

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **RAVENSDALE JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Devonshire Drive, Mickleover, Derby

LEA area: City of Derby

Unique reference number: 112760

Headteacher: David Cooper

Reporting inspector: Mike Harrison  
5902

Dates of inspection: 10<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> January 2000

Inspection number: 191231

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior School
School category:	County
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Devonshire Drive Mickleover Derby
Postcode:	DE3 5HE
Telephone number:	01332 512373
Fax number:	
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Saunders
Date of previous inspection:	20 – 24 January 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mike Harrison	Registered inspector	Information technology	Characteristics
		Religious education	Improvement
		English as an additional language	Management
Gillian Marsland	Lay inspector		Standards (attitudes)
			Care for pupils
			Partnership with parents
Sheila Mawer	Team inspector	Science	Teaching
		Art	
		Design and technology	
		Equal opportunities	
Philip Gadsby	Team inspector	Mathematics	Standards (results)
		Music	
		Physical education	
		Special educational needs	
Margaret Leah	Team inspector	English	Curriculum
		Geography	
		History	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Ravensdale is a large junior school for children from 7 to 11 years old sited in a sought-after residential suburb of Derby. The vast majority of the 316 predominantly white pupils are well supported at home. Only two percent of pupils are entitled to free school meals which is well below the national average. Two percent of pupils have statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) which is around that found in other schools. The school has sixteen pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), but only four of these are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The attendance rate at the school is well above the national average and there is very little unauthorised absence.

Pupils transfer from the infant school on the same site and their attainment on entry is above average according to the results of national tests and tasks.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a friendly, caring school which is successful in achieving its primary aim of creating good relationships which result in pupils having positive attitudes to learning. Pupils achieve good results in national tests, at least equal to those attained in similar schools. In these tests significant numbers of pupils are able to demonstrate skills and knowledge which are two years above that expected of 11 year olds nationally, but the school is not effective in providing an enhanced curriculum and high quality teaching so that more able pupils can show this very good level of performance in such areas as information technology, art, music and the humanities. However, teaching is satisfactory overall, there is almost no pupil absenteeism and virtually all pupils are learning at a sound pace. Good progress is made by the majority of pupils with special needs and those for whom English is an additional language.

The school cares very well for all its pupils, consults parents regularly on many aspects of school life and keeps them informed about their child's progress, enlisting their support through fund raising and work in school. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The head, teaching and non-teaching staff and governors strive to work closely as a team. Sound leadership and management and carefully managed finances provide at least satisfactory value for money

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

- Provides well for pupils' social, cultural and moral development resulting in well behaved pupils who are keen to learn, work well together and have positive attitudes to school
- Gives good supports to both pupils with special educational needs and to those with English as an additional language so that they can benefit from the curriculum and achieve success
- Achieves good results in national tests for English, mathematics and science
- Cares well for all its pupils and achieves very good levels of attendance
- Consults parents, acts on their suggestions and enlists their help

#### **What could be improved**

- The achievement of all pupils, particularly the more able, across the whole curriculum, rather than just part of it
- The range of lively, varied, well-focused teaching which challenges all pupils and increases the degree of participation within lessons
- The influence of subject coordinators on the improvement of teaching and learning
- The methods by which the impact of management and teaching staff on pupil achievement can be judged

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in January 1997 and since that time has made several improvements. The curricular provision in information technology and in art satisfies the requirements of the National Curriculum and pupils are now no longer below the standard found in other schools in these subjects. Word processing, singled out previously as particularly poor, is now well developed, as is the challenge to extend children's thinking in many mathematics lessons. Coordinators have been appointed for all areas of the curriculum; longer-term financial planning is in place; reports to parents have been revised and improved and parents are kept much better informed about the school's curricular provision. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has dropped from 13% to 7%. However, the need for teachers to develop a wider range of teaching strategies, as highlighted in the previous report, still remains. Indeed the previous finding that 14% of teaching was very good and excellent has dropped in this inspection to 5%. The previous inspectors' findings that monitoring of teaching did not centre sufficiently on the impact on pupils' achievement has not improved, nor has the school's provision for spiritual development. The school has responded to the previous inspection's concern about teachers' range of teaching styles through training in Summer of 1999, as set out in the previous action plan. This training has therefore not yet impacted upon the quality of teaching. The system for the appraisal of staff, which was present in 1997, now no longer operates, although the current school improvement plan forecasts its development.

The school is on line to achieve or exceed its targets for pupil attainment at the end of Key Stage 2.

The school has maintained its high level of results in national tests and therefore the balance of judgements is that the school has made no more than satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. It does however have the capacity to be effective in focusing change in the identified areas of priority outlined in this report.

