-part daily mathematics lesson is in place throughout the school. However, whilst overall assessment procedures are satisfactory the use of the information gained is unsatisfactory. Most planning uses task-based assessment, which takes no account of skills or learning needs of the pupils. Monitoring of planning and of teaching is undervalued at present. The development and use of effective assessment systems has begun and provides a foundation for raising the modest targets for the future attainment of the pupils. The school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum in mathematics.

Science

- 89 Pupils enter the school with results in science, judged by teacher assessment, broadly in line with national expectations. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 1998 fifty six per cent of pupils reached national expectations in the National Curriculum tests. Their results were well below the national average and well below those for similar schools. The number of pupils achieving higher scores was broadly in line with results nationally. Pupils' performance for this year has risen with 74 per cent achieving national expectations, close to the national average, although the number achieving higher scores, thirteen per cent, is below the national figure of twenty seven per cent. Attainment over the three years from 1996 to 1998 has gone down when compared to national results but has risen significantly this year for pupils achieving the expected level. The achievement of girls over the past four years has been higher than that of boys.

- 90 Attainment in lessons seen is generally satisfactory. At the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils can identify and control the main key factors and can plan and carry out tests. Pupils are learning how to observe closely and sort and classify materials. They learn to use instruments correctly. They record results in bar charts and tables. Older pupils are beginning to use line graphs. However higher attaining pupils in the upper school are not offered opportunities to extend their understanding, for example by testing their own ideas and structuring their own findings. This limits the progress which they make. In a Year 3 class the majority of pupils recognise that sounds travel from a source to the ear. They can draw musical instruments and name the parts which vibrate to make sounds. Pupils in Year 4 find out about the properties of soil as they classify them according to criteria such as texture, consistency and smell. Most pupils in Year 6 talk confidently about what happens to substances dissolved in water and how they might be retrieved. Some pupils fully understand the processes of evaporation and condensation. Discussions with Year 6 pupils show that their knowledge and understanding is in line with expectations for pupils of this age. However pupils are more secure in their knowledge and understanding of the biological sciences, that is, plants, animals and humans and less confident when trying to explain aspects of the physical sciences, particularly about different types of forces. Evidence from work covered last half-term shows that an adequate proportion of pupils' knowledge and understanding is gained through investigation and that science skills are being acquired at an appropriate level. Pupils in Year 3 begin to consider what must be controlled in a fair test on evaporation when the shape of the container is changed. They make predictions first. Year 6 pupils investigate series and parallel circuits and many can give sensible explanations as to why bulbs are brighter or dimmer.
- 91 Progress is satisfactory in scientific knowledge and understanding across the key stage. Year 3 pupils make good progress in developing their understanding of how sounds are produced as they watch and feel the vibrations of musical instruments being played and as they experiment with elastic band 'guitars'. In Year 4 pupils extend their knowledge of natural materials as they investigate the properties of soils. Higher attaining pupils in a Year 6 teaching group make unsatisfactory progress when they repeat a lesson, in dissolving and retrieving salt from water, which had been taught the previous year. Most pupils already show a good understanding and need to be taken on to the next stage. Several pupils ask questions such as, "What would happen with a lot more salt and cold water?" and "Does it depend on what you put in the water how quickly it dissolves?" but these were not used to stimulate further investigations. Progress in the development of science skills, whilst satisfactory, tends to be restricted by tight teacher control and by the lack of planning for science skills to be developed systematically. Year 3 pupils begin to consider fair tests and predict what might happen. They are encouraged to use their results to reach conclusions. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for in lessons by extra teacher or class assistant support or by the provision of tasks which match their needs and they make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. There is no significant difference between the progress which pupils make within year group classes.
- 92 Pupils' attitudes to their work are mainly good and never less than sound. In most classes there is a real sense of enjoyment and enthusiasm for their work. Some Year 6 pupils show their interest by asking questions and generating their own hypotheses about how substances dissolve in water. Pupils listen well to their teachers and respond to questioning. Pupils in Year 4 are able to investigate soil safely and sensibly in groups without direct teacher control. They co-operate well and are able to choose their own scribe to record results. In a minority of lessons where there is a lack of doing and a lot of talk a few pupils become bored and inattentive. However the behaviour of the majority of pupils is always good.

