

INSPECTION REPORT

OADBY BROOKSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Oadby, Leicester

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 119989

Headteacher: Mr William Poulton

Reporting inspector: Mr John Earish
23216

Dates of inspection: 30th April – 3rd May 2001

Inspection number: 190486

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 10

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Copse Close
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Colin Entwistle

Date of previous inspection: November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23216	J Earish	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities	What sort of school it is The school's results and pupils achievements How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further
9056	V Cain	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
21420	P Allison	Team inspector	English as an additional language Art and design	
30853	S Betts	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Religious education	
22452	M Farman	Team inspector	English Music Special educational needs	How well pupils are taught
18027	S Mawer	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Physical education	
1530	B Walker	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Geography History	How good the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils are

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Brookside Primary School is situated to the south of the City of Leicester in the Brookside ward in Oadby. Currently there are 377 pupils on roll in 13 classes and an Education Support Unit. The unit provides for 21 children with statements of special educational needs related to moderate learning difficulties. The vast majority of pupils are from families of Asian origin, and the main languages spoken at home are Gujarati, Punjabi and Kaatchi. A third of pupils attend from outside the catchment area. Eighty per cent of pupils have English as an additional language, which is very high. Just over 11 per cent have been identified as being at an early stage of English fluency. The vast majority live in private housing and only five per cent claim free school meals. This is below average. At present there are 15 per cent of pupils on the special educational needs register, which is also below the national average. Twenty-five pupils have full statements of educational need, and this is very high. Although attainment on entry to the school is average overall.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school with some outstanding features. It successfully develops the potential of its pupils so that by the age of ten they are confident, and achieve good academic standards. The quality of teaching is good overall, and in 46 per cent of lessons it is very good or excellent. The headteacher, staff and governors work very well together to achieve their aim of challenging and motivating the pupils. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in speaking and listening, writing, mathematics, information and communication technology, history, geography, music, physical education and religious education are good by the age of ten years. Standards in reading are very good.
- Pupils' very good attitudes to learning and good behaviour contribute to the very good relationships within the school.
- Provision for social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is very good overall.
- There are excellent learning opportunities for children under five and for pupils in the Education Support Unit.
- Teaching is good overall, and it is very good or excellent in 46 per cent of the lessons.
- Parents hold the school in very high esteem and links with home are excellent.
- Monitoring of pupils' performance and welfare is very good, and pupils are very well supported.
- There is very good leadership and management, and a shared commitment to succeed.
- All pupils have full and equal access to the curriculum.

What could be improved

- The rate of attendance.
- The time allocated for the teaching of some foundation subjects.
- Space for practical activities and for quiet study and reflection.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, the school has made very good progress since its last inspection in 1996. Since then it has continued to improve in many ways. The school has responded well to all of the key issues from that inspection. Standards have risen in English, mathematics and science, and pupils' attitudes, relationships and personal development have all improved. A comprehensive framework for monitoring, review and evaluation has been successfully implemented, and there is greater involvement of governors in school management. The standards of teaching remain good overall. Assessment information is being used well to develop the curriculum and to set individual targets for pupils to achieve. However, the rate of attendance has declined since the last inspection, and is well below the national average. The school is now well placed to continue to make further improvement.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds based on National Curriculum test results. This data includes the results of pupils from the Education Support Unit.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
reading	B	A	B	D
writing	C	B	C	D
mathematics	C	A	D	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Standards achieved by 11 years olds based on National Curriculum test results are not shown, since pupils transfer to the middle school at the age of ten years.

For Year 2000, by the age of seven years, standards in reading are above average, and average in writing. Standards in mathematics are below average when compared to all schools nationally. Taking the three years 1998 – 2000 together, pupils' performance exceeded the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with schools with similar intake, standards are below average in reading and writing, and well below average in mathematics. However, this comparison takes no account of the very high proportion of pupils from homes in which English is an additional language.

Inspection findings show that standards achieved in reading, mathematics, science, geography and physical education are above average by the age of seven. In speaking and listening, writing, art and design, music, history, design and technology, and information and communication technology standards are in line with that normally expected of pupils aged seven years. In religious education, pupils' attainment exceeds the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. Similar standards are achieved by the age of ten years, except in reading where standards are very good. Standards in information and communication technology, history and music are good, and in science they are average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are responsive, responsible and eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good throughout the school in lessons, and at all other times.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are sensible, and readily accept responsibility
Attendance	Well below the national average.

Pupils enjoy coming to school, and work and play together happily. Their attitudes to learning are very good, and these have a positive effect on both the quality of the education and the standards achieved. Below average attendance is largely due to a high rate of absence during religious festivals and extended holidays taken during the school terms.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-10 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Good

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

The good quality of teaching reported at the previous inspection has been sustained. Teaching in 78 per cent of lessons was good or better, including 46 per cent of lessons where teaching was very good or excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. A particularly good feature of teaching is the skilful way in which work is planned to provide suitably challenging work for all age groups of pupils. The quality of teaching in the Education Support Unit and the Foundation Stage is consistently very good. This is possible because teachers are very skilled at providing exactly the right amount of help whilst promoting skills of independence. The pupils respond with clear determination to succeed, and have very positive attitudes to each other, adults and learning. Teachers generally have a good knowledge of the subjects that they teach. The teaching of numeracy skills is good, and skills of literacy are very well taught. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to practise these skills in other areas of the curriculum.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The quality and range of learning opportunities for the Foundation Stage are excellent.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision within and outside the classroom is very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is very good, and ensures that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' moral, social, spiritual development is very good. Provision for cultural development is excellent.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils very well within a safe environment.

The school has an excellent partnership with parents. There is a good curriculum in place that meets statutory requirements. The provision for developing literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills across subjects is securely established. However, insufficient time is allocated for the teaching of some foundation subjects. Very good procedures are in place for monitoring pupils' personal and academic development, which underpins many of the improvements made since the last inspection. The ethos of the school ensures that pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are welcomed and have equal access to the curriculum.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior staff provide very good leadership and clear educational direction. This is a major factor contributing to the school's continuing successful development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are knowledgeable and are very active in supporting the school. Their role in shaping the school's direction is very good
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Staff and governors are very good at critically appraising their work and in seeking ways to improve.

The strategic use of resources	Very good. While ensuring that National Curriculum requirements are fully met, the school constantly has to work hard to overcome the limitations of its buildings.
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The headteacher and governors share a clear view of the future development of the school and work in close partnership. The school's accommodation places numerous constraints on the delivery of the curriculum, and staff constantly have to work hard to overcome these limitations. Learning resources are good, although storage space is at a premium in the main building. Good improvements have been made in the quality and numbers of computers. The school applies the principles of best value when buying in resources and services.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The behaviour of pupils. • Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best. • The way that the school is led and managed. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. • Children's good progress. • The quality of teaching. • The way in which the school helps children to develop mature and responsible attitudes. • Information about how children are getting on. • The school working closely with parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • Homework.

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. A few parents expressed some concerns about the amount of homework, and the range of activities outside lessons. Inspectors consider the use of homework to be good, and the range of activities outside lessons to be excellent.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 Although attainment on entry to the school is average overall, many children have limited English language skills. On entry to reception, about a quarter of pupils have a limited working knowledge of English. Although their parents speak English at home, some of these children have very limited English, which affects their use of English language in other subjects. Their teachers, bilingual teaching assistants and other support staff support them very well and they make rapid progress in the acquisition of English skills throughout the Foundation Stage. By the time they enter Year 1, most are well on the way to becoming bilingual, although some still need support to access the breadth of the curriculum. Children make very good progress as a result of very good teaching. They exceed expectations in knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative, physical and personal development. Progress in mathematics is also very good, and children meet expectations by the age of five years.
- 2 At Key Stage 1, an analysis of the 2000 test results shows that the school was successful in getting pupils to reach the national target of Level 2, but fewer pupils were successful in reaching higher level work. In reading, 89 per cent of pupils achieved Level 2, which is above average, and the proportion achieving the higher Level 3 was average. In writing, the proportion achieving Level 2 was average, but the number of pupils achieving Level 3 was below average. In mathematics, 95 per cent of pupils achieved Level 2, which was average, but the proportion achieving Level 3 was below average. However, these results include those pupils identified with special educational needs in the Educational Support Unit. In comparison with those of similar schools, standards in 2000 were below average in reading and writing, and well below average in mathematics. However, this comparison takes no account of the very high proportion of pupils from homes in which English is an additional language.
- 3 By the age of seven years standards seen in reading, mathematics, science, geography, and physical education are above average. In information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, history, writing and music standards are average. In religious education, pupils' attainment exceeded the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. At the time of the previous inspection standards were described as 'average in English overall', with 'good standards in reading', and 'underachievement in writing'. Attainment in most other subjects was satisfactory, except in geography where it was unsatisfactory. Standards in physical education were good, and attainment in religious education exceeded the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards at Key Stage 1 have therefore risen in writing, mathematics, science and geography in comparison with those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Standards in art and design, design and technology, history, music, physical education and religious education have been sustained.
- 4 The majority of pupils at Key Stage 1 make good progress in all aspects of literacy. When pupils enter the school many have below average skills in speaking and understanding English. They make rapid progress because of the skilled teaching and, by the time they are seven, achieve good standards in reading and satisfactory standards in writing and speaking and listening. The positive learning ethos, the pupils' very good attitudes to school and the very good relationships that prevail, all contribute to building pupils' confidence to express their ideas, knowing that they will be valued and respected. The strong emphasis on oral work consolidates and sharpens pupils' speaking and language skills. Pupils make very good progress in developing reading skills, and by the age of seven years achieve standards that are above average for most pupils of this age. Good teaching and the pupils' enthusiasm for their work contribute to the development of pupils' love of literature and their good knowledge of phonics. The school also effectively involves parents in helping their children attain good standards in reading. Standards in writing are in line with the national average. The school has introduced a carefully structured programme to improve further pupils' performance, and this is already having a positive effect on standards. In most cases, sentences are correctly punctuated with capital letters, full stops and speech marks, and the spelling of basic words is generally secure.
- 5 Pupils' skill in using and manipulating numbers improves at a very good rate as they progress through Key Stage 1. By Year 2, pupils have a very good understanding of numbers, and add and subtract accurately

to over a 100 in a wide variety of situations. This includes solving problems by sequencing, doubling and finding missing numbers. They estimate sensibly and measure accurately using standard measures. Most are able to read the time, and record it accurately using both digital and analogue methods. Pupils can collate a simple tally chart and represent the data using graphs, which they are able to interpret accurately.

- 6 Skills learned in numeracy and literacy play an important part in the development of pupils' skills in science at Key Stage 1. At this key stage pupils make good progress in developing skills of scientific enquiry, and learn to make simple hypotheses as part of their work. For example, pupils predict whether the changes brought about by heating a substance are reversed when it is cooled. These hypotheses are then tested, and pupils are able to draw simple conclusions based on an analysis of experimental evidence. Good use is made of practical activities, and pupils use an increasing range of scientific vocabulary, and equipment.
- 7 Pupils transfer to the middle school at the age of ten years, and this is before the end of Key Stage 2. However, by the age of ten years pupils achieve standards that are above average in speaking and listening, writing, mathematics, information and communication technology, history, geography, music, and physical education. In reading they achieve standards that are well above average. In religious education, pupils' attainment exceeds the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. At the time of the previous inspection standards were described as 'average in English overall', with 'good standards in reading', and 'underachievement in writing'. Attainment in most other subjects was satisfactory, except in geography where it was unsatisfactory. Standards in physical education were good, and attainment in religious education exceeded the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards by the age of ten years have therefore risen in reading, writing, mathematics, information and communication technology, history, geography, and music in comparison with those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Standards in science, art and design, design and technology, physical education and religious education have been sustained.
- 8 Pupils at Key Stage 2 make very good progress in all aspects of literacy. They speak very clearly with good intonation and use vocabulary that is appropriate to the occasion. By the end of Year 5, most pupils read longer texts silently, with good concentration and understanding. Many are able to talk about different authors and say what they like about their books. They carefully select phrases and sentences when justifying their views. Pupils' attainment in writing is above average because of good teaching at both key stages and the sound basis, which is established at Key Stage 1. They have a good understanding of story structure and use this accurately in their writing. Most pupils know how to use a range of punctuation correctly and make their stories more interesting by using adventurous vocabulary.
- 9 Pupils make good progress in mathematics at Key Stage 2. By the age of ten, most pupils are working accurately with large numbers and apply their mathematical knowledge effectively to solve problems. The very good emphasis placed on investigative work helps pupils to understand that one of the key skills in mathematics is the ability to identify patterns of numbers. Most pupils have a firm understanding of place value to four figures and are able to use the four rules of number accurately. They know and use their tables quickly in mental calculations and they show a very good recall of large numbers when they double five digits up to a thousand. Their measuring skills are accurate and knowledge of shapes is good. Pupils often use the computer to help them solve problems, and several classes are currently working on a spreadsheet to record individual achievements in athletics.
- 10 Pupils make good progress in science at Key Stage 2. In Year 5, however, standards remain in line with national expectations. This is because of the unusually high number of pupils in this year group who have been identified by the school as needing special help in developing their skills in English. In turn, this has an impact on the standards these pupils are able to achieve in science. However, progress in science is good for all groups of pupils. Pupils of all ages and abilities are able to conduct a fair test, offer hypotheses and draw simple conclusions from their work. Older pupils have a good understanding of the principles of fair testing. By the time they are aged ten years, the majority of pupils in Year 5 are working at the appropriate level, with a number in each class working at a higher level.
- 11 The good progress seen at both key stages is the result of several factors. For example, the good quality of teaching is a significant factor in sustaining good progress across the school, as is the system for setting targets and tracking personal and academic achievement. Pupils' very good attitudes also play an

important part. The school has started identifying more able pupils and teachers now make additional provision for them within lessons. This is developing well in English and mathematics, where work is well designed to meet their particular needs.