## STANDARDS

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

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

Pupils perform well in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2. In the 1999 tests, both in English and mathematics, the percentage of pupils who reached the expected level (level 4), was well above the national average and those reaching level 5, above the national average. In the science tests pupils attained above the national average for all schools and achieved results broadly in line with those for similar schools.

The school has maintained levels of attainment above the national average over the last three years. The school's targets for its present Year 6 pupils project a slightly lower level of attainment for the next national end of Key Stage 2 tests. This cohort has experienced a degree of movement of pupils in and out which is above average for the school. This has had a detrimental effect on levels of attainment in the year group. Inspection evidence in English suggests that the targets are realistic, although in mathematics the targets appear low and the school should set slightly higher targets, including the percentage who will achieve higher levels.

Inspection findings confirm the good standards indicated by the English, mathematics and science tests. Standards in reading are above those found nationally and attainment in speaking and listening is very high. Attainment in writing is satisfactory overall. Standards in handwriting are inconsistent between classes. In numeracy, pupils show high levels of understanding and in the use of mental calculation strategies and use appropriate mathematical vocabulary. The standards of numeracy of the highest attaining pupils are particularly impressive and teaching is challenging them to extend their thinking, which represents an improvement since the school's previous inspection. Pupils have a good grasp of scientific vocabulary and a broad and secure base of scientific knowledge. More able pupils are limited in their ability to plan, carry out and evaluate their own investigations because they are not given much opportunity.

Standards in art and information technology are satisfactory, which represents an improvement from the previous inspection when children were unable to demonstrate skills and knowledge in these subjects to the same degree as pupils in other schools. Attainment in Religious Education meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Satisfactory levels of attainment have been maintained in history, geography, music and physical education. Overall, although the level of pupils' achievements is satisfactory, there is not a culture of high achievement in subjects beyond English, mathematics and science. In these other subjects standards are not yet high enough.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	The pupils' attitudes to the school are very good. They clearly enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic, interested and involved in most activities. This has a positive effect on their progress.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in the classrooms, assemblies and around the school is very good. The pupils walk calmly throughout the building and are polite and courteous to visitors.
Personal development and relationships	The personal development of the pupils is good and relationships between the pupils and the pupils and staff are very positive. Pupils respect the impact their actions have on others.
Attendance	Attendance throughout the school is very good. For 1998/99 it was well above the national average.

The vast majority of pupils are positive about learning and sustain effort and concentration for long periods of time. Pupils are willing to share resources and ideas and work well together in pairs and groups. Pupils play together co-operatively in the playground at breaks and lunchtime. No challenging or oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection and the pupils know and understand the school rules and the reasons for them. Pupils are encouraged to take initiative such as raising money through events for charity, act as prefects and the older pupils take care of the younger ones.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	N/a	N/a	satisfactory

*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.*

Ninety three percent of the teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory or better, over one third was good or very good. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs and for those who have English as an additional language is good. Seven percent of the teaching is unsatisfactory. The strongest teaching challenges pupils to modify and improve their performance in a highly focused learning environment. Frequently, given the opportunities, pupils rise to the occasion in applying intellectual, physical and creative effort in their work and the high quality of teaching in the very good lessons observed has a significant positive impact on their progress. Pupils do not make such progress whenever teachers use uninspiring photocopied worksheets, do not intervene to promote or challenge pupils' thinking or where the degree of pupils' participation in the lesson is low. Unsatisfactory teaching was observed in only four lessons which were confined to Years 3 and 4 in physical education (PE), mathematics, art and religious education (RE). Learning was limited in these lessons.

The teaching of English and literacy is satisfactory while the teaching of mathematics and numeracy is good. Most teachers have a satisfactory grasp of the requirements of the literacy hour and a good understanding of numeracy strategies. They teach the basic skills competently and teaching in numeracy challenges higher attaining pupils to extend their thinking and understanding.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school curriculum is sufficiently broad to meet all statutory requirements. Sex education is taught along with personal safety and drugs awareness. However, the time devoted to English and mathematics, which is much more than in the vast majority of other junior schools, restricts the opportunities for interesting and valuable experiences elsewhere in the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Standards achieved by pupils with special educational needs are good and they make good progress in their learning. This is a strength of the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils whose home language is not English made good progress well with the help of well chosen in-class, school-wide and outside additional help.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' social, moral and cultural development is good. The school promotes its clear and relevant aims successfully, particularly through the development of good relationships. Parents and inspectors believe that children have a good sense of right and wrong.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good educational and personal support and guidance for the pupils. The teachers know their pupils well, have good relationships with them and respond positively to their needs. This contributes to the positive ethos of the school.