- 93 Two lessons were seen in each year group. In 12 per cent of lessons the teaching was good, in 50 per cent it was satisfactory and in 38 per cent it was unsatisfactory. Teaching in Year 5 is unsatisfactory, mainly because the insecurity of teachers in identifying science knowledge and the misinterpretation of the scheme of work leads to lessons on man-made and natural fabrics being planned with no National Curriculum links and minimal science content. Another unsatisfactory lesson does not take account of pupils' present knowledge and understanding and extend it. In these lessons pupils are not challenged and consequently make little or no progress. A good lesson on sound is well planned with clear objectives which are made explicit to pupils. The teacher builds up a flow chart to establish what pupils already know and understand. In this and in other satisfactory lessons teachers involve pupils in their own learning, enabling them to find answers for themselves. In most lessons good guidance and encouragement is a major factor in the progress which pupils make. Tasks are generally differentiated appropriately. However planning does not allow for extension activities and the use of pupils' own ideas to challenge higher attaining pupils. Science teaching contributes to the development of literacy and of mathematical skills. At both key stages pupils are encouraged to talk about what they see and do, and about their ideas. Pupils write their own reports. Teachers use, and encourage pupils to use, appropriate scientific vocabulary. Mathematical skills develop as pupils take measurements and draw graphs and charts.
- 94 Planning for science is weak. The school has a scheme of work which maps out progression within each aspect of science knowledge and understanding but not in experimental science. Its layout lacks clarity and this has led to an investigation to retrieve salt from a salt solution being carried out in Years 4, 5 and 6 this term. Half-termly planning is unsatisfactory. The planning format is too general and does not require teachers to identify learning objectives to enable them to focus on what pupils can be expected to learn. Links to the science National Curriculum programmes of study are not always identified. Lesson planning is often equally unfocused. When objectives are identified there are often too many to use to identify expected outcomes. The development of science skills is often not mentioned although lessons planned involve investigation. There is an assessment sheet to record pupils' progress in specific skills during one investigation per term and this is useful when it includes specific comments as well as the ticking of simple statements. Assessment sheets to record pupils' knowledge and understanding have been introduced recently but have not yet been used.
- 95 The co-ordinator has put a lot of effort into planning a scheme of work which links to school topics whilst at the same time satisfying National Curriculum requirements. She has identified the need for more focused planning and is hoping to introduce more detailed half-termly and lesson planning sheets. Her role does not include monitoring planning or pupils' work and this is a weakness, especially for a core subject, and has allowed repetition to pass unnoticed. There has been no recent subject development or training for staff due to other curriculum priorities. Time is not provided to clarify the scheme of work and to provide support and guidance for teachers in their planning. The school has adequate resources to develop all aspects of science. National Curriculum requirements are met in this subject

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Information technology

- 96 During the inspection many activities involving the use of information technology were observed throughout the school. These, along with discussions with pupils and teachers, indicate attainment is in line with national averages at the end of the key stage.
- 97 All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in developing information skills and using the computers as they move through the school in a number of curriculum areas, including literacy and numeracy.