- 12 Pupils with English as an additional language make good and often very good progress through the school. By the time they leave the school at the age of ten, most pupils are working at levels that are at least in line with what is expected of pupils of this age. However, some pupils can have difficulties achieving in subjects such as science, where the language demands are particularly high. This can have a considerable impact on overall attainment, particularly in some year groups, for example the current Year 5. This has been recognised by the school and the support service, and resources are being used effectively to support achievement in this year group.
- 13 Pupils identified as having special educational needs in reading, writing and number skills make good progress in their learning. The school uses a range of school based and national tests to determine pupils' needs. It sets individual education plans with clear, specific and achievable targets. The school identifies needs at an early stage, conscientiously places pupils on a register of special educational needs and agrees targets for improvement annually. There is provision for more frequent reviews of targets if it is considered necessary. This ensures that targets are accurate and relevant to pupils' individual needs. Pupils generally achieve standards in line with the agreed targets on their individual education plans. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties in the Education Support Unit make equally good progress towards achieving their individual targets. Standards are below average for the pupils' age but they make very good progress in learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 14 Pupils display very good attitudes to learning, and are keen to come to school. Parents say that all children are totally absorbed in what they are doing, are highly motivated and caring. This is supported by the findings of the inspection. Pupils are keen to participate in lessons, to listen to each other and become involved in discussions. They display good levels of concentration and persevere, and are fully appreciative of the support and guidance given to them by all adults. They settle quickly to their work, obey instructions and take pride in their achievements.
- 15 Standards of behaviour both in school and around the site are good. High standards are implicit in the ethos of the school, and pupils respond positively. They show consideration for others and behave sensibly. There have been no exclusions, and no oppressive or inappropriate behaviour was observed during the inspection.
- 16 Children under five listen attentively to their class teachers, to learning support assistants and to each other. They choose activities sensibly and are developing skills of independence and initiative. They behave very well, respond quickly to teacher's instructions, and are developing very good relationships with each other.
- 17 Relationships between all members of the school community are very good. The ability of teaching and support staff to work as a very strong team provides a very good role model for pupils. The fruits of these positive relationships are seen in lessons, where pupils cooperate well in paired and group work, and share tasks equally. Pupils are able to appreciate the needs and feelings of others, listen well to each other, and show respect for one another's values and beliefs.
- 18 Pupils willingly accept responsibility and diligently perform duties as monitors and prefects. They are able to organise their own work, set targets and make perceptive comments on their annual reports. Several pupils are actively involved in the School Council and are responsible for seeking others' views and effecting improvements. Personal development is further enhanced through residential experiences, and the excellent range of extra curricular activities that are extremely popular.
- 19 Pupils with special educational needs are happy and secure within their class groups. They relate well to their classmates and to adults. The good quality of their relationships gives them confidence to explore new areas of learning and to join in all school activities. Most pupils take considerable pride in their work and achievements. A very small minority of pupils, mostly boys, present challenging and potentially

disruptive behaviour. They are less positive in their attitudes to work and learning. The school applies its behaviour policy effectively to ensure these pupils become aware of when their actions are unacceptable.

- 20 Pupils from the Education Support Unit are sensitively included into main school activities wherever possible. They show a clear determination to succeed, and it enables them to develop a very positive attitude to each other, adults and learning.
- 21 Levels of attendance are well below the national average. The main reason for absence is extended holidays taken by a significant number of pupils. Punctuality to school and to lessons is good, and this has a positive effect on learning and achievement.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 22 The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and the Education Support Unit is very good. Teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour and make them clear to the pupils. They make very effective use of lesson time, support staff and learning resources to provide the pupils with good quality learning opportunities. All teachers use the results of assessment activities well to carefully match future work to pupils' individual needs. Teaching in three-quarters of all of the lessons seen was consistently good or better. In half of these lessons the quality of teaching was very good. One in ten lessons were of excellent quality. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed during the inspection. This represents a good level of improvement since the previous inspection.
- 23 In the previous inspection some weaknesses were identified in teachers' subject knowledge in design and technology, science, history and geography. This is no longer the case and is an improvement since the previous inspection. Shortcomings were also identified in the match of lesson plans to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for the younger pupils. This has also improved, and teachers make effective use of the National Curriculum in all lesson plans. Most teachers use homework effectively to extend learning and support work done in lessons.
- 24 The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good. Teaching is never less than good, and in seven out of ten lessons it is very good or excellent. This is a significant improvement on the quality of teaching reported at the time of the previous inspection. This very good quality of teaching has a very positive impact on learning and progress. This is particularly noticeable in children's language and personal and social development. Teachers, non-teaching staff and language support staff work together very effectively. This ensures that these children make rapid gains in their understanding and use of English. All members of staff have a very secure understanding of how young children learn. They ensure that activities are enjoyable and capture the imagination and enthusiasm of these young learners. There is a relevant and suitable emphasis on the teaching of basic skills, particularly in speaking, reading, writing and number.
- 25 The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is good. It is very good in one in three lessons. Teaching in one lesson was excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. There is a marked level of improvement to the teaching in Year 1 since the previous inspection. This good quality teaching builds effectively on the progress and learning made by children in the Foundation Stage. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is very effective. This is evident from the quality of teaching, planning and the use of assessment in English and mathematics. In these lessons the planning is closely linked to the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to make lessons interesting and stimulating. For example, a teacher used her good knowledge of English to develop the pupils' skills of independent learning and enquiry. In this lesson the pupils were encouraged to find out and explain the meaning of sentences in the story 'The Mice and Mr Newman'. This enabled the pupils to consolidate their understanding of English. All the teachers use resources such as posters, books and number cards very effectively during the literacy and numeracy sessions. They use the results of assessment activities successfully to provide challenging and stimulating work for pupils of all abilities.
- 26 The quality of teaching for the pupils at Key Stage 2 is also good. This makes a very noticeable impact on pupils' learning, progress and attainment. Teaching is good or better in two out of three lessons. One out of five lessons are very good, and one in ten lessons are excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This represents a good level of improvement since the previous inspection. In the best lessons, pupils learn very well and make rapid progress. The quality of teaching is variable in Year 3, but it is never

less than satisfactory. As the pupils progress through to Year 5 the quality of teaching ensures they make good progress in their learning, and has a positive impact on their achievements. In these lessons teachers have high expectations of what pupils should achieve and how they should behave. They make these expectations clear to the pupils and take steps to ensure that their expectations are met. Teachers use questions skilfully to establish what the pupils know and understand, and then move them onto more demanding activities. They also make effective links between subjects. For example, the teacher explained that meditation exercises the mind and used music associated with the sea to reflect on their work in geography. The vast majority of pupils work hard and concentrate well. Some pupils, however, have difficulty in listening to and following instructions. This is noticeable in a Year 3 class and this sometimes impedes their learning and progress. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is very effective. This is evident from the quality of the teachers' planning, their use of the national strategies, and the results pupils achieve as they progress through the school.

- 27 The quality of teaching for pupils in the Education Support Unit is consistently very good. Teaching in three out of eight lessons is excellent. This has a very beneficial effect on the quality of the pupils' learning and is a very significant level of improvement since the previous inspection. The provision for pupils in the unit is outstandingly good, and they are integrated into main school activities very sensitively and effectively. This enables them to develop self-esteem, confidence and an enthusiasm for learning.
- 28 The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs in the main school is consistently good. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. All teachers and members of the support staff provide very effective levels of support for pupils with special educational needs. This makes a positive contribution to the good rate of progress these pupils make. Pupils' targets are challenging but are practical, and are clearly understood by pupils and parents. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs takes place within the classroom, which ensures they are included in all class activities. Class teachers have suitable and realistically high expectations of these pupils, and ensure they achieve their targets. This has the effect of raising pupils' self-esteem. The effective management of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties promotes good levels of learning.
- 29 Teachers of English as an additional language and teaching assistants work alongside class teachers to support pupils, and help them to learn alongside their peers. This partnership is most effective when the lesson is carefully planned, so that the adults know precisely what their roles are and the skills of all are being used well. For example, in a literacy lesson in Year 2, a bilingual teaching assistant worked with a group of language learners and helped them to develop their skills in forming questions. She introduced new phrases and encouraged pupils to use them appropriately. This was a similar task to the one that the rest of the class had been given. By the end of the lesson these pupils had gained in confidence and were able to make a contribution during the plenary session.
- 30 The quality of the teaching for EAL pupils is good, and has a positive impact on the quality of learning and the progress they make. Teachers are well aware of the needs of language learners and carefully plan how they are going to be met. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson, pupils worked in pairs and were asked to discuss what equipment they needed for an investigation. By this means, pupils had the opportunity to work out orally the details of the work before committing themselves to the written part. In numeracy lessons pupils are often asked to explain their strategies for solving mental problems. This gives them opportunities to use demanding language structures with the sensitive support from their teachers.
- 31 The quality of teaching provided by the EAL support teachers is good and often very good. In the Foundation Stage, bilingual teaching assistants work alongside teachers to support children's home language. This is very effective and has a major impact on the learning of the youngest children. An example of this was when an assistant worked with children on a handwriting task. She sensitively used children's home language to explain how to form the letters, and this helped children to access the task more readily. Another assistant read a story in English, but explained some of the more difficult ideas in the pupils' home language. This helped those with limited English to follow the story and kept them focused through the session.
- 32 Teachers' subject knowledge across the school is good. It is very good for children in the Foundation Stage of learning. The quality of all the teachers' planning reflects their knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum. Lessons have clear and specific learning objectives and the teachers explain

them carefully to the pupils. This enhances the quality of teaching and learning for all pupils. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. This contributes significantly to the very positive attitudes that the vast majority of pupils have towards their learning. Many teachers use humour very effectively in their lessons. This makes the learning enjoyable and interesting for the pupils. Class control in these lessons is relaxed and confident. This is a very significant achievement for teachers and pupils because different classes share one large open space. All teachers use resources very well to promote and support learning. The support assistants are very effective and give a high level of input in promoting and supporting learning and progress.

- 33 The teachers begin lessons punctually, organise them effectively and group pupils carefully and efficiently. This helps the pupils to learn well and make good progress. The pupils work well in groups, pairs and individually. Teachers encourage them to concentrate on their work, to listen carefully and not waste any time. This is a very significant achievement because several classes share one large open space in the main school. The constrictions of the available space restrict the effective promotion of learning through practical work. All members of staff ensure that pupils use computers as tools to support work in lessons such as history and literacy.
- 34 The quality of day to day assessment is particularly good. It is outstanding for children in the Foundation Stage of learning. Teachers question the pupils skilfully and effectively and mark work regularly and constructively. All members of staff record pupils' individual levels of attainment systematically. They use the information to evaluate the success of their lessons and, if necessary, make adjustments to future lessons. Teachers set a range of homework regularly. This gives an effective level of support to work done in lessons and is an improvement since the previous inspection.

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

- 35 The school provides a good curriculum, which fully meets the requirements of the Foundation Stage for pupils under five years of age, the National Curriculum for pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2, and the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education in primary schools. Full attention has been given to the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, which are both very effective in the school's provision, ensuring that all children have very good opportunities to develop the appropriate skills in regular and well planned programmes of developmental work. The school's provision for sex education and drugs awareness education includes clear and effective programmes, which fulfil all requirements. The overall curriculum has good range and is very effective in ensuring that all pupils, regardless of age, gender, cultural background or ability, have full access to a wide range of suitable learning opportunities and an effective education.
- 36 Curriculum developments since the last inspection have been extensive and effective. They have ensured progress in relation to the key issues of the previous report and prompt response to new national changes, such as 'Curriculum 2000' and the new provision for children under five years of age. Appropriate training for staff, consultations with the local education authority, restructuring of the school's curriculum plan and the development of subject coordination have all had effective impact. At the last inspection the curriculum was weak in skills development, investigative work, continuity and progression. All of these weaknesses have been addressed and progress since the last inspection has been good.
- 37 The curriculum for pupils under five is excellent. All areas specified in the Foundation Stage requirements are fully provided, with additional enrichment through drama, swimming and dance. Provision for personal and social development is given special attention through a well planned programme of activities. In the provision for language and literacy and mathematics, there is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, with associated emphasis on understanding through talk, enquiry and play in every activity. This is helpful to all young children, but is particularly helpful to those who enter school with little or no English language, and to those who are immature. In all other areas of learning, including knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development, opportunities for the development of skills and understanding are well structured. This ensures that each child, including those with special educational needs and those who are higher attainers, regardless of their cultural background, engages successfully with the activities provided. This ensures learning at the right level for each child,

and has the effect of developing and maintaining positive and enthusiastic attitudes to learning and ensuring very good progress.