The curriculum meets statutory requirements although a much higher percentage of the teaching time than that in most junior classes nationally, is allocated to English and mathematics. This reflects the school's strong commitment to maintaining its high standards in national tests, but is less supportive in raising standards in the broad range of other subjects, which are satisfactory rather than good. The quality of the curriculum in geography and history also suffers in overlong teaching sessions and the range of activities within such lessons does not always captivate pupils' interest.

The majority of parents in the survey felt that children did not get as interesting a range of activities outside of lessons as they thought they should. During their time at the Ravensdale, there are opportunities for the pupils to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, although the majority are only offered to pupils in Years 5 and 6.

The arrangements the school has for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. Records tracking their performance in tests have been introduced for each child since the start of the 1999/2000 academic year. Test and assessment information is analysed to highlight areas of the curriculum which might need further development. Curriculum coordinators for English and Mathematics are beginning to use this information to inform and guide planning in these subjects. Coordinators in other subjects will need to develop equivalent systems to track pupil's progress.

Procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are good. The processes are underpinned by the relationship between staff and pupils. The headteacher is the designated person responsible for child protection and staff are aware of procedures. The school follows local authority guidelines. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides sensitive leadership giving a clear educational direction for the school and holds high personal standards. Staff with subject management responsibilities are not sufficiently involved in raising the standards of teaching and learning and achievement within their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	A well organised and experienced governing body with a full complement of members with a high level of expertise is committed to and supportive of the school. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities
The school's evaluation of its performance	Diagnosis of the school's strengths and weaknesses through the analysis of results in national tests, and through an item by item analysis of non-statutory tests taken throughout the school has begun to lead to effective action designed to secure improvements.
The strategic use of resources	Being allocated by Derby LEA one of the lowest levels of income per pupil and consequently one of the highest pupil/teacher ratios compared to the rest of England, the governors and headteacher have skilfully used the funds available to maximise the benefit to pupils.

Strengths in the leadership and management offered by the headteacher include an ability to achieve the school's primary aims, such as creating a happy caring environment in which pupils want to learn, coupled with a toughness and willingness to confront extreme cases of poor performance by staff. However there are no effective performance management systems to further the objectives of the school; coordinators are not supported so that they can improve teaching, learning and achievement in their subjects; and, there is no rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching methods.

The governing body and headteacher are aware of and satisfactorily apply principles of best value. They take a keen interest in the way the school is perceived locally. Parents are frequently consulted about areas of school and contracts are often awarded on the basis of competition.

Despite using its accommodation imaginatively the space available is still barely adequate for teaching and storage of equipment. The quantity and range of resources for learning is satisfactory. There are sufficient computers but they are underused, one reason for which is the lack of appropriate software.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school and the pupils are well behaved</li> <li>• The progress pupils make</li> <li>• The school expects children to do their best</li> <li>• The school helps children to become mature and responsible</li> <li>• Good teaching and good management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the range of activities provided by school</li> <li>• the amount of information regarding my child's progress</li> <li>• the way the school works with parents</li> <li>• the amount of homework children are given to do</li> </ul>

The parents' views of the school are that it is approachable, responds to their concerns, teaches the pupils right from wrong, and promotes positive behaviour and a clear understanding of rules. This view was confirmed by the inspection. Although not all parents agreed in their responses to the parents' questionnaire, inspectors found that the school maintains good effective links with parents who provide good support and raise significant amounts of money. Parental involvement therefore makes a good contribution to the work of the school.

The questionnaire survey showed a third of parents were unhappy about the way the school works in partnership with parents and that they felt that they are not well informed about their children's progress. However, the evidence gained from scrutiny of the school's extensive records of consultation with parents; the access parents have to teachers on three occasions per year alongside the school's open-door policy, a scrutiny of the reports sent to parents; the evidence from the parents' meeting which detailed many recent improvements; the help given by parents in school, and the amount of monies raised by parents contradict this view. The same survey claimed the school was approachable and therefore there is no evidence to substantiate the negative views.

A good homework policy has been agreed with parents, although the results of a consultation exercise show that a few wanted more work and a few wanted less. Parents consistently complete the homework diary.