- 98 Year 3 pupils use the Pendown programme to move images onto the screen, enlarging and printing their work in colour. Year 4 pupils print a letter to their teacher at the beginning of the school year expressing their excitement about returning to school. Year 5 pupils produce a weather forecast for the British Isles and move symbols onto a weather map. They produce spread sheets using information from the newspapers and their own observations and present their results in graphs of various types. This work made an excellent display in a Year 5 classroom making very good use of information technology. One pupil had brought work on India she had printed at home from the internet to help the whole class with their project in geography. Year 6 pupils use CD-ROM to research information on the Victorians as part of the history project. This activity helps pupils develop their independent learning skills. Other pupils use control technology to program lights to shine for pre determined periods of time. Year 6 pupils produce a newspaper using items of local and national news and this helps to promote their skills in literacy.
- 99 Pupils are eager to improve their skills on the computers and show keen interest in their work. They collaborate well and are helpful to one another. Whilst working in pairs or small groups they share ideas and demonstrate confidence and independence. They take good care of software and hardware and can be trusted to work independently in pairs. Pupils show good listening skills when teachers are giving explanations of tasks. They are invariably well behaved during lessons.
- 100 Although no direct teaching of information technology was observed during the inspection it is clear from the work on display and scrutiny of pupils' work that all members of staff are making considerable efforts to overcome weaknesses identified in the last report. Teachers keep careful records of the time individual pupils spend on the computers ensuring equal opportunities for all. Staff have participated in training to raise their subject knowledge and understanding and new staff have contributed to the increase in staff confidence.
- 101 The enthusiastic co-ordinator began developing the subject two years ago. She has recently produced a policy and scheme of work and organised a system of assessment. Although these have not yet had sufficient time to make a real impact on the pupils' attainment and progress they provide a good framework for improvement throughout the school in the future. Resources of hardware and software have improved since the last inspection. The co-ordinator is aware more resources are required, especially software for use in other subjects. The co-ordinator is unable to monitor the teaching and learning of information technology in the classrooms. This is a major weakness in the subject. The school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum in this subject.

Religious education

- 102 It was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection. However a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work from the whole of 1998-1999 and displays in classrooms and corridors indicate that pupils at the end of the key stage, generally attain expected standards as set out in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. In one of the lessons seen during the inspection Year 3 pupils learn of the story of Moses. They think about what it would be like to be a slave of the Egyptians. By the end of the key stage pupils know many Old and New Testament stories. They study Hinduism, Judaism and Buddhism as well as Christianity. They realise that different religions have different rituals and ceremonies. They can recall facts relating to Diwali and create attractive cards for the celebration. Pupils think about Christenings and hear about Bar Mitzvahs. Pupils learn of the lives of famous people who have helped others such as Gladys Aylward and Mother Teresa. Pupils visit local places of worship and clergy visit the school taking part in assemblies. Overall progress is good.
- 103 Pupils have a good attitude to religious education. They are keen to be involved in assemblies and lessons and show respect for the subject. Behaviour is good. Pupils learn to respect themselves and others and to consider social and moral matters seriously. There are good caring relationships between teachers and pupils and potential disruptive behaviour is well managed by teachers and support staff. The subject adds considerably to promoting pupils' spiritual and moral development.

- 104 There were only limited opportunities to observe the teaching of religious education during the inspection, but evidence suggests that it is satisfactory. In the lesson observed and in assemblies teachers link religious concepts and knowledge well to pupils' experiences and understanding. Teachers use questioning effectively and the answers pupils give are equally valued. In a Year 5 lesson on Diwali the teacher was able to retell the story of the celebration in an interesting and stimulating manner. Opportunities were provided for pupils to use word processing skills to record their work and also to develop skills in creative writing.
- 105 The school follows the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus. The resources are barely adequate but the school is aware of the need to improve them as soon as possible.
- 110 **Art**
- 106 Only one lesson was seen during the inspection and this was insufficient evidence upon which to make overall judgements for the subject. However, from the work on display, samples kept from the previous year, pupils' sketch books and art work seen in other areas of the curriculum, standards are generally in line with national expectations for pupils of this age. This represents an improvement upon the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment.
- 107 Pupils develop skills in observational drawing as seen, for example in the work with shells in Year 4 and some good plant drawings in the school's collection of work from the previous year. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their drawings into designs, which include the use of fabrics to represent the texture of shells. Other work of a satisfactory standard is the use of leaf drawings to form the basis of large swirling colour patterns. Year 5 pupils produced some good drawings in appropriate colour when making Diwali cards. Pupils are provided with opportunities to use their skills in mixing colour, for example in Year 3 portraits and in reproducing Morris type designs for wallpaper. A very attractive display in Year 3 included some lively painting with dots of colour which depicted the lights and atmosphere of a fairground. Pupils can undertake weaving with a range of materials and have developed simple skills in quilling, as well as print from basic objects. Sketchbooks are not frequently used, but the quality of work in the sample seen was satisfactory. For example in planning ideas based on the work of Matisse.
- 108 In the lesson observed the Year 5 pupils showed a satisfactory level of interest and concentrated well on making rangoli patterns. Most pupils understood the concept of symmetry and lower attaining pupils were able to adequately explain what was required. An unsatisfactory feature of this lesson was the inappropriate behaviour of a minority of pupils. However, in a Year 6 Victorian style sketching lesson the pupils were able to work in silence and made careful copies of a design of that period.
- 109 There was insufficient evidence upon which to judge the quality of teaching. However, teachers use the subject well in a range of curriculum activities. For example, Year 5 pupils illustrate poems on weather and use their skills in drawing to show how thunderstorms are caused. Work in the style of Japanese art is displayed well in the hall and adds interest to the school environment. Other work which enhances the school include a gallery of silhouettes around the large Year 6 teaching unit and designs for the dust jacket of books. Also in Year 6 an attractive seaside display and well made three-dimensional Punch and Judy characters. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' cultural development.
- 110 Due to staff absence the school has not completed the writing of a scheme of work but the enthusiastic co-ordinator has attended courses and produced a useful draft document. The assessment of art is unsatisfactory and there are no formal procedures for the monitoring of the subject.