- 38 The school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils it identifies as having special educational needs. There is a register of these pupils in place, which lists pupils in order of priority. The school reviews the register regularly to ensure it reflects the current needs and provision for pupils. All teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs have a suitably wide range of learning opportunities within the curriculum. The provision in and beyond the classroom is very good. It ensures that all pupils, including those with the greatest need, have full access to the National Curriculum.
- 39 The curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 is good overall. Careful restructuring of the whole school curriculum plan has ensured that those subjects noted as weaker in the last inspection report have been strengthened and their content has been addressed to ensure continuity of teaching and progression in learning. Good attention has been given to the need to develop investigative approaches so that pupils develop enquiry and research skills. This has been achieved through use of new schemes of work and careful subject development by the coordinators. Increased opportunities for pupils to find out and develop understanding in these areas were evident this time in mathematics, science, history and geography, and to a lesser extent in design and technology. All of these subjects were reported as having this weakness in 1996. The additional element of improved information and communication technology provision has further strengthened these developments, and the school has progressed well towards a curriculum which is both challenging and interesting in all core and foundation subjects.
- 40 Although staff have done extensive work to provide an appropriate balance between all the subjects of the curriculum there are still some shortcomings in some foundation subjects at Key Stages 1 and 2. Examples include Year 1 history sessions, which last all afternoon and are too long for this age group, and a Year 5 geography session, which is interrupted by a brief physical education lesson. This happens when teachers are trying to make the very best use of the accommodation. For example, teachers adjust their timetables to ensure that classes do not disturb each other in the open plan teaching spaces. Most classes are taught literacy and numeracy during the morning sessions, as this avoids noisier practical activities interfering with these lessons. Consequently, many of the foundation subjects are allocated to the shorter afternoon sessions, and this does not allow older pupils enough time for research and experimentation in practical subjects such as art and design, and design and technology.
- 41 There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, and educational trips and visits to extend the curriculum. Sporting activities include football, netball and athletics, and all teams are open to both boys and girls. There are many visits to local places of interest, and distant locations such as Hunstanton and the residential visit to the Isle of Wight. There is a wide range of clubs which meet after school and includes drum club, Choir, Gujarati and Punjabi club, Muslim school and a 'Harry Potter' club. There are also very good links with outside agencies such as Leicester Business Partnership and Beauchamp Technology College. There are a number of extra curricular sessions organised for parents by the school and Leicester College. For example, a number of parents have attended ten weekly sessions on the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Four parents who attended the Literary course have become classroom assistants in school.
- 42 The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection report when this provision was described as 'good overall'.
- 43 Spiritual development is very good. Assemblies provide time for prayer and reflection, religious education includes visits to places of worship, and classical music is used to provide a suitable atmosphere for spiritual thought when the pupils come together for worship. Many visits and other curriculum opportunities offer spiritual opportunities as pupils explore the wonders of science, nature, the environment and space. Art provision offers opportunities to consider and compare the works of famous artists and cultural links help pupils to see the beauty of human movement through dance and language.
- 44 Moral development is built into the whole of school life and is very good. All staff provide very good role models for pupils, reinforcing the values set out by the school. Teachers have very high expectations of good behaviour, which are consistently applied across the whole school. Older pupils understand that they need to be responsible, and accept and fulfil the role of prefect with good understanding of their

responsibilities. Through these opportunities, pupils learn to understand, respect and support the school's clear code of conduct. Each individual pupil can win stars for a star chart, leading to gold stars and praise from the headteacher. Where necessary, special arrangements are made to help individuals with particular problems. These offer clear incentives for pupils to behave well, and encourage them to make appropriate adjustments to their behaviour.

- 45 Provision for social development is very good. The school provides very many opportunities for all pupils to benefit socially from their time in school. There are good opportunities for pupils to work in groups and individually, while the very good range of clubs and activities provide further extended social opportunities. Each class selects two representatives for the school council each term, and where necessary, elections are held. Issues are discussed fairly, and all outcomes are reported back in class. Pupils learn to understand that they can have an influence on the community, and understand that some suggestions may be unrealistic. Residential visits, which are provided at Year 3 and Year 5, help pupils to respond to new social challenges by developing self-reliance, sharing and cooperation. Social responsibility is part of the school ethos, and older pupils are expected to take on more responsibilities for the smooth running of the school.
- 46 Cultural provision is excellent. As with other aspects of personal development, this is thoughtfully structured throughout the year groups, so that understanding of other cultures becomes an expectation and an opportunity for every pupil. Languages are explored and shared in a series of classes for both parents and children; dances are taught and developed in clubs and in physical education sessions; religions are explored through curriculum work, visits, visitors, festivals and displays. When each festival day is celebrated, the community is fully involved in providing expertise, reminiscences, and food. Cultural dimensions of the taught curriculum are very well supported through well chosen visits such as Hampton Court for history work on the Tudors and Oadby village for geography work. Music and art from many cultures are used to support and enrich this excellent range of cultural opportunities.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 47 The quality of care provided by all staff is strength of the school. Parents greatly value the support and guidance given to their children. All staff are dedicated, caring and vigilant, and respond quickly and sensitively to the varied needs of the children. Pupils feel happy, secure and fully appreciate the support given to them during their time in school. They are confident that staff will help them in times of need.
- 48 Effective arrangements are in place to manage child protection issues should the need arise. Staff are trained and vigilant. Records are contentiously kept, and any pupils causing concern are carefully monitored. Fully trained first aiders support the school's very good procedures for ensuring the health and safety of its pupils. The school site is very clean and well managed, and no health and safety issues were identified. Fire evacuation drills and checks of electrical equipment regularly take place. A risk assessment has recently been carried out, and the school is acting on the findings.
- 49 Attendance is well monitored and good levels of attendance are encouraged. However, levels of attendance are unsatisfactory and remain well below the national average. The main reason for absence is extended holidays taken abroad by a significant number of pupils. Additionally some absence is due to illness and the celebration of religious festivals. Registrations take place twice daily, and are both prompt and efficient. Regular monitoring is carried out by the home/school liaison officer in partnership with the educational welfare officer. They conscientiously follow up any concerns over long-term absence. The school advises parents of the need for good attendance to ensure continuity in pupils' learning. Those pupils on extended holidays visiting families in the Indian subcontinent are encouraged to maintain a diary, and to discuss their experiences in class on their return to school.
- 50 The school has very effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The behaviour policy is an effective tool to promote good behaviour and discipline, which is consistently applied by all adults. High standards are an important part of the ethos of the school. There have been no exclusions over the last three years, and no inappropriate behaviour was observed during the inspection. Pupils have been involved in developing school rules, but the accent is on self-discipline and mutual respect so that pupils are trustworthy in all situations. A strong emphasis is placed on pupils understanding the significance of good behaviour within the context of their own personal development. There are good

procedures in place for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. Any incidents are taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.

- 51 An established programme is in place to ensure pupils' smooth transfer to their next school. The pre-care and after care clubs are very much appreciated by both pupils and parents. Committed staff provide a varied range of activities, which pupils obviously enjoy. Staff ensure that pupils are well cared for in a safe environment. The school has good policies for health and safety and drugs awareness.
- 52 The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have improved considerably since the last inspection and are now good. The school has developed good monitoring and evaluation procedures. Staff now have a clear understanding of the purpose and use of assessment. The arrangements for testing pupils provide a good basis for tracking pupils' achievement and setting targets. Records are kept on all pupils, with levels of attainment being passed on to their next class teacher. The school has recently created a post of responsibility for assessment analysis. This is enabling teachers to analyse assessment data more effectively, to plot fluctuations from year to year, as well as identifying areas for improvement.
- 53 Since the last inspection the school's procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress have improved, and are now very good. Teachers keep detailed notes of pupils' progress, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Pupils are identified and monitored to ensure that they are placed in correct groups, and within those groups, work is fully matched to their individual needs. Individual target setting is in place for each pupil and this is being carefully analysed and evaluated.
- 54 The school makes very good use of assessment information to guide their planning, which underpins many of these improvements. Teachers and learning support assistants keep informal notes on individual pupils' progress and use these to modify their weekly plans. Teachers know where there are significant and individual strengths and weaknesses, which need to be addressed through specific measures. Assessment data is analysed to plot the fluctuations in attainment from year to year, enabling teachers to clearly identify areas for improvement. For example, analysis showed that 'writing' was an area for improvement, so adjustments were made to the literacy provision in order to allow more time in the timetable for these activities.
- 55 Pupils' personal development is monitored by class teachers, and is based on the very good knowledge the headteacher and all staff have of the pupils. An important element of this provision is the attention that all members of staff give to pupils' pastoral care. All the members of staff have information about any medical problems that pupils have. This ensures pupils receive the necessary care and attention they may need. The members of staff encourage pupils with special educational needs to become independent in their learning and social skills. They take all available steps to promote self-esteem and self-confidence. Teachers use assessment very effectively to identify special educational needs at an early stage. They chart and track pupils' achievements and progress systematically. Pupils move up and down the register as their needs change. The school tracks the progress gifted and talented pupils' make towards their targets. They keep careful records of pupils' success and plan future steps carefully.
- 56 Assessment procedures used to identify and monitor the language needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language are very good. Before children start school, the home school liaison officer uses home visits to help her identify children's language needs. This information is analysed and used as basis for deciding what kind of support each child needs. Children's progress is carefully monitored and teachers can use this to help them target support more accurately. Throughout their time in school pupils are assessed regularly and the level of support changed as appropriate.
- 57 The school identifies higher attaining pupils, and teachers now make additional provision for them within lessons. There are good examples of this, for example, in English and mathematics where work is well designed for their particular needs. There is a register that lists pupils' special abilities and talents, and teachers carefully monitor pupils' progress. The school also provides additional enrichment activities such as 'Master Classes' in design and technology, and information and communication technology. This is also contributing to the good progress that these pupils are making.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 58 The school has excellent links with parents and the community. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report when 'communications between the school and parents' were described as good. Parents hold the school in very high esteem; comments both through questionnaires and at the parents' meeting were very positive. Parents' responses indicate that their children like school, that the school works closely with parents, and is well led and managed. They also believe that teaching is good and children work hard to achieve their best. The inspection team fully agrees with these views. A few parents feel that their children do not get the right amount of homework and a few expressed their concern about the range of interesting activities outside school. The inspection team's findings are that pupils receive an appropriate amount of homework for their age, and that the range of outside activities is excellent and wide ranging.
- 59 The school strives hard to keep parents well informed and is successful. There are regular monthly newsletters keeping parents, friends and governors well informed; the style is clear, friendly and encouraging. In addition the Prospectus, Governors' Annual Report to parents and regular newsletters are clearly written and informative. The annual school reports are of good quality. They clearly state what pupils know and can do, as well as a detailed evaluation of progress towards individual targets. Parents are invited to discuss the reports with the class teacher, and both parents and children are encouraged to record their own evaluations in writing. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the review process. The partnership with parents of pupils with English as an additional language is excellent.
- 60 Pupils benefit from parental help in school; parents help in class, in the library, with reading, swimming and school visits. Additionally many parents are involved in providing materials and support when festivals are celebrated, thus adding interest and enjoyment. Although there is no formal Parent Teacher Association, any requests for help from the school receive a positive response. For example, additional computers have been purchased from proceeds of the very successful annual 'May Fayre'.
- 61 The home/school liaison officer visits all families prior to their children starting school to ensure that they are fully informed and feel comfortable with the routines and expectations. Excellent arrangements are made continually by the home/school liaison officer to involve parents and pupils in the community in an exceptionally wide range of activities and causes. This has a very positive effect on parental confidence and enables them to provide maximum support for their children at home. The homework policy involves reading, spelling and project work, and parents actively support their children in these activities. Parents of Key Stage 1 pupils sign the homework book when they have heard their child read. The majority of parents have signed the home/school agreement, and greatly appreciate this feature of the school's work.
- 62 The school invites all parents of pupils with special educational needs to attend meetings to discuss the progress and achievements of their children. There is a very good level of parental involvement. The school maintains very effective links with parents.
- 63 The school works very effectively with the parents of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The home school liaison officer has developed very effective lines of communication between school and home, and this supports children's learning by giving them confidence. For example, projects such as the 'Keeping up with the kids', have provided parents with new knowledge and skills which they use to support their children's learning at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 64 The school is very well led by the headteacher. He effectively manages the school in close partnership with the governing body, and has established excellent links with parents. He inspires a strong sense of loyalty and motivation in staff, and enables all to make a contribution to school development. The very strong leadership of the senior management team ably supports the headteacher. With their support, and the support of all the staff and governors, he has created an ethos in which all who work and learn in the school community feel valued and respected. Teaching staff are committed to improving pupils' attainment and are very good at reflecting critically on their practice. There are very good relationships within the school and a strong sense of teamwork among all staff.
- 65 The commitment of the chair of governors is considerable. Under his leadership the governing body is effectively organised and successfully fulfils its obligations in monitoring the work of the school. Its role in

shaping the direction of the school is very good. Governors have a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and offer practical help and advice. For example, the chair of governors was able to use his professional expertise to help the school devise and implement a very good performance management strategy. Governors successfully fulfil their role as 'critical friend' to the school. They are very active in holding the school to account for its performance and discussing ways in which standards may be improved. For example, a performance management/school development plan working party monitors and evaluates progress and agrees priorities for action. All policies and documents that were scrutinised during the inspection met statutory requirements.

66 Following the last inspection in December 1996, an action plan was prepared in response to the key issues identified for future improvement. Most of the points contained in these key issues have been successfully addressed. They are as follows:

67 *Key Issue 1 "Improve level of attainment in geography and in aspects of design and technology and history, where standards are below average, by providing greater challenge in those parts of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study which are currently under emphasised."*

Progress has been very good. Initially, the school sought advice from the local education authority and modified the curriculum and teaching methods. Inspection evidence shows that most ten year olds are on course to attain standards that are higher than those expected by the time they are 11. Pupils are likely to attain the standards expected of 11 year olds in design and technology.

68 *Key Issue 2 " Increase the rate of progress for the five to ten year olds in their acquisition of skills of enquiry and research by providing more investigative work in mathematics, science, design and technology, history and geography."*

Progress has been good. The school has developed a good teaching and learning policy, and focuses on areas such as planning and the quality of learning. Research and investigative skills have been identified and incorporated within planning. This is having a direct impact on the quality of learning, and the rate at which pupils make progress.

69 *Key Issue 3 " Secure curriculum continuity and progression by refining long term planning to ensure that learning objectives in the medium and short term plans are based firmly on National Curriculum requirements."*

Progress has been good. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been successfully adopted as well as the QCA¹ schemes of work. These are enabling the school to successfully link long, medium and short term planning, and to clarify learning objectives in planning. Weekly planning is now scrutinised to check for quality and consistency.