The inspection confirms the views of the parents' meeting that information about the school's curriculum and information about individual pupil's progress has improved since the previous inspection.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. Pupils perform well in the national tests for eleven year olds, at the end of Key Stage 2. The results of the tests have shown a trend of improvement over the last three years which is similar to that found in schools nationally. Pupils enter the school demonstrating high levels of attainment as measured by the tests they took as seven year olds at the end of Key Stage 1. The school's rate of improvement in test performance is satisfactory.
2. In the 1999 tests in English, the percentage of pupils who reached the expected level, level 4, of the National Curriculum, was well above the national average. The percentage who reached the higher level, level 5, was above the national average. When compared with schools with similar characteristics, the percentage of pupils who reached the expected level was above the average. The percentage who reached the higher level was broadly in line with the average for similar schools. Boys did slightly better than girls at the higher level, which is unusual and contrary to what is found in most schools nationally.
3. In mathematics, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in the tests was well above the national average. The percentage achieving the higher level (level 5) was above the national average. When compared with schools with similar characteristics, the percentage of pupils was broadly in line with the average. Girls did slightly better than boys in the tests, which is in line with national figures.
4. In the science tests pupils attained above the national average for all schools and achieved results broadly in line with those for similar schools both for the percentage attaining the higher and expected National Curriculum levels. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls in the science tests.
5. The standards achieved in the 1999 tests in English, mathematics and science represent a trend for the school which has maintained levels of attainment above the national average over the last three years. The school's targets for its present Year 6 pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, project a slightly lower level of attainment for the next national tests. Inspection evidence in English and science suggests that the targets are a realistic reflection of the number of pupils who will reach the expected National Curriculum level 4. In mathematics the targets are too low and the school should challenge itself further and set slightly higher targets, including for the percentage who will achieve higher levels. This cohort has experienced a degree of mobility, with the movement of pupils in and out, which is above average for the school. This has had a detrimental effect on levels of attainment in the year group. Teacher's assessment of pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 reflects accurately the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected level 4 in the tests but underestimates attainment at the higher level 5 in English, mathematics and science.

6. Inspection findings from the observation of English lessons in the school, of the work pupils have completed and discussion with pupils about their work, confirm the above average standards of achievement indicated by the tests. Standards in reading are above those found nationally and attainment in speaking and listening is well above average. Attainment in writing matches the national average with spelling and handwriting found to be of a high standard. Opportunities for pupils to write at length are limited. The organisation of the curriculum doesn't give them enough time to complete extended writing tasks. In particular, higher attaining pupils are unchallenged by the too frequent use of worksheets, where only short or one-word written responses to tasks are required.
7. Inspectors found the achievement of pupils in mathematics to be above average. This is particularly true of pupils' achievements in numeracy, where they show high levels of attainment in the understanding and use of mental calculation strategies. Pupils use appropriate mathematical vocabulary. The standards of the highest attaining pupils are particularly impressive and teaching is challenging them to extend their thinking, which represents an improvement since the school's previous inspection. When pupils are given tasks which require them to use their knowledge and understanding of mathematics to carry out their own investigations or to solve problems in which answers are open to different interpretations, their attainment is average. Teachers do not plan enough lessons in which pupils carry out this kind of work. Pupils can apply their numeracy skills in other subjects, but again an insufficient number of tasks are planned in which they have to do so.
8. Pupils' achievement in science was found, during the inspection, to be above average. By the end of the key stage they have a good grasp of scientific vocabulary and a broad and secure base of scientific knowledge. They are developing the ability to carry out investigations using predictions and testing. They know how to vary factors when carrying out tests, in order to identify cause and effect. They base their conclusions on a good understanding of scientific principles. Teachers' planning does not sufficiently take into account the needs of more able pupils, allowing them to plan, carry out and evaluate their own investigations.
9. Inspection evidence shows pupil's achievements in English, mathematics and science to be good, representing satisfactory progress in their learning. By the time they reach the end of the key stage, achievement is satisfactory in all other subjects and pupils overall make satisfactory progress in their learning. Standards in art match those expected of pupils aged 11, which represents an improvement from the previous inspection, when they were found to be unsatisfactory. Pupil's competence in information technology meets the standards set out in the National Curriculum and is line with national expectations. This improves on the standards found in the previous inspection. Attainment in Religious Education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Attainment in history, geography, music and physical education have been maintained at nationally expected levels. Given the above average levels of attainment, particularly in English, insufficient demands are made on all pupils to demonstrate higher standards in these subjects.
10. The school's system for coordinating parts of the curriculum not subject to national testing has had little impact on standards of achievement. The school undertakes little monitoring of how well pupils actually perform.