115 **Design and technology**

- 111 Insufficient evidence was gained during the inspection week to make a judgement on the progress which pupils make over the key stage. Two lessons were seen in which pupils were acquiring knowledge before designing and making. No artefacts or models had been kept from previous work.
- 112 Standards of work seen in lessons are appropriate for the age of the pupils. Year 3 pupils found out about the movement of fairground rides during a visit to the local Charter fair. They can categorise rides in terms of their movement. They learn about the importance of the axle and some can relate it for example to their experiences of bicycles. They make satisfactory progress in their understanding of movement as they construct and test their own axles prior to designing and making a roundabout. Pupils in Year 5 make good progress in acquiring knowledge of Indian jewellery and its significance in Hindu festivals as they investigate the colours and patterns used. Pupils with special educational needs in both classes are given good support to allow them to make similar progress.
- 113 Pupils enjoy design and technology. They listen well and respond to questioning. Year 3 pupils work enthusiastically as they make and test their axles. They co-operate well when working in pairs and groups. Behaviour is always good.
- 114 Teaching is sound with some good features. Teachers have appropriate subject knowledge. Lessons are well focused although objectives are not made clear on planning. Both lessons are well organised, resources are used effectively and there is good support and encouragement for pupils as they work, all of which contribute to the progress which pupils make. Design and technology supports the teaching of literacy and the development of measuring skills. Teachers emphasise the use of appropriate vocabulary and encourage pupils to use it as they discuss their ideas.
- 115 A policy and scheme of work were put in place in response to a key issue from the previous inspection report. The scheme has appropriate content in terms of the types and range of activities and the skills to be developed. However, half termly and lesson planning does not provide clear learning objectives which can be used to focus on what pupils can be expected to learn in each lesson. There is a useful assessment sheet for the end of each topic to record what pupils know and can do but its layout is not practical in providing a clear picture of skills development.
- 116 The co-ordinator has worked hard to develop a scheme of work and assessment sheet which are linked to school topics whilst covering National Curriculum requirements and ensuring progression and continuity. Unfortunately her role at present does not include monitoring planning or pupils' work in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in provision and practice. The accommodation is not conducive to class teaching and this results in all Year 3 classes undertaking the subject as one whole group of almost 90 pupils.

121 **Geography**

- 117 Only three lessons of geography could be observed during the inspection. Other evidence was obtained from a scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils. From the evidence available it would appear that standards have been maintained since the last inspection and pupils are working at levels appropriate for their age.
- 118 All pupils, including those with special educational needs make sound progress. Pupils understand the composition of the Earth's structure. They know the position of Ilkeston on a map of Britain and their country's place in Europe and the world. By the end of the key stage pupils have compared Ilkeston with Skegness and Chambakolli in India. They can follow the route to Skegness on a map and plan walks round Skegness using large scale street maps. Pupils make a detailed study of weather producing graphs and charts recording sunshine, rainfall and temperature in Ilkeston and comparing them with the climate of India.