70 *Key issue 4: " Improve the use of assessment of pupils' attainment in lessons to inform the next steps in learning."*

Progress has been very good. The school has developed good monitoring and evaluation procedures. Staff are now more secure at using assessment information to inform short term planning. Individual targets are set for each pupil and which are being analysed and evaluated. A new post of responsibility for assessment analysis has recently been created. This is enabling teachers to analyse assessment data more effectively, to plot fluctuations from year to year, as well as identifying areas for improvement.

71 *Key Issue 5: "Devise and implement plans for the continuing professional development of teachers in ways which focus upon the above action points by utilising information from monitoring and evaluation procedures."*

Progress has been good. Opportunities for professional development of staff are provided through priorities identified within the school development plan. The quality of course is carefully monitored, and teachers have opportunities to discuss issues with colleagues during staff meetings.

¹ Qualification and Curriculum Authority

- 72 Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum have been improved since the previous inspection and are very good. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject coordinators monitor the quality of teaching and learning in most subject areas. This has led to improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. For example, this information has been used to develop a very good programme for inservice training, which is available to all teachers.
- 73 Planning for school improvement is very good, and reflects the aims of the school. There is a clear framework for development planning linked to the budget cycle. The school development plan is very good. It sets out clear priorities for the future development of the school. The plan is securely based on evaluations of previous progress and contains good detail of targets to be achieved during the current year. The plan is easy to follow, and is a useful working document for the school. The performance management/school development plan working party monitors and evaluates progress against an agreed set of criteria, and sets priorities for further action.
- 74 The school makes very good use of its resources, and plans its expenditure effectively. The governors are well informed about finance, and principles of best value are well applied through the use of cost comparators and effective tendering arrangements, which ensure competition. They make good use of the detailed analysis of assessment results, including comparisons with other schools, to target their spending strategically. This is well matched to the long-term strategic financial plan to secure improvements in standards. For example, the senior management has been very active at bidding for additional funding to improve school facilities. These have included successful bids for six additional classroom assistants, improvements to school security, a new adventure playground for the Education Support Unit, and funding for master classes for information and communication technology and design and technology and courses for parents. Finances are carefully managed and the effects of spending decisions are closely monitored. Issues of 'best value' are always pursued. For example, recent work carried out to upgrade the school's computers was carefully costed and evaluated.
- 75 Day to day financial control is good. Information and communication technology is very effectively used for administrative purposes, as well as to support pupils' learning. Information given to governors contains good detail, and enables them to effectively monitor the school's financial position.
- 76 There are sufficient qualified and experienced teachers to meet the school's needs. They are well deployed, and the match between teaching qualifications and subjects taught is satisfactory. Job descriptions clearly identify both general and specific responsibilities. The non-teaching staff make a valuable contribution to the smooth running of the school, and support teachers' work effectively.
- 77 The special educational needs coordinator provides a very good level of management for pupils with special educational needs. The school makes effective use of the money allocated for special educational needs. It analyses and costs the budget very carefully. The SEN coordinator is a full time class teacher in the educational support unit. She recognises the importance of her role within the school and fulfils it very effectively. The special needs support assistants give a very good level of support to the SEN coordinator and class teachers. This high quality support enables the school to continue with its outstandingly good provision.
- 78 Provision for EAL pupils is well managed and is effective in supporting pupils' English language development, and ensuring that they have full access to the curriculum. The school receives a support from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Support Service and this is well integrated into the overall school provision. The Support Service staff are well trained and effectively deployed. This is having a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress.
- 79 The school's accommodation is barely adequate to deliver the curriculum, and staff constantly have to work hard to overcome these limitations. Opportunities for individual learning are often constrained by the premises especially by the age of ten years. The three reception classes and Year 3 are housed in good quality temporary accommodation. However, pupils and children do not have covered access to the main building for assemblies, physical education, music and school lunches. This is particularly difficult in wet or very cold weather. Teachers skilfully manage to minimise restrictions of the open plan layout in the main building by careful planning and negotiation. Nevertheless, the layout of the accommodation does adversely affect the ability of staff to organise the learning, as they would wish. For example, they are restricted by the lack of suitably sized practical areas for design and technology, food technology, and art

and design. Opportunity for quiet reading, investigation, independent learning, is often restricted by the lack of 'quiet study areas', and storage space is at a premium. The governors are very aware of these shortcomings, and have recently made good improvements to the provision for information and communication technology by building a separate computer suite. This is having a positive effect on the quality of learning, and the rate at which pupils make progress. Children under five have a safe and secure play area with a good range of toys and equipment. The Education Support Unit is a welcoming learning environment with its own safe and secure adventure area that is well used.

- 80 The school is set in very pleasant grounds that include a nature area and pond, three playgrounds, an adventure area, an indoor swimming pool with access to playing fields. Good use is made of the grounds as a learning resource. The site is clean and well maintained. Good quality displays of pupils' work enhance classrooms and corridors.
- 81 The range and quality of learning resources are good. A significant proportion of the funding available has been used to ensure that there are sufficient computers of good quality. The ratio of pupils to computers is now good, and reflects improvement since the last report. However, the lack of storage space restricts accessibility to large equipment such as workbenches and materials for art and cookery.
- 82 A wide range of indicators, including the quality of teaching, the improvement since the last inspection, the quality of leadership, and the good standards achieved, show that the school is effective. Unit costs are high, but include additional funding for the Education Support Unit and funding for minority ethnic pupils, and therefore the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 83 In order to improve further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Improve the rate of attendance
 - (2) Adjust the curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 to ensure that all classes are allocated an appropriate time for the teaching of foundation subjects.
 - (3) Reconsider the development of the premises to provide more space for practical activities and independent research.

UNIT FOR PUPILS WITH MODERATE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

- 84 The school manages a specialist unit for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. All pupils attending the unit have a statement of special educational need and come from across Leicestershire. At the time of the inspection 21 pupils with ages ranging from six to 11 years of age were attending the unit. The unit is well staffed with two qualified teachers, and two support assistants. The pupils receive support from outside agencies, such as speech therapy, in accordance with their identified special needs. All members of staff work exceptionally well together as a cohesive team. Their commitment to the welfare, education and social development of the pupils in their care is outstandingly good.
- 85 There is a very strong and clear commitment to ensuring that the pupils receive specialist teaching that will enhance their learning and develop their social skills. This is balanced carefully by ensuring that the pupils also learn and work alongside pupils in mainstream education. There is a very carefully structured programme that ensures this element of the pupils' development is met as they mature. This provision is outstanding, educationally and socially, for all pupils who attend the unit. Particular strengths are the dedication, quality and commitment of all staff who work in the unit and the sensitive inclusion of pupils into main school activities wherever possible. The pupils receive very good levels of support from staff and other pupils in these lessons. An example of this was seen in a music lesson where pupils from the unit worked confidently alongside pupils of their own age. There are regular reviews of pupils' statements of special educational need, and all staff work closely to meet the pupils' learning targets.

- 86 The quality of teaching in the specialist unit is never less than very good. Teaching in three out of eight lessons observed was excellent. This has a very positive impact on the pupils' learning, progress and achievements. The exceptionally good quality of support enhances this provision. All members of staff are very skilled at providing exactly the right amount of help whilst promoting skills of independence. They adapt the level of support to meet the pupils' individual needs, and continually assess the impact of their work with the pupils. All activities promote a sense of enjoyment and fun, as well as developing the pupils' abilities to concentrate and work hard. The pupils respond with clear determination to succeed, and have very positive attitudes to each other, adults and learning. They celebrate each other's successes, and have secure and confident relationships with all the adults who work in the unit.
- 87 All the pupils make very good progress towards the skills identified as targets in their individual education plans. Work in literacy and reading is very well matched to their individual needs, and they make very good progress at reading accurately and fluently. The very careful and sensitive teaching enables the pupils to grasp and understand new concepts and skills through carefully planned small steps of learning.
- 88 The unit has very good and effective links with parents. This enriches further the pupils' education, and promotes a close partnership with the school. All members of staff ensure that parents and carers are well informed about the education their children are receiving. This ensures that all involved have a very good understanding of the pupils' needs and how to meet them. The inspection team received several letters from parents praising the work of the unit, and inspection evidence supports these very positive views.
- 89 There are exceptionally good systems and procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and achievements. These ensure that all planning and teaching is focused clearly on meeting each pupil's individual needs. The curriculum provision for the pupils in the unit is excellent. It follows the national curriculum and is very carefully adapted to meet the pupils' needs. This gives all the pupils an equal entitlement to a rich and varied curriculum that is well matched to their developing abilities.

PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

- 90 At over 80 per cent, Brookside has the highest percentage of pupils with English as an additional language in Leicestershire. They are supported through an Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant [EMAG], which provides the school with the services of staff from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Support Service [EMAS]. The school's provision for EAL pupils is good and has a positive impact on the quality of learning of these pupils and the progress they make through the school.
- 91 In the last inspection EAL pupils were found to be learning effectively. This has been sustained and improved. There have been major improvements in the partnership between the support service and the school. Provision is now even more carefully targeted and more effective in meeting individual needs.
- 92 The ethos of the school ensures that pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are welcomed. This is evident in the confidence with which pupils conduct themselves in school. They take a full part in all lessons and activities. The way in which all cultures are valued is a particularly strong feature of this school. The parents of EAL pupils are also made welcome, and the school ensures that the partnership with parents remains very positive. The skilled and enthusiastic work of the home school liaison officer is a particular strength of the EAL support, and this has a considerable impact on the quality of parental involvement in school activities.
- 93 Equal access to the curriculum and equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve well underpins the work of the school. The way in which cultural diversity is actively promoted, through for example the celebration of festivals, helps pupils appreciate their own and other cultural traditions in a positive way. All available resources are very well deployed to provide EAL pupils with the support they need to access the breadth of the curriculum. The school is aware that pupils' needs change as they get older. So, the youngest children receive support for their home language and more advanced learners are helped to change their spoken English into the written word. The work of bilingual teaching assistants and the effectiveness of the partnership between support teachers and class teachers, are both significant factors in the quality of the provision overall.

- 94 Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress. They enter the school at the age of four years, and many children are at an early stage in learning English. By the time they leave the school at the age of ten, not only are they speaking English fluently, but also achieve standards in written and spoken English that are in line or above what is expected nationally.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	100
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
10	36	32	22	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y5
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	372
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	23
Special educational needs	YR – Y5
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	24
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	56
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	302
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	39
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	32	24	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	24	29
	Girls	24	24	24
	Total	50	48	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (89)	86 (95)	95 (91)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	29	28
	Girls	24	24	22
	Total	49	53	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (95)	95 (93)	89 (95)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	32
Black – other	3
Indian	206
Pakistani	10
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	1
White	40
Any other minority ethnic group	23

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR–Y5**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.8
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y5

Total number of education support staff	22
Total aggregate hours worked per week	411

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	774304
Total expenditure	771165
Expenditure per pupil	2068
Balance brought forward from previous year	19852
Balance carried forward to next year	22991

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

377

Number of questionnaires returned

56

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	38	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	48	4	2	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	50	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	52	18	4	4
The teaching is good.	48	45	5	2	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	43	7	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	45	46	4	0	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	48	5	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	52	43	4	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	48	46	2	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	52	2	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	41	14	2	4

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

- 95 Children enter the reception classes in the half term after their fourth birthday. At the time of the inspection there were three reception classes. Reception 1 contained 24 children, eight of whom were new to school and were attending on mornings only. Reception 2 was split into two mixed ability classes of 20 children.
- 96 Overall, attainment is broadly average on entry to school. Some children are at immature stages in their personal, social and emotional development, and the vast majority have English as a second language. Some are bilingual, being proficient in speaking their mother tongue language and competent in speaking English. Others are at early stages of using English, and have little experience of using it as their main means of communication.
- 97 A programme for language development is well established, and children are helped well from the very beginning of their time in school. The development of English speaking skills are very well supported by the very good teamwork between the early years teachers, nursery nurses and the bilingual support staff. Children make very good progress in the development of spoken language, and consequently make very good progress in all of their learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 98 The children, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in their personal and social development, and most are in line to exceed expectations by the time they are five years old. Although some of the children were new to the classes at the time of the inspection, they had already settled well to the new routines. Personal and social development is well planned and promoted in all areas of learning. The well established routines and nurturing environment enables all the children to feel secure and confident. As a result, children respond positively to new challenges, displaying enthusiasm and enjoyment in their work and play. They listen attentively and soon begin to sustain concentration for longer periods. They behave very well and gain a good understanding of right and wrong. Children learn to be part of a smaller or larger group, and understand the need to take turns, say 'please' and 'thank-you' and give help when asked. All adults provide very good role models, listening to each other, and treating each other with respect and positively encouraging children to do the same. Those children with little English are helped to participate with the assistance of the bilingual support staff. Older children help younger ones and all make progress socially. Children treat the classrooms, the people and the resources with respect. This area shows some improvement since the last inspection.

Communication, language and literacy

- 99 Progress for the majority of children is very good in language and literacy. Children make rapid gains, learning to start and sustain conversations with each other and adults. Children enjoy learning the words of rhymes and songs, anticipating repeated lines and understanding the meaning. Progress in reading is very good. Story sessions and carefully linked activities encourage children to become familiar with books. Younger children learn to use books effectively with attention to the order of the pages and the content. Younger children work extensively with rhymes, inventing new rhyming words and enjoying characters. Older children show successful learning, recalling some of the text in known books, appreciating the events of the story in the pictures and learning some key words. Higher attaining children meet the challenge and structure needed to support extended learning to appropriate levels. There are many helpful activities for supporting development in early reading. Children are introduced well to initial sounds. They use pencils and crayons, trace or write well-formed letters, and have a growing understanding that writing is widely used to communicate thoughts and ideas. Children see text and writing in their mother tongue as well as English. The majority of children are in line to meet expectations fully in these aspects of language and literacy by the age of five. Higher attaining children exceed expectations for the age group. This represents an improvement on the finding of the previous inspection report.