11. Standards achieved by pupils with special educational needs are good and they make good progress in their learning. This is a strength of the school. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve satisfactory standards across the curriculum and make progress in their learning which is comparable to that for all pupils. Japanese pupils make good progress in their acquisition of English.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

12. The pupils' attitudes to the school are very good. They clearly enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic, interested and involved in activities. This has a positive effect on their progress.
13. During the inspection, pupils in a Year 5 literacy lesson were seen eagerly discussing traditional tales and participating in question and answer sessions. Pupils sustain effort and concentration for long periods of time. They are willing to share resources and ideas and work together well in pairs and groups, for instance in science investigations.
14. Behaviour in the classrooms, assemblies and around the school is very good. The pupils walk calmly throughout the building. They are polite and courteous to visitors. Pupils wait patiently to collect their meals in the dining hall and engage socially with their classmates. They play together co-operatively in the playground at breaks and lunchtime. No challenging or oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection and the pupils know and understand the school rules and the reasons for them. They respect the impact their actions have on others and there have been no permanent or fixed term exclusions from the school for several years.
15. The personal development of the pupils and relationships in the school are good. Relationships between the pupils and the pupils and staff are very positive. They listen to what others have to say and help each other. A good example of this was seen in a Year 4 literacy lesson for pupils with special educational needs. They were seen to support each other and sympathetically discuss their feelings arising from the death of a pet. Opportunities for the pupils to show initiative in lessons are limited, because not enough of the work allows them to carry out their own planning or follow up their own ideas. However, pupils take responsibility for returning dinner registers, act as library monitors, take turns to be prefects, prepare dinner menus and the Year 6 pupils happily support younger pupils in the Year 3 playground and elsewhere. Pupils also demonstrate concern for the wider community by initiating fund-raising events for charity.
16. Attendance in every class is very good. For the last reporting year, 1998-1999, it was well above the national average at 96.2 per cent. Most pupils are punctual for school and registration is promptly and efficiently undertaken.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

17. The quality of teaching across the school is satisfactory. Ninety three percent of the teaching is satisfactory or better, and over one third good or better. Teaching was very good in five percent of lessons.

18. The previous inspection reported the quality of teaching to be very similar but with slightly more both very good and unsatisfactory teaching. There have been some improvements in aspects of teaching, but some of the weaknesses identified at the last inspection have not been fully eradicated. The school's agreed action plan to meet concerns found in the last inspection scheduled training to take place at the end of the last academic year to develop and improve teaching styles. Therefore only limited progress has been made in improving teaching overall.
19. Literacy and numeracy have received considerable attention over the past two years. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory while the teaching of numeracy is good. Teachers have a satisfactory grasp of the requirements of the literacy hour and a good grasp of numeracy strategies. They teach the basic skills competently. Pupils make good progress in numeracy and literacy lessons where all sections of the lesson are carefully organised to reinforce and extend the main objectives. Although work is generally planned to match the different ability groups in the class, there are inconsistencies in approach particularly for the higher attaining pupils. The over-use of uninspiring work sheets restricts the pupils' excitement for language and numeracy and inhibits their rate of progress. Across the school lessons frequently last for well over an hour and this extended time is not used productively to accelerate progress. Instead, the pace slows and the pupils' lose some interest. In contrast in the first part of the numeracy lesson, the teaching is often brisk and effective mental strategies enable all pupils to participate productively. The summary session at the end of the literacy hour is usually well focused on extending learning and giving positive feedback. This period is sometimes less successful in numeracy lessons where it is often used simply to go over the mental work covered at the beginning of the lesson instead of consolidating and extending learning.
20. Support from classroom assistants is very good and enables pupils with special educational needs to benefit from numeracy lessons at an appropriate level and make good progress in their learning. Pupils taken out of their classes gain from very good teaching by the special needs coordinator. This teaching is based on clear planning, good subject knowledge, high expectations, good ethos and relationships in the group: pupils make good progress in their learning. Those pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress. Work is well matched to their needs; teachers give these children additional support; as appropriate such pupils occasionally work outside the classroom with non-teaching assistants and those in the early stages of acquisition of English benefit from an enthusiastic and skilled peripatetic teacher. Provision is varied in quality for pupils on lower stages of the Special Educational Needs register, when working unsupported in classrooms, and depends on the teacher's assessment and subsequent match of work. This is good in many classes but poor in others.
21. Most staff are confident in their knowledge and show a satisfactory understanding of the subjects they teach. This represents an improvement since the last inspection in information technology and art, but physical education, religious education and music are now weaker elements. Particularly effective is the way that key vocabulary across all subjects is emphasised and clearly explained. The planning for literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. This is helping teachers to provide a sequence of experiences that are progressively more demanding and help to accelerate progress. This planning also takes into account the range of ability within the class. Teachers also plan together within their year groups to ensure a consistent approach for the pupils and to allow teachers to share ideas. However, although teachers state clearly in their plans what pupils are to learn they are not equally clear as to the methods they

will use to achieve the outcomes. Planning apart from literacy