- 119 During the inspection Year 5 pupils were observed beginning their study of Chambakolli. They compare their lives to those of people living there with special reference to climate, houses, food, clothes, occupations, education and family life. Good links are made with other subjects, in science pupils make a detailed study of the weather, using data from newspapers and their own observations. In design and technology pupils design and make Indian jewellery and dress in Indian costume. Information technology is used in geography to present information and also for research purposes. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils develop sound skills in using atlases to obtain geographical information.
- 120 Pupils respond well to geographical work. In one lesson observed, their response was very good. They enjoy the questioning and discussion sessions and make good contributions to the lessons. They participate in practical work, and use atlases and maps to find information. They work well together when required to do so and willingly share equipment.
- 121 The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Work is well matched to pupils' needs and to the relevant programmes of study of the National Curriculum. Teaching strategies are varied and provide an appropriate balance between listening and active participation. In all classes good relationships form the basis for positive management, and all teachers use praise and encouragement effectively to promote pupils to further effort.
- 122 The co-ordinator has produced a policy and scheme of work which provide good guidance for teaching geography throughout the school. An assessment system has been in use since September this year but has not been used long enough to make an impact on pupils' progress. Resources are satisfactory. The school does not provide the pupils with an opportunity to experience a residential visit and compare a different environment at first hand. However the subject makes a sound contribution to the pupils' cultural development.
- 127 **History**
- 123 During the inspection week history was only being taught in Year 6. Other evidence was gathered by a scrutiny of pupils' work from last year, talking with pupils and teachers and inspecting the scheme of work and topic plans. By the end of the key stage all pupils have made satisfactory progress; a significant minority have made good progress and achieved standards higher than those expected for their age group.
- 124 Work from Year 3 to Year 6 shows good coverage of the periods studied. There is evidence of pupils' own research and the use of a variety of sources to allow pupils to find their own information; for example pupils in Year 5 use pictures of Egyptian wall painting to find out about everyday life in Ancient Egypt. In Year 4 pupils use their knowledge of Sir Francis Drake and his adventures to work out why he was seen as a hero in England and a villain in other counties. Pupils' skills in historical enquiry develop over the key stage. Pupils in Year 6 use school log books, census returns, newspapers, photographs and artefacts to find out about Victorian life. They carry out individual research using books and CD ROMs. Pupils are developing a sense of time and older pupils can place periods studied in a chronological framework, relating this to the present day. Most have developed an appropriate historical vocabulary and can discuss terms such as civilisation, invasion and slavery, using examples. They can discuss why Victorian children have different perceptions of life, and different priorities to their own. During the inspection pupils in Year 6 experienced a Victorian school day. They acquire good knowledge and understanding of school life one hundred years ago and can discuss it from their own point of view and from that of a Victorian child with different experiences to their own.
- 125 Pupils' response to the role-play is very good. The majority of them show initiative in finding appropriate clothing for themselves. Throughout the day they take on the personae of Victorian pupils and behave accordingly; calling the teacher "ma'am", not speaking unless spoken to and standing when adults enter the room. Their relationship with both teachers is very good and contributes to the success of the day, as does pupils' exemplary behaviour.

126 Teaching is good. The Victorian day is well planned with appropriate activities such as handwriting, dictation, pounds, shillings and pence sums, sketching and drill. Teachers are appropriately in role in their clothing, demeanour and use of Victorian speech patterns. This motivates pupils to respond similarly and results in a good learning experience. Evidence of pupils' written work from last year shows that activities are planned appropriate to the age and prior attainment of pupils to allow all to make progress. This includes pupils with special educational needs. Year 6 pupils start their topics by writing their own questions to answer. Work is marked satisfactorily; in Year 6 in particular good use is made of comments and questions to praise and encourage. Visits to local museums and 'experience days' are well planned, enrich pupils' experiences and act as a good stimulus to learning. There are good literacy links. When time for foundation subjects was reduced teachers decided to use literacy time to support history. For example Year 3 pupils have guided reading sets on King Alfred and Boudicca, pupils can choose to read historical fiction and Shakespearean poetry is introduced to link with Year 4's Tudor topic. Research carried out on famous reformers such as Mary Seacole and Elizabeth Fry provide links with religious education. The teaching of history makes a positive contribution to the pupils' understanding of their own culture.