100 Teaching is very good. Teachers always explain things clearly or give reasons why things are done in a certain way, using English or mother tongue or both according to the needs of the child concerned. They use elements of the literacy strategy to develop the children's knowledge very effectively, while providing meaningful and practical activities to enthuse the children and encourage them to persevere and concentrate on tasks. Teachers make very good use of their assessments to ensure the children work at an appropriate level, particularly in literacy. Opportunities to develop descriptive language and vocabulary are very well used to stimulate interest in speaking.

Mathematical development

101 Children's attainment in mathematics meets expectations of the early learning goals by the time they are five. Progress is very good. Well planned activities provide children with very good opportunities to put things in the right order, match and count systematically and use their understanding in a variety of situations. Older and higher attaining children do addition and subtraction sums to 20, find the missing number in a sequence of numbers and add on in twos. Through carefully structured themes, children learn about shape and measuring. They understand that different shapes have different properties, and they use this knowledge well to challenge each other's understanding. At registration, children solve mathematical puzzles by counting the number of children, as well as the numbers of boys or girls. When working on the computer, children successfully complete matching and counting activities. The scrutiny of number books show that learning is maintained at a good pace for each child, and good gains are made in learning. Children with special educational needs enjoy carefully planned practical activities to develop early understanding of number. No judgement was made about mathematical attainment at the last inspection.

102 Teaching is very good. All children are continually assessed, and this knowledge is very well used to plan the next lesson or activity. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the needs of young children and how they learn. They plan practical mathematical activities with clear learning objectives that make firm links between all the areas of learning. This enables them to use their knowledge and understanding in a range of contexts, and builds their confidence at using and working with numbers.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

103 Children make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They talk with interest about experiences and events which have taken place in and out of school. Well planned activities, such as visits to the local town, are used successfully to develop their knowledge of the local area. Children know that travel requires a passport, and that a travel agency is the place to go for tickets for the journey. As a result, they are able to talk and describe with confidence features of the local environment. Children are encouraged to find out about the work done by people in the wider world, such as fire fighters and the police. Information and communication skills are very well taught and are used well to support teaching and learning. They use the mouse and the keyboard, understanding that clicking and moving the mouse will move the arrow and change a colour or an item on the screen. Their skills in using technical equipment are developing well, and they successfully use earphones and tape recorders to listen to stories. Children develop a good understanding of their own personal history through the use of photographs, toys and through speaking to parents. By the time they are five most children exceed the expected standard, and this represents an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report.

104 Teaching is very good. Reception teachers provide a wide range of activities that broaden the children's view of the world. As a result the children make very good progress in understanding a wide range of topics. They are given very good opportunity to benefit from first hand experience, to talk about what they see, to use new vocabulary in context, to ask questions and link ideas.

Physical development

105 Attainment at five exceeds expectations for the age group, and matches the findings of the previous inspection. Younger children show good confidence when using wheeled vehicles and steering them around circuits. They use their feet or the brakes to stop and start at will. When playing with balls, they show increasing control and a growing ability to coordinate their bodies when moving around the playing area. Older children have good awareness of space, and can run, jump, and hop effectively. Children are

taught to enter the swimming pool safely, and use buoyancy aids well to build their confidence in water. Fine motor skills are well developed as children use tools such as scissors, crayons, and construction kits in their work. Children's progress is very good, including the children with special educational needs.

- 106 Teaching is very good and sometimes excellent. For example, new pupils were very well supported during their first lesson in the hall. This was due to the very good teamwork of all the staff. They used a large parachute to capture the children's interest and attention. The group enthusiastically entered into the activities and carefully listened to know where to stand, what to do, and when to move round or under it. Confidence was built up carefully, with adults or more experienced children demonstrating first, so that new children had a good example to follow. Similarly, in the swimming provision, the very high levels of teaching skill, teamwork, organisation and assessment of needs enables every group to make good progress. The school's excellent provision supports this area of development very well.

Creative development

- 107 Children make very good progress in their creative development, and exceed the early learning goals by the age of five. There is a very good balance between guided activities and opportunities for children to freely explore. For example, they paint and draw with increasing control, and have opportunities to experiment with mixing paint to achieve a desired effect. Opportunities for imaginative play are stimulating, and older children talk about their feelings when working out the relationships between of nursery rhyme characters. In music lessons, they quickly learn the words of new songs and sustain simple rhythms by clapping. They experiment with different musical instruments to make patterns with sounds. Children make pictures and designs on the computer screen, and print them out for display on the wall. They also enjoy learning dances from different cultures. Such experiences make a good contribution to children's spiritual, social and cultural development.
- 108 Teaching is very good. Speaking and listening are strong features in all creative activities, which enhances the learning for children who are developing spoken English and extends the speaking skills of the other children. Children are given very many opportunities to be expressive and creative in many different and challenging activities. Staff who are very clear about the value of this work, and are very knowledgeable about the needs of young children.

ENGLISH

- 109 In the most recently published results in Year 2000, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 achieved standards that were above average in reading and average in writing. When compared with that of similar schools, with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, attainment was below average. However, this comparison takes no account of the very high proportion of pupils from homes in which English is an additional language. No comparisons can be made for the pupils who transfer to the middle school at age of ten years, as the national tests are not taken until the age of eleven.
- 110 Inspection evidence shows that by the age of seven, pupils are achieving above average standards in reading. Standards in speaking and listening and writing are similar to those expected for pupils of this age. This is an improvement of the standards reported at the time of the last inspection. The school is working very hard to improve pupils' standards in writing, and this is already having a positive effect on pupils' achievement. Inspection findings show that pupils aged ten years are on course to achieve above average standards in English by the time they are 11. These pupils speak fluently, have a sound understanding of English, and write interesting and informative accounts. Standards in reading are well above average. This represents a very good level of improvement since the previous inspection. The school has achieved this improvement by carefully analysing results and trends, and using the data to effectively target areas for improvement. Teaching and learning are also rigorously monitored to ensure the quality of teaching remains high throughout the school. The quality of learning is very good overall, and pupils make above average progress in developing their speaking and listening skills, and reading.
- 111 When pupils enter the school many have below average skills in speaking and understanding English. Eighty per cent of pupils have English as an additional language, and just over 11 per cent have been identified as being at an early stage of English fluency. Pupils make rapid progress because of the skilled teaching and, by the time they are seven, the majority meet expected standards. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills through carefully planned discussion sessions, for

example, when pupils discuss the life of Mairi Hedderwick. Skilful questioning enables pupils to extend their understanding of words and phrases, and follows much discussion on what happens when people go to college. Older pupils continue this rate of progress, and achieve good standards in their speaking skills. By the time they are ten, most pupils achieve standards above those expected for their age. This represents much hard work, and is a significant achievement for pupils, their teachers and members of the support staff. Teachers encourage pupils to speak and read aloud wherever possible, and this has a positive effect on both their speaking and understanding of English. For example, Year 5 pupils read the 'Night Mail' expressively and rhythmically, and effectively captured the mood of the poem.

- 112 Standards in reading show a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. By the age of seven, most pupils achieve above average standards in reading. By the age of ten pupils achieve standards that are well above the expectations for this age group. This represents a very good level of improvement from when pupils enter the school. All the teachers work hard to give pupils an interest in and love of books, for example, through the thriving 'Harry Potter' club. Each classroom has interesting reading areas where pupils explore books of their own choice independently. The school has also provided evening classes for parents to help their children improve their reading skills, and this is having a direct effect of the standards that pupils achieve. Opportunities for quiet and undisturbed reading are, however, restricted by several classes sharing the one working area. However, teachers work hard to overcome these concerns by carefully timetabling these activities to reduce noise and movement.
- 113 Teachers constantly promote understanding of English. This was evident in Year 2, where pupils were taught how to formulate questions from a poster. As they progress through the school, pupils read with increasing accuracy and understanding. Many ten year olds are able to talk about different authors and say what they like about their books. For example, one girl says she likes books by Jacqueline Wilson because 'they are interesting and well written'. Teachers provide many varied opportunities for pupils to develop an interest in poetry and drama. They also provide them with effective levels of support to enable them to tackle new texts confidently, whatever their ability. Most pupils have a good understanding of how to use the library, and find specific books to help in researching subjects such as history and geography. They find information quickly by using the index and contents page. However, the library is shared with the computer suite. This restricts pupils' access to books for private study and research.
- 114 By the age of seven standards in writing are average. However, the school believes they could be higher, and has introduced effective new strategies to improve pupils' performance. These are already having a positive effect on standards. Pupils are beginning to write for different purposes, but do not always consistently apply their understanding of English to their writing. By the age of ten, standards in writing are above expectations for this age group. Pupils have a good understanding of story structure and use this accurately in their writing. These pupils know how to use a range of punctuation correctly, and make their stories more interesting by using adventurous vocabulary. The older pupils have a good understanding of the use of grammar, and use different forms of writing accurately and confidently. For example, they write accurate factual accounts in science and history. This represents a good level of improvement since the previous inspection.
- 115 Handwriting standards are improving throughout the school. Most seven year old pupils are beginning to use 'joined up' writing with correctly formed letters. By the age of ten most pupils write clearly, neatly and fluently. Their work is legible and easy to read. Pupils' spelling is satisfactory. The younger pupils spell simple words correctly, and attempt more difficult words by using letter sounds. The older pupils use dictionaries to help in their spelling, and most spell words correctly. This is having a positive effect on raising standards in writing.
- 116 The quality of teaching in English is very good overall. It is marginally better for the older pupils. Teaching in half of the lessons is very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed during the period of the inspection. The high quality teaching has a positive effect on the standards pupils achieve. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly, and choose the content carefully to make sure it is relevant to the pupils' needs. This ensures that the pupils remain interested and enthusiastic in their work. Teachers share learning objectives with the pupils at the beginning of each lesson. This ensures that pupils have a good understanding of what they are doing and the purpose of their work. At the end of each lesson they are encouraged to reflect on the quality of their work. Pupils quickly realise how well they are doing, and whether their work is good enough. The open plan teaching spaces sometimes restrict the value of these sessions, and working noise from other classes can be distracting for some pupils.

- 117 Teachers try to involve pupils fully in their lessons and encourage independent thinking. For example, Year 5 pupils were asked to think about the use of descriptive language and rhythm in the poem 'Night Mail'. Pupils responded very well to this challenge, and expressed their thoughts and ideas sensitively. Teachers have a good understanding of how to teach reading. They do this very well. They are working hard to develop a similar level of expertise in the teaching of writing skills. This is having a positive effect on the quality of pupils' spelling, and their ability to write with understanding. There are clear and effective links with the development of writing in subjects other than English. Most pupils have satisfactorily developed skills in writing factual accounts and taking notes. A minority of pupils has difficulty in using their writing skills across the curriculum. The school ensures these pupils have good quality support to meet their specific needs in this area. Teachers always encourage pupils to answer questions with precise and clear diction. This is a sharp focus in all lessons, and is particularly valuable for pupils who have English as an additional language.
- 118 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in developing their understanding and use of English. They receive a good level of effective support within the classroom. This enables them to work alongside their classmates, thereby increasing their self-esteem. All teachers ensure that the pupils have suitably challenging work that meets the requirements of their individual education plans. The school is maintaining standards similar to those at the previous inspection.
- 119 The support for pupils who have English as an additional language is very effective. Teachers are well aware of the needs of language learners and they approach their planning with this in mind. This ensures they make very good progress overall. Teachers and teaching assistants work alongside class teachers to support pupils and help them to learn alongside their peers. This partnership is effective and adults know precisely what their roles are and the skills of all are being used well.
- 120 The subject leaders manage the English curriculum effectively. They have a clear vision for the future of the subject and work hard to raise standards further. Both coordinators are closely involved in monitoring English through the planning, teaching and learning. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is very successful and is making a positive contribution to the improvement in standards.

MATHEMATICS

- 121 In the most recently published results in Year 2000, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 achieved standards that were below the average of all schools and well below the average for similar schools. This shows a dip in the good or very good results nationally since 1997. The school attributes this to the composition of the cohort, and the numbers of pupils leaving and joining the school during the key stage. No comparisons can be made for the ten year old pupils, as the national tests are not taken until the age of 11. Inspection evidence shows that standards for the current Year 2 pupils, and pupils aged ten years, are above average. These findings for the ten year olds also match the targets the school has set for the optional national tests in Year 5, in which about half the pupils are expected to achieve Level 4. This is the level that pupils are expected to achieve by the end of Year 6. Standards have improved significantly from the previous inspection when attainment was average and progress was generally satisfactory. The pupils at both key stages, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language now make at least good and often very good progress, especially at Key Stage 1. These improvements are the result of the successful implementation of the Numeracy Strategy, the development of very good assessment procedures and effective teaching across the school. Also, teachers provide effective support for pupils with SEN and for those pupils especially at Key Stage 1 who are in the early stages of their fluency in English. All of these developments have had a very positive effect on standards and progress. All of these developments have impacted very positively on standards and progress. Improvements have also been made in developing problem solving and research skills since the previous inspection.
- 122 By the age of seven, most pupils have a very good understanding of numbers. Most can add and subtract accurately to over a 100 in a wide variety of situations, which includes solving problems by sequencing, doubling and finding missing numbers. Very good progress was seen in the scrutiny of work. For example, less than nine months ago, pupils were only confident in money problems up to 50 pence. They are now secure when investigating money problems up to ten pounds. The higher attaining pupils can

successfully partition 668, when in September they were only confident with place value up to a 100. This represents good progress. Teachers are careful to ensure that pupils understand questions, and that they use the correct mathematical vocabulary when explaining their answers. This ensures that pupils with special educational needs and those pupils who are in the early stages of their fluency in English have equal access to the curriculum and make good progress. They also receive good focused and practical support from classroom assistants. All pupils gain a good range of practical experience in measuring and describing the properties of shapes. They are particularly skilled in understanding position and movement, and combine this well with work on the computer. They estimate sensibly and measure accurately using standard measures, and can tell the time and record it accurately using both digital and analogue methods. Pupils are often given the opportunity to collect information and make and interpret simple graphs. The recent survey of favourite colours for a new school uniform gave them the opportunity to investigate a real mathematical problem. They tackled it enthusiastically, and were able to interpret the information and draw simple conclusions.

- 123 By the age of ten, most pupils are working accurately with large numbers and apply their mathematical knowledge effectively to solve problems. About a half are already working within Level 4, which is the level they are expected to reach by the age of eleven. These pupils are confidently carrying out the multiplication of decimal numbers such as 8.56 by 7. Even the average pupils, who are at the borderline of Level 4, can work out the relationships between fractions and decimals. Most pupils know and use their tables quickly in mental calculations, and they show a very good recall of large numbers when they double five digits up to a thousand. Their measuring skills are accurate and knowledge of shapes is good. Teachers are now giving pupils more responsibility for planning, organising and carrying out investigations themselves. This was seen in a lesson where the pupils had to choose the correct units and instruments to carry out a range of measurements. Computer programmes are used to calculate and construct triangles. Pupils often use the computer to help solve problems, and several classes are currently working on a spreadsheet to record individual achievements in athletics. All pupils take a pride in the presentation of their work.
- 124 The school ensures equal opportunities and inclusion for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language receive a very effective level of support. This enables them to make good progress towards the targets set for them.
- 125 The quality of teaching is good overall, and is having a significant impact on pupils' learning. It is very good at Key Stage 1. All of the lessons were at least good, and half were very good. At Key Stage 2 it is consistently good, and two of the lessons were very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. This is a much better picture than at the previous inspection when teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall. All of the teaching has many good features. The best lessons always start with the teacher sharing the focus of the learning with the pupils. They constantly remind them of it during the independent tasks, and when discussing their achievements at the end of the lesson. This is particularly well done in Year 2, where pupils discuss their individual achievements informally with the teacher.
- 126 Teachers are flexible in their planning and successfully meet the needs of pupils who learn at different rates. For example, pupils in a Year 5 lesson were having some difficulties estimating sensibly in their independent task. The teacher changed the original plan for the plenary session, and focused on the immediate needs of the pupils to reinforce this important skill. Teaching assistants, play a very active role in maintaining the involvement of pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. In a successful lesson in Year 1, the support assistant worked with one pupil with moderate learning difficulties on the same activity as the rest of the class who were investigating repeated patterns on the board. The pupil responded positively and made good progress. All teachers have secure subject knowledge, and there is a strong emphasis on practising, improving and extending the learning skills of the pupils. The best teaching always reinforces the learning from the previous lesson learning before introducing new ideas. The independent work is usually matched well to the range of ability within the classes. A strong feature and strength of the teaching is the very good relationships established with pupils. The encouragement and support they receive helps them to behave well in all of the classes. They concentrate well, work well both individually and in groups, and make at least good gains in their learning.
- 127 All teachers have a clear understanding of the objectives of the numeracy strategy, and are confident in their teaching of the basic skills of numeracy. The strategy has been very effectively implemented into all

classes. There is a stimulating environment in classrooms where numeracy has a sharp focus, and good displays remind pupils of the rules and language of mathematics. Teachers make every effort to cover a good range of work, but the cramped conditions in the school make the opportunities for practical tasks very difficult at times. Numeracy skills are used well across the curriculum. For example, pupils measure the distance of their long jumps in physical education, record the climate and temperature charts of different countries for geography and draw, and measure nets for containers in design technology. Literacy skills are promoted well through discussion about mathematical problems, and when recording information. Also, parents are provided with a list of mathematical terms that will be used in class so they can help their children at home.

- 128 The coordinator, who has just taken up an appointment in another school, has had a positive effect on raising standards in mathematics. She has devised very good systems to support teachers in their development of the numeracy strategy across the school.

SCIENCE

- 129 Standards in science at the end of Key Stage 1 are good. Likewise, at Key Stage 2, attainment in Year 3 and Year 4 is above that expected nationally for pupils of these ages. However, standards of the current Year 5 are in line with the national expectations. This is because of the unusually high number of pupils in this particular year group who have been identified by the school as needing special help in developing their skills in English. In turn, this has an impact on the standards these pupils are able to achieve in science. However, progress in science throughout school is good for all groups of pupils, including those with English as an additional language and special educational needs. The improvement in standards since the last inspection for the majority of pupils is mainly due to the increased emphasis placed on scientific enquiry.
- 130 Throughout the school all pupils are given regular opportunity to learn through first hand experience. Consequently, by the age of seven years, pupils are familiar with the idea of a fair test. They are encouraged to make predictions, and can make a series of detailed observations. Pupils can record results in tables, such as their observations of what happens as seeds grow, or data about the warmest place in school. The worksheets pupils use during investigative work are useful guides for planning experiments and for analysing their results. In addition, pupils explain orally what their results mean, which gives teachers a clear picture of their understanding. This also helps develop the vocabulary of those pupils who are at the early stages of learning English.
- 131 All pupils, including those with special education needs, and English as an additional language make good progress in lessons. Pupils with special needs and those who receive additional language make very good progress when they are working directly with support assistants receiving bilingual support. A close scrutiny of previously completed work in science shows that because teaching and planning takes into account the different abilities within classes, these different groups all make at least good progress in their lessons.
- 132 In Year 1, pupils think about light and dark, and can sort materials into broad groups. Pupils in Year 2 can draw electrical circuits using pictures of the components, and can compile a healthy meal. Pupils of higher ability are encouraged to extend their knowledge and understanding, for example, when identifying which changes brought about by heating are reversible by cooling. Challenge for higher attaining pupils was a concern identified in the last inspection report. Good progress has been made in addressing this issue since their needs are now identified within teachers planning, and their progress is carefully monitored.
- 133 By the age of ten years, pupils have broadened their knowledge and understanding of science. In Year 3, pupils know about the way magnets behave, and understand that plant roots play an important part in transporting water and nutrients. In Year 4, pupils can make a simple thermometer using food dye, and can investigate how to insulate ice cubes to stop them melting. Information and communication technology is well used to support work in science. For example, Year 5 pupils obtained pictures and information about rockets and astronauts such as Neil Armstrong when they studied astronomy. There is an increasing use of scientific language throughout the key stage, with pupils confidently using words like 'compressed' or 'herbivore' from Year 3 upwards. Skills in scientific enquiry continue to develop well throughout this key stage. Pupils develop a good understanding of fair testing, controls, and the

importance of making predictions. For example, pupils in Year 5 had to make predictions about the conditions needed for seeds to germinate. They carried out an experiment to check their hypotheses, and were able to draw simple conclusions. Pupils are able to collect and analyse simple scientific data, and use bar charts well to display the results. Higher attaining pupils are able to use and interpret line graphs. All pupils are now making good use of the new computer suite to analyse experimental data, and can successfully enter results into tables and spreadsheets.

- 134 Pupils' attitudes to learning in science are good at both key stages. Pupils are interested and enthusiastic about experimenting, and respond positively to challenges. Pupils work well together in groups. This was seen in a very good lesson about friction in Year 4, where a group elected a spokesman to coordinate activities during an investigation. Pupils were heard to comment that "We enjoy testing and experimenting...it's really fun...". Pupils have enquiring minds and are keen to ask and answer questions. For example, in one excellent lesson in Year 2, the teacher skilfully captured their enthusiasm by providing very good opportunities for questioning and demonstration to increase their knowledge of the life cycle of plants. In one Year 5 lesson, two pupils from the Education Support Unit were well integrated into a group from the main class. They responded very positively and enjoyed planting seeds with the help of their teacher.
- 135 Teaching is good overall. At Key Stage 1, all of the lessons were at least good, and at Key Stage 2, eight of ten lessons were of this quality. One excellent lesson was seen at Key Stage 1. Where the teaching was good or better, the teacher shared the purpose of the lesson with pupils at the start of the activity, and linked this with a reminder of what pupils had already learned in previous lessons. This introduction heightened the interest of the pupils and made them keen to learn more. Good classroom routines and high expectations of pupils' behaviour resulted in a good working atmosphere in which pupils were able to learn without disturbance. Where teaching was very good or excellent, the objectives of the lesson were clearly shared with pupils at the start of the lesson and there were opportunities for pupils to offer simple predictions and hypotheses. Pupils were given the opportunity to design their own tests, choose suitable equipment, carry out an experiment, and then make a short presentation of their conclusions at the end of the session and they were allowed to make mistakes. The teacher used clearly focused questions to guide the pupils to analyse where they had gone wrong, and then enabled them to suggest ways of improving their work. Support teachers and assistants are well used and provide valuable support to enable pupils of lower ability and also those pupils for whom English is a second language to take a full part in all activities.
- 136 The curriculum in science is good. Continuity and progression are taken into account in the scheme of work, which is closely related to national guidelines. This is shared by all the primary schools that transfer pupils to the local middle school at the end of Year 5. These schools also provide a valuable forum for curriculum development. The curriculum has been enriched by a series of 'Science Days' when pupils are asked to carry out tasks that involve designing experiments and making decisions. Higher attaining pupils have also been involved in a special project called 'Lifting and Shifting on the Farm' in association with Beauchamp College.
- 137 There are good arrangements for assessing pupils in science. Statutory teacher assessments are made at the end of Key Stage 1, and Qualification and Curriculum Authority tests at the end of Year 4, which provide useful information about pupils' progress. Teachers make assessments at the end of each unit of work, and this information is used to track the progress of individuals and groups. The coordinator has collated a very helpful portfolio of pupils' investigations, which have been moderated by staff.
- 138 Resources in science are satisfactory. The science portfolio contains lists of resources, which can be used to extend and consolidate science knowledge, including multimedia, databases and videos. The Internet links in the computer suite and those shared in classrooms are very useful for research. Sensors are available and have been used to measure temperature. The wild nature area offers good opportunities for environmental studies. Science resources are stored in boxes and trays, but storage space is at a premium. The open plan design of classrooms can place constraints on learning in science. Staff constantly have to work hard to overcome these limitations. Teachers in adjacent areas have to plan practical activities very carefully since space for movement is limited. Also, they try to avoid unnecessary noise when experimenting, as this can be distracting for other classes undertaking 'quiet' activities in adjacent areas.

139 Science is well led by an experienced and capable coordinator. She has produced good documentation including a policy, a development folder and a science portfolio. She has provided workshops to help staff develop skills in scientific enquiry. All of these strategies are having a positive effect on the progress pupils are making.

ART AND DESIGN

140 Standards in art and design are broadly in line with what is expected nationally, and pupils make satisfactory progress. There have been some improvements since the last inspection, but more needs to be done in order to enable pupils to achieve even higher standards particularly at Key Stage 2.

141 At the time of the last inspection attainment in art was in line with what is expected, and progress was generally satisfactory. The quality of teaching was variable, and the policy did not help teachers to plan their lessons. Since then, the coordinator has reviewed the scheme of work, and improved the consistency in teaching and planning across the school. Teachers are now using the non-statutory guidance for art and design to guide their planning. This is resulting in a wider range of experiences being offered, and pupils are achieving better standards. However, this initiative is at an early stage of development, and the school wants raise standards even further.

142 Standards are in line with what is expected nationally at the age of seven and at the age of ten. Seven year olds explore ideas and investigate and use a variety of materials and processes. For example, they observed and discussed the colours, shapes and textures of natural materials they had previously collected, before drawing some of them. They have worked three-dimensionally on sculptures, and used a range of materials to make collages. They are beginning to comment on the work of others, but are not yet sufficiently confident in evaluating their own work and suggesting ways to improve it.

143 By the age of ten, pupils have investigated and worked with a range of materials and processes. They have experimented with woven fabrics, and with techniques such as marbling. They communicate their ideas through careful drawing and painting, and the quality of the work shows care and imagination. However, pupils are sometimes given insufficient opportunities to experiment and develop their own ideas when working on projects.

144 Pupils make satisfactory progress through the school. They gain skills and begin to work confidently with a range of processes. For example, Year 1 pupils experiment with printing and begin to understand how to control the prints they make. By Year 3, pupils are confidently carrying out repeat and overlapping patterns in printing. Skills in drawing and painting are refined, and then used in different contexts through the school. All pupils have access to the curriculum and make similar progress. Pupils with special educational needs are often well supported in lessons so that they can work alongside their peers. The practical nature of the lessons allows them to achieve well. In the best lessons, teachers help pupils with English as an additional language develop their vocabulary and confidence when communicating their observations to others.

145 Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. They are keen to learn and use new ideas and materials. For example, Year 2 pupils were very keen to get started with their drawings of natural materials, and worked with concentration and enjoyment. They cooperate well together and respect each other's views and opinions. For example, pupils in Year 5 helped and supported each other when working on their collages. They concentrated well, and appeared to enjoy what they were doing.

146 The quality of teaching in art and design is satisfactory overall. All lessons were at least good at Key Stage 1, and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. In the best lessons pupils are given the opportunity to explore ideas on a given theme, and encouraged to use these ideas as starting points for their own work. For example, a Year 1 teacher put together a display of pupils' photographs and rubbings of the school building. She added other pictures of buildings, and gave them the opportunity to talk about the shapes and patterns they could see. This gave them lots of ideas for their own work, and resulted in some imaginative and confident drawings. Similarly in Year 2, pupils were given time to observe and talk about the natural materials they had found, before being asked to draw them.