127 In response to a key issue in the previous inspection report a detailed scheme of work has been prepared by the co-ordinator. It meets with National Curriculum requirements and provides good support for teachers' planning. There is a sound assessment sheet which can give useful information on pupils' progress in the key elements of history, however it is not used consistently well. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and acts as a consultant for staff. At present she has no monitoring role to allow her to judge strengths and weaknesses across the school. Resources have been improved since the last inspection and the wide range of sources used has a positive impact on pupils' learning. The large teaching areas do not make it easy for teachers to work individually with their classes.

132 **Music**

128 The standard of attainment is in line with that expected for pupils of their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are now making good progress. There has been a marked improvement in the teaching of music since the previous inspection. Year 3 pupils produce sounds associated with the fairground using tuned and untuned percussion instruments. They explain why they think their composition reflects the mood of the fairground. After experimenting with their instruments in groups they combine to produce a whole class performance. Year 4 pupils use a BBC recorded programme to learn a song, The Wise Old Man. They compose their own pieces using simple rhythms and perform them creating whole class items. Year 6 pupils learn about the pentatonic scale. They understand how it is used in the composition of the song Old Mr. Dick which they learn as part of the BBC programme about David Copperfield. Over 40 pupils have recently started to learn the recorder although this is only available as an extra curricular activity taught by the music co-ordinator at lunch times with the help on a grandparent. The school choir is only convened for the Christmas concert. There is scope to continue this throughout the school year. Pupils' singing in assembly and during hymn practice is satisfactory. More attention is now given to improving the quality of the singing and this is having an effect on raising standards.

129 Pupils enjoy music and listen with concentration. They collaborate well in groups, sharing resources and co-operating to play their part in joint compositions. They are confident to experiment with sound and to perform in front of each other. All pupils treat instruments with care and follow routines for accessing these and putting them away.

130 In the few lessons observed the teaching of music was good. Teachers stress the excitement in making music. During music making activities teachers visit groups advising and encouraging their pupils to improve their compositions. Teachers challenge pupils to sing well, one teacher suggesting that if the class tried hard they could sing as well as the recorded choir on the BBC programme. A Year 6 teacher used the taped lesson particularly well, stopping the programme at frequent intervals to emphasise particular points in the music before allowing the class to perform the complete work. Teachers have very good rapport with pupils and behaviour in classes is good.

131 At the time of the previous inspection the school had not had a music co-ordinator for some time. The new co-ordinator has made a start on developing music. A policy is in place and a scheme is being written. The co-ordinator is not able to monitor the teaching and learning of music in the classroom. Resources are satisfactory, well stored and accessible being easily transported on the new music trolley. There is no peripatetic instrument playing tuition available in the school. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' cultural development.

136 **Physical education**

132 Since the last inspection the school has developed a useful scheme of work which ensures progress throughout the key stage and includes all elements of the National Curriculum requirements for physical education with the exception of out-door and adventure activities. The lack of out-doors and adventure activities was pointed out in the last report and there is still a need for useful assessment criteria by which teachers can assess the quality of pupils' performance.

133 From the few lessons that it was possible to inspect an overall satisfactory rate of progress was observed including that for pupils with special educational needs. Attainment above the expected level for the age is seen in gymnastics as some of the youngest pupils show good awareness of body shape and extension of arm or legs as they develop a sequence of movement around the room using both hands and feet. They made good progress in the development of imaginative movement and increased in confidence as they progressed through a sequence of challenge and stimulus to change direction and vary the point of support. However other pupils made only satisfactory progress after overlong explanation from the teacher that resulted in poor performance and little use of imagination.

134 The oldest pupils show a good level of games skill as they move and bounce the ball at speed and some are fast and skilful. Boys and girls shoot with accuracy and show satisfactory passing and catching skills but game strategies and use of space are in an early stage of development. The pupils made satisfactory progress in this fast moving lesson on basketball that used good pace to cover a lot of skills in the time available.