147 Lessons are less successful when pupils are given a restricted framework within which to work. For example, Year 5 pupils were able to produce working sketches for a collage using a range of textiles that

had been collected by the teacher. However, they had little opportunity to experiment and explore their own ideas using these materials, before committing their ideas to paper.

- 148 The curriculum for art and design is satisfactory. Pupils are given a range of opportunities to work with different media and materials. Investigating and making aspects of the curriculum are strong. Knowledge and understanding elements are developing well. For example, pupils are taken to galleries and workshops, and are exploring the artwork of their own and other cultures. These activities make a very valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. Teachers use information and communication technology well, for example in using 'painting' software to explore colour and pattern.
- 149 The school has to work hard to overcome the difficulties presented by the shortage of space for art activities. For example, teachers are restricted by the lack of suitably sized practical areas for art, and the space to store materials. Teachers skilfully adapt their teaching styles to the open plan layout in the main building by careful planning and negotiation with colleagues. Pupils also have good opportunities to develop their art skills in an after school art club. Here pupils are given the opportunity to explore, experiment and design for themselves, and achieve very good standards.
- 150 The weakest parts of the subject lie in the balance between exploring and developing of ideas, and the evaluation and development of work. At Key Stage 2, pupils have insufficient time to allow for all elements of the subject to be experienced fully. Currently teachers are introducing the non-statutory guidance, and are finding it quite difficult to put into practice. This is particularly the case at Key Stage 2, where pupils have previously not experienced the skills they need to approach the work they are given to do.
- 151 The coordinator for art and design sets a high standard in her own teaching and knows what needs to be done to develop the subject in school. As yet, she has not had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in art and design. The school will be evaluating the success of the introduction of curriculum 2000 at the end of this term, in time to make adjustments to the curriculum for next academic year.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 152 Standards are in line with what is expected nationally at the age of seven years and by the age of ten years. At the time of the previous inspection design and technology was considered to be weak because of low expectations, and pupils' lack of research skills. Improvements have been made, but more attention still needs to be given to developing design skills in Years 4 and 5. Unfortunately, the way that the timetable for the older junior pupils is organised doesn't allow enough time for research, and pupils don't achieve as much as they could in this area of their learning. The school is aware of the situation, and is carrying out a review of provision in order to adjust the curriculum for the start of the new academic year. Also, there are significant restraints on the teaching of design and technology because of limited space for practical activities.
- 153 Pupils in Year 2 designed and made doll sized versions of Joseph's 'Coat of many colours'. They successfully made their own paper patterns to act as guides when cutting out the material. They stitched the cloth together, and then decorated them using a range of materials and techniques. These original designs were then recorded on the computer using graphics software. Pupils also recorded that they made the coats, and decided what had been successful, and what could be improved. Many topics are successfully linked to other subjects such as science. For example, they made model vehicles when studying forces in science. They tested and evaluated their designs, and realised they needed bigger wheels on their vehicles for them to work successfully. They show a satisfactory level of skill in making the models, although the standard of finish could be improved. Pupils in Year 1 make good progress in designing and making a moving page for a book based on the story of 'Elmer the Elephant'. Their design and making skills are above average, and this is due to the good quality of the teaching.
- 154 Pupils at Key Stage 2 continue to develop their skills in designing and making. In a lesson in Year 3, pupils were given good opportunities to experiment and find the best techniques and components for making a simple pneumatic system for their 'moving monsters', which they achieved successfully. These pupils have also designed and made their own picture frames and packages, and decided which were the most successful. Although the pupils in Year 4 and Year 5 have made articles such as purses, storybooks and musical instruments, the design and evaluation elements are not covered in sufficient

detail. In many cases, the design consists of a simple picture with few details about the materials or techniques to be used.

- 155 Opportunities for individual learning are restricted by the lack of suitably sized practical areas with benches and tools, and an area for food technology. Teachers skilfully adapt their teaching styles to the open plan layout in the main building by careful planning and negotiation with colleagues. This ensures that noisy practical activities do not interfere with lessons that require quiet study and concentration. Design and technology skills are successfully developed in the after school club where pupils have made models of space models and satellites from construction kits, as part of a 'Young Engineers for Britain' competition.
- 156 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. During the period of the inspection the quality of teaching was good at both key stages. However, the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning confirms that the quality of teaching and learning over time is satisfactory overall. Teachers are introducing the new non-statutory guidelines, and plan appropriate lessons that generally challenge pupils of all abilities. This is already helping to develop pupils' skills and understanding more effectively. In particular, pupils' ability to design and evaluate is improving in response to teachers' better subject knowledge, and good questioning and prompting. The generous levels of staffing in the school ensure that all pupils are well supported and helped to improve their learning. In particular those pupils at Key Stage 1 with English as an additional language are effectively targeted and sensitively guided to understand the work they are given. Unfortunately the shortage of space in the building has limited the opportunities for food technology to be taught regularly.
- 157 The coordinator for the subject is aware of the areas that require improvement. While he has a good level of subject knowledge, he has had little opportunity to work alongside colleagues or to monitor the quality of teaching and learning as priority has been given to the introduction of numeracy and literacy.

GEOGRAPHY

- 158 Pupils exceed the national expectations in geography at the age of seven years. Pupils make good progress, and are above national expectations by the age of ten. Pupils with English as an additional language also make good progress. This is due to the effective use of the bilingual support staff and resources. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, when geography standards were below expectations at both key stages.
- 159 Pupils in Year 2 explore an imaginary island home, and recognise and explain the various geographical features of the landscape. Pupils of all abilities understand the importance of communication and transport. They know the difference between physical and human features, and are able to show them on their maps. Pupils demonstrate awareness of localities beyond their own, and start to use appropriate geographical vocabulary. Simple mapping skills are developed well, and pupils use and draw simple maps. They understand how time and places differ, and how physical features influence climate. Older pupils can talk about environmental issues, and link these to human and physical features within the local landscape. For example, they understand that communities change the environment in many ways including pollution of the air and water. Pupils in Year 5, for example, explore the strategy behind the development of a local road by-pass, and the impact it will have on the surroundings. They develop plans for the local area, and pay particular attention to the social, educational, health and environmental needs of communities.
- 160 Pupils have good attitudes towards geography, and behave well in lessons. They show a high level of interest, work cooperatively in the practical sessions and talk about the work effectively, using appropriate geographical vocabulary. They ask questions in lessons and explain their work to the class when asked. They use the maps and plans provided to develop their knowledge and understanding, applying themselves well, and thinking about the issues involved and the reasons for certain developments.
- 161 Teaching is good at both key stages, with some very good features. The very effective use of resources in all lessons ensured that all pupils were able to learn effectively. Teachers give clear explanations, and challenge pupils understanding by asking questions. Pupils are given good opportunities to speak about their work using appropriate geographical vocabulary. Teachers are aware of the needs of intervals and groups, and provide appropriately challenging activities with the help of the bilingual support staff.

Lessons are very well organised, and teachers use demonstration and experimentation well to challenge thinking. For example, Year 5 pupils were able to explore the concept of coastal erosion through experiments on freezing, and by exploring the effect of weak acid on chalk. These activities are particularly helpful in providing first hand experience for pupils who are still facing difficulties with learning in English.

- 162 The curriculum for geography is good. The curriculum has been improved since the last inspection, and a scheme of work has been devised to support units of work for all age groups. This ensures that pupils who learn at different rates make good progress, as they get older. Visits are well used and are carefully planned. For example, Year 2 pupils visit Hunstanton as part of their study of the seashore. This theme is developed further when Year 5 pupils study coastal features and coastal erosion, during their residential visit to the Isle of Wight. The work in geography develops pupils' growing numeracy skills well, as they use graphs, maps and charts. They are able to interpret these well, and can build their own data bases using spreadsheets. The use of information and communication technology in geographical work is currently being developed for both investigation and presentation of work.
- 163 Geography makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development when they study social and environmental issues. They are encouraged to develop empathy with the needs of different groups and individuals. Pupils are very aware of social and environmental issues, and the ways in which we can change things for the better.
- 164 The coordination of geography is good. In addition to the new scheme of work and curriculum framework, there has been effective action planning and considerable attention to improving resources and frequency of educational visits. The weaknesses noted in the previous inspection have been addressed very well, and progress since the last inspection has been very good.

HISTORY

- 165 Pupils meet national expectations in history by the age of seven. By the age of ten, the majority of pupils are achieving standards that are above national expectations. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress, while those at Key Stage 2 make good progress. These progress rates are consistent for all groups of pupils because of the careful attention given to supporting understanding for pupils who learn at different rates. This is a clear improvement since the last inspection, especially at Key Stage 2. The previous inspection report stated that standards at that time were mainly in line with expectations throughout the school.
- 166 As pupils get older, they develop a secure knowledge about specific periods of British and European history such as Ancient Greeks, the Victorians, and the Tudors. Pupils in Year 2, study the work of Florence Nightingale's. They are encouraged investigate how nursing provision was changed as a result of her influence and work. Pupils in Year 4 and Year 5, prepare well organised and interesting folders about the Tudors and the Ancient Greeks. Their studies range over important issues such as language, culture and social change. They pursue individual investigations and personal research, using a range of sources and references. Their work is presented in chapters with effective use of maps, timelines, illustrations and diagrams. They use their literacy skills well, and prepare glossaries and bibliographies to support their investigations.
- 167 Pupils have positive attitudes to history, enjoy their work, and put considerable effort into presenting their work well. For example, during class discussions about bias and prejudice during World War II, they develop empathy with young evacuees who were often separate from their families. Pupils are curious about events from the past, ask pertinent questions and seek information from a range of documents and other sources at their disposal. Behaviour in lessons is very good.
- 168 The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1, and very good at Key Stage 2. The key feature underpinning the quality of the teaching observed is good planning with clear learning intentions, which are shared with the pupils. Teachers focus well on what they want pupils to learn, and provide a very good range of artefacts for pupils to examine. For example, pupils in Year 1 carefully examined a wide range of toys to look for evidence of age and use. They used the evidence to draw simple conclusions based on their observations. Year 4 pupils were able to see original documents about evacuation, and used these

to collect first hand information before undertaking some descriptive and empathic writing. Support staff are used well. They are involved at the planning stage and provide effective leadership of groups in the classroom. Language staff are well used to support pupils with English as an additional language. They are familiar with the content of lessons and the teaching methods being used. For example, they successfully enabled pupils to empathise with the plight of evacuees during the lesson about the Second World War.

- 169 Teachers use their assessment skills well, and plan suitable work for groups of pupils of different ability. They make good use of drama to explore roles, and use diagrams and time-lines effectively to support lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Higher attaining pupils are challenged to use a very good range of historical sources. Pupils respond enthusiastically, are able to develop simple hypotheses about events in the past. This is particularly effective in Years 4 and 5 where teachers increase the level of challenge as the topic continues; setting high expectations that pupils will use the knowledge they have gained in previous work. This ensures that pupils develop a good sense of chronology, recognising that the past time can be divided into periods with similarities and differences between them. Teachers enjoy very good relationships with their pupils and give very clear information, guidance and feedback to individuals and groups in both class work and written work.
- 170 The history curriculum is good. It has been restructured within a new scheme of work since the last inspection, and offers clearly defined units of work for each year group. The teachers have embraced these units with enthusiasm and vigour, and the coordinator has developed a suitable range of visits to historical sites to support work in the classroom. These are very effective in making the history accessible to all children. For example, younger pupils visit a toy museum to develop their understanding of how toys and games have developed since their great grandparents were alive. Older pupils visit Hampton Court to develop their understanding of the Tudors. Practical investigative work is a significant strength of the curriculum, and pupils are gaining good experience at exploring evidence and suggesting what it might mean. This was a weakness at the time of the previous inspection, and has been successfully addressed. The use of literacy and numeracy skills is built into the expectations for history, while information technology as a source for information or for presentation of work is currently being developed effectively. The history curriculum makes good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the consideration of social issues, and the reference to cultures in other times and places.
- 171 Coordination of history is very good. Development planning has been thorough and effective. In addition to restructuring of the curriculum, there has been considerable monitoring and guidance to help staff improve their teaching. A portfolio of work has been prepared which shows the range of responses to be expected from pupils of different levels of ability. Progress since the last inspection has been good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 172 Standards in information and communication technology at the end of Key Stage 1 meet those expected nationally. At Key Stage 2 standards are good. Requirements on schools have changed considerably since the last inspection, and the school has successfully kept abreast of these developments.
- 173 The new computer suite is having a significant, positive effect on the development of pupils' skills. All classes are allocated a session during the week when they use the computers to support work in other areas of the curriculum. In addition, in Year 4 and Year 5, there are special computer skills lessons given by the coordinator. Pupils also benefit from having access to computers in the classrooms, so that skills learned in the computer suite can be used in other lessons.
- 174 Progress is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1. By the age of seven, the scrutiny of pupils' work shows that pupils are developing their skills with text by writing sentences, and using different fonts to write captions for pictures. They have used a database and can present data in simple tables. During discussions with pupils in Year 2, they described how they could draw and 'fill' enclosed shapes with colour, for example to print 'Joseph's coat of many colours'. Pupils could remember how to use a programmable floor robot. Mouse and keyboard skills are developed well in Year 2 mathematics lessons, and a group of higher ability pupils could satisfactorily enter instructions for following a route on a treasure

map. In a Year 2 English lesson, two groups of pupils used the computers to choose words to fit into a sentence, which they then recognised and spoken by the computer.

- 175 By the age of ten, pupils have made good progress. They are more sophisticated in their use of computers in a wide variety of tasks. Pupils can use word processing for different styles of writing such as letters, stories, and posters using appropriate spacing, font size, colour and alignment. They confidently use spreadsheets to record data, and some pupils can enter a formula. For example, pupils use databases in history to enter data about monarchs. Pupils can combine pictures with writing when using drawing and painting programs to illustrate stories, and are developing their research skills by using the Internet or a CD-ROM. For example, they can find maps, or search for information about planets, and then insert pictures from these sources into written work. Pupils are selective about the information they use. The portfolio of pupils' work includes examples of experiments using temperature sensors to find out which materials are good insulators. Pupils can control a screen cursor by designing sets of instructions to follow a pre-designed path.
- 176 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. A pupil with a visual impairment is learning keyboard skills through touch-typing. Classroom assistants have had some training in the use of the computer suite. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress. Appropriate attention is paid to the careful use of specialist vocabulary, and pupils are well supported in class. They enjoy using computers, and are very keen to do well.
- 177 Throughout school pupils enjoy using the new computer suite as well as the classroom computers. They work happily in pairs, helping each other and discussing work sensibly. Pupils display confidence in using their skills, and work hard to solve any difficulties they encounter.
- 178 There were limited opportunities to see the direct teaching of information and communication technology during the inspection, but in the three lessons seen at Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching was judged to be good overall. No direct teaching of information and communication technology was observed at Key Stage 1, but additional evidence shows that teaching is satisfactory. This judgement is supported by observations of pupils using computers, a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' plans, and through discussion with pupils. Teachers have a good understanding of the software and are able to intervene effectively to reinforce subject skills. Technical language is used well to support the development of pupils' understanding. Teachers use questions well to quickly establish what pupils know and understand, and use these responses to target their teaching effectively. This enables all pupils to make good progress during lessons. Pupils are well managed, and their own enthusiasm is an important factor contributing to the good progress seen in the lessons.
- 179 There is good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils including those with special educational needs, and for those with English as an additional language. Pupils are well supported and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment, achieving standards that are close to those expected of pupils of similar ages.
- 180 The quality and range of the curriculum is good. The school has introduced the Qualification and Curriculum Authority guidelines, and are currently identifying links with other subjects as part of the Curriculum 2000. Additional opportunities are provide by an after school 'master class' taken by a specialist from Beauchamp College. This provides very good opportunities to develop control technology.
- 181 Assessment is satisfactory overall. Teachers use ongoing assessment to support pupils' learning and plan subsequent work for them. Assessment information is used to track progress and for analysing the performance of particular individuals, groups or cohorts. The school has completed a portfolio of pupils' work to illustrate the range and quality of pupils' learning.
- 182 The provision for the new computer suite is very good. This is well used by all pupils in the school. Year 3 pupils are located in temporary classrooms, and have no direct access to the Internet. However, they are allocated more time in the computer suite. This is having a positive effect on the motivation of pupils, and on the standards that they are able to achieve. There is a good range of other equipment, including a digital camera, which are well used.

183 The coordinator of the subject is experienced and provides very good leadership. There is a clear policy, which was developed in partnership with staff. She has overseen the New Opportunities Fund Training, the introduction of the new computer suite, and has managed the development in the subject very successfully.

MUSIC

184 Standards in music have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils meet national expectations in music by the age of seven. By the age of ten years, pupils achieve standards that exceed those of pupils of similar age. The quality of singing by the choir and some pupils in Year 5 is well above average. The school is continuing to maintain standards for the younger pupils that are similar to those at the previous inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is good for all the pupils, including those with special educational needs. Teaching for the older pupils is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection where teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall. This improvement is largely due to the enthusiasm of the specialist subject leader. Also, the school effectively uses teachers' subject skills, and the good scheme of work. The teaching of music is carefully monitored across the school, and the subject leader provides support for less confident colleagues.

185 The quality and range of the curriculum is good. The school successfully promotes a broad, rich and balanced curriculum. It covers the areas of listening, appraising, composing and performing elements of music effectively. This enables the pupils to achieve well and make good progress in learning new skills and techniques. The school enjoys a good working relationship with specialist instrumental teachers. This ensures that the work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and gives effective support to work in lessons. Many pupils from Year 3 to Year 5 take advantage of these lessons. This makes a valuable contribution to the development of their musical skills and understanding. An example of this was seen when a pupil played the clarinet in a school assembly. This is a further improvement since the previous inspection.

186 By the age of seven, the majority of pupils sing tunefully, with enjoyment and enthusiasm. They practise diligently, and work hard to improve their musical skills. Effective teaching of basic skills ensures that pupils make good progress. They have a good sense of pulse and rhythm, and follow the teacher's instructions to stop and start accurately. By the age of ten, pupils make very effective use of their musical skills when they compose music. This is a direct result of very good teaching that successfully promotes high standards. Pupils sing confidently in harmony, display careful diction, phrasing and breath control and have a good awareness of how to use dynamics. By Year 5, the pupils maintain accurate pitch, sing enthusiastically and show above average awareness of pitch, for example, during the very moving rendition of 'Blowing in the Wind'.

187 All pupils make good progress in their learning. The rate of learning increases as pupils' progress to Year 5. They learn new skills effectively, and build carefully on their previous knowledge and understanding. All pupils improve their ability to sing melodically and rhythmically and to play a range of instruments. By the age of ten the pupils listen carefully and identify different instruments playing. Most pupils persevere and work hard to improve their singing and instrumental playing skills. This is a direct result of the enthusiastic and knowledgeable teaching. Many pupils develop their ability to play tuned instruments well. For example, they make good progress in developing their ability to play the clarinet accurately. The pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make very good progress in developing and increasing their musical skills.

188 Pupils throughout the school respond with enjoyment and enthusiasm to music. They enjoy their singing and playing, and are eager to learn new skills. All pupils respect the efforts of others and respond politely to their teachers. The provision for pupils from the Education Support Unit is excellent. Pupils are very carefully and sensitively included in main school music lessons. This develops the pupils' awareness of community and increases the self-esteem of the pupils from the unit. By the age of seven, the pupils concentrate hard and persevere to improve their skills. They concentrate very hard on improving their performance when they sing and play instruments. By the age of ten, the pupils show high levels of determination and perseverance. This was evident in the Tabla class and during the school choir practice. Pupils listened very carefully to the teacher, concentrated very well, and were determined to achieve high standards in all they did.

189 The quality of teaching in music is very good overall. At Key Stage 1, two lessons were observed, one was good and one was satisfactory. At Key Stage 2, one lesson was good and two lessons were excellent. The school makes effective use of individual teachers' skills. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers capture pupils' enthusiasm for the subject, and have high expectations of achievement. In the very best lessons, teachers use lively, interesting and enthusiastic approaches to their teaching, for example, when working with the school choir. This approach enthuses and motivates pupils to learn, work hard and achieve well above average standards. These activities are challenging, and are carefully matched to the National Curriculum programmes of study. The school makes very effective use of specialist knowledge amongst its teachers. This makes a positive contribution to the standards of pupils' singing. Music makes a very good contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. For example, many pupils participate in the choir and Japanese drum club. These activities further enrich their cultural experiences, enhance pupils' skills and abilities, and have a significant impact on increasing pupils' confidence in their own abilities. Work in music makes a very strong contribution to developing the pupils' cultural awareness and community links. An example of this is the lunchtime Tabla class, which is taught by a member of the Sikh community.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

190 Pupils at both key stages achieve standards that are above average. The picture was similar at the previous inspection. It is not possible to make any judgements on the standards in gymnastics through the school because no lessons were observed. However, over the period of a year the planning shows that pupils have good opportunities to experience this aspect of physical education. The focus of the curriculum for this term is on dance, swimming, games, athletics and outdoor and adventurous activities. The school has worked hard to maintain a wide variety of activities for pupils during and after school hours. A good range of equipment supports the opportunities pupils have to develop both independent and team skills. The teachers at Key Stage 2 are currently introducing outdoor and adventurous activities for the pupils, and are using the new non-statutory guidelines. Progress here is satisfactory, and pupils achieve average standards. However, progress in all other areas of the subject continues to be good at both key stages.

191 By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils confidently swim the four-metre width of the school pool unaided. Swimming is a particular strength of the school, and it is fortunate in having a small learner pool for the regular use of pupils from the Foundation Stage to Year 3. At least half of the pupils are already beginning to develop the correct techniques and style in their arm and leg movements, and all can get in and out of the pool competently. In a Year 1 games lesson, pupils work with good levels of confidence either alone or together. They have a good awareness of space, and are well coordinated. Most pupils can bounce, catch, dribble and control the ball with good levels of skill and energy. They practise hard to improve their performance and listen carefully to the instructions of the teacher.

192 During Key Stage 2 pupils practise to master their skills in dance, swimming, games, athletics and outdoor and adventurous activities. By the age of ten years, pupils show high levels of commitment and maturity in their dance lessons. They are very keen to perform the 'Dandy-Ras' stick dance, and move expressively to the music. Good levels of creativity are shown as the pupils control their sequences of movements and the patterns with the sticks. In athletics, Year 5 pupils work hard with sustained energy, to develop their skills in jumping and throwing. They are well aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies, and the importance of working safely together. They pay particular attention to the demonstrations from their teachers, or their peers, to improve the quality and precision of their own skills. This was also noted as strength at the previous inspection. Two-thirds of the pupils can swim confidently for a sustained periods of time in the twelve metre length of the pool, unaided. They are all well on the way to achieving the twenty-five metres required by the end of Key Stage 2.

193 The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching is very good at Key Stage 1, and all lessons were of very good quality. At Key Stage 2, just over half of the lessons were of good quality. There were no unsatisfactory lessons observed during the inspection. The main reason for the better quality teaching at Key Stage 1 is the very well planned lessons that take pupils forward in their learning, and the high expectations that are set. In all lessons observed the teachers had very clear procedures for safe practices, and the lesson were well managed and controlled. The pace was brisk, and pupils are given sufficient time for warm up and cool down activities. Very positive feedback and encouragement is given,

which helps pupils to work even harder and acquire new skills. Boys and girls work happily together, listen carefully to instructions, and in almost all cases show a high level of consideration for others. There are excellent opportunities for equal access to the curriculum. Whenever possible, the pupils from the Educational Support Unit join the mainstream classes for their lessons. This integration is very successfully managed so that the pupils are secure and well supported in the lesson. Others who have specific physical difficulties also receive additional help in the lesson. This was particularly well done in a Year 1 games lesson, when the teaching assistant worked specifically on ball skills with a small group of pupils with poor co-ordination. The school is very committed to celebrating the wide range of cultures within the school, and the recent focus on Indian dance is providing very high levels of interest and motivation for the older pupils in the school. Not only do they perform in school, but also regularly present their dances to the wider community.

194 The school hall is suitable for most activities. The school grounds provide good facilities with both hard and grassed areas. In addition, most of the pupils at Key Stage 2 have the opportunity for outdoor and adventurous pursuits when participating in residential visits. Assessment of pupils' swimming ability is good. However, there are no formal procedures for assessing how well pupils are performing in areas such as gymnastics or games. The coordinator for the subject is very experienced and highly committed to providing a very good range of out of school activities and clubs.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

195 Standards at both key stages are above those expect the expectation of the locally agreed syllabus. These are similar standards to those found in the last inspection.

196 Progress in religious education is good throughout the school. Pupils are gaining a good knowledge of a variety of religious beliefs including the Christian faith. This contributes to the harmony that exists between the different cultures within school. Spiritual awareness is developed well, particularly in the older pupils. When stories are told, the feelings associated with them are explored with the pupils. Pupils in Year 1, learn that religions have special days, such as Shabbat. In Year 2, pupils learn about the stories Jesus told, and they have made illustrated books about 'The Good Samaritan'. Pupils' sentences underneath their pictures show they are sensitive to situations in which others might find themselves. By the time pupils are ten, they know about the main events and stories in range of major religions, such as Islam. They have increased their understanding of the significance symbols and religious stories, and can relate these to their own faiths.

197 The quality of teaching is very good overall. There were limited opportunities to see lessons at Key Stage 1, and the single lesson seen was satisfactory. At Key Stage 2, three lessons were seen; two were excellent and one was satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to express their ideas and listen to those of others during discussions. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are fully involved in lessons, and make good progress. Some excellent teaching in Year 4 and Year 5 was seen during specialist afternoons. In one lesson the teacher began with meditation. Pupils closed their eyes and under the expert guidance of the teacher, reflected silently on things that they wished to care about in the world. In another lesson, pupils were writing a diary of 'The week before Easter' in Jesus' time. The teacher conveyed how Jesus might have been feeling through dramatic presentations. This engaged the pupils' interest and enthusiasm, and helped them relate these feelings to their own lives. Subsequently, pupils composed a short play where they were able to show their own feelings of anger and resentment.

198 Pupils' attitudes to religious education are very good. The school places considerable importance on respecting the beliefs of others, and pupils treat adults and each other with care and respect. Pupils' interest and enjoyment in the subject are apparent in their involvement and interest in lessons. They listen respectfully during assemblies and answer questions readily. In a lesson in Year 1, which involved the whole year group, pupils concentrated well even when space was limited.

199 There is a rich curriculum, with religious education having a high profile in school. Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Festival days are celebrated regularly, with lively and colourful photographic records kept by the school. Parents play a large part on these days. Local religious leaders, tabla musicians and Indian dancers make regular visits to the school. The curriculum is further enriched by visits to buildings used by a range of religions as

places of worship. There are satisfactory arrangements assessing pupils achievements, and for monitoring the progress of different individuals and groups. Pupils' achievements are also recorded in their records of achievement.

200 Resources for the subject are good. A comprehensive list includes web pages, useful multimedia, and videos. However, the open plan accommodation often makes it difficult to have periods of calm and of reflection, especially when other classes are pursuing practical activities.

201 The coordinator provides good leadership. There is a very good range of learning opportunities, and teachers are currently developing the scheme of work alongside the requirements of the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus. A useful portfolio of pupils' work has been collated by the coordinator, which illustrates pupils' achievements in all areas of the subject.