135 Progress for pupils in swimming is unsatisfactory and levels of attainment are well below those expected. Pupils in the middle of the key stage recognise the dangers associated with water and the need for safe behaviour near water. However they are not able to use this knowledge well in a simulated situation which requires decisions about helping a swimmer in difficulty or in seeking their own survival when in a situation of difficulty. It is likely that about four out of ten pupils will achieve the National Curriculum target of swimming 25 metres by the end of Key Stage 2. The focus of swimming has recently been transferred to Year 3 and Year 4 in order to leave more time for literacy. The school has lost one session at the pool to avoid disruption to the Literacy Hour and as a result provision is for one session of eight lessons per class in Years 3 and 4, which provides a total of 16 sessions per pupil overall. There is no provision for pupils who do not achieve the expected standard and there is parental concern at the limited provision that leaves so many pupils unable to swim. Supervision arrangements for changing and travel depend on the goodwill of volunteer parents.

136 The pupil's behaviour in physical education lessons is satisfactory overall. All pupils wear appropriate clothing, most pupils listen carefully to instruction and wait sensibly for their turn and many are enthusiastic and vigorous in their enjoyment of the activity. In lessons where teachers use overlong explanation and infrequent change of activity pupils become fidgety and uncooperative as they lose the focus of challenge in the activity. Some pupils respond to negative discipline and overlong explanation by deliberately interrupting lessons. However the majority of the pupils work well as a team when moving equipment and are aware of safe handling methods for bulky items.

- 137 Teaching is satisfactory overall, but not all teachers have a secure understanding of the subject or sufficiently high expectations. There is some good teaching that plans a progressive series of activities, uses a brisk and purposeful explanation, changes the focus of the activity frequently and recognises the quality of movement from some pupils and uses this to provide more challenge for other pupils. Other teaching does not use efficient methods to organise pupils into groups, gives pupils too much time to meet the challenge of a task and uses negative discipline strategies, which leads to unnecessary interruption to the lesson
- 138 A good scheme of work has been developed since the last inspection; dance and games are now included. There is no residential visit but attempts have been made to provide activities such as orienteering. However, there has been less time provided for this out-door activity in order to allow more time for literacy and this has impeded the school's capability to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum. The scheme is based on activities and makes no reference to skills development or teaching methods. Neither is there any information on style or level of challenge, so assessment is based on what the pupils can do rather than on how well it is done, and this is unsatisfactory. There is valuable curriculum support from established sporting organisations which provide coaching for cricket, lawn tennis, rugby and basketball and there are a number of extra curricular opportunities such as dance club, netball, football, athletics and swimming.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 139 The team consisted of five inspectors, including a lay inspector, who spent a combined total of 23 days gathering first-hand evidence. Approximately 77 hours were spent observing classes, in discussions with pupils and in evaluating their work. A further 18 hours were spent interviewing staff, governors and parents. Parents' letters, questionnaires, displays of work, documents and resources were also examined.
- 140 Inspectors visited registration sessions and assemblies and observed the pupils' behaviour at break and lunch times. Discussions were held with members of the teaching and support staff, representatives of the governing body and others, both during the inspection and the initial inspection visit. Pupils were also observed during extra-curricular activities. All the available work of a representative sample of three pupils from each class and the work and records of a sample of pupils with special educational needs was scrutinised. Approximately ten per cent of pupils were also heard to read, either individually or during group reading in literacy lessons. A large amount of documentation provided by the school was analysed, both before and during the inspection. A meeting with parents was held before the inspection.

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y3 – Y6	294	7	64	49

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (Y3 – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	10.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28

Education support staff (Y3 – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked each week	92

Average class size:	32
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Financial data

Financial year:

1998/99

	£
Total Income	346,474.00
Total Expenditure	362,349.00
Expenditure per pupil	1,303.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	37,072.00
Balance carried forward to next year	21,197.00

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	294
Number of questionnaires returned:	74

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	29	55	14	3	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	45	44	1	7	3
The school handles complaints from parents well	23	41	26	6	4
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	16	59	16	7	1
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	29	46	14	8	3
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	33	51	12	3	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	21	60	17	3	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	28	43	15	14	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	37	42	18	1	1
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	30	48	14	7	1
My child(ren) like(s) school	46	47	1	1	4

Percentages of responses are rounded to nearest integer, the sum may not = 100%
 Percentages given are in relation to total number of returns, excluding nil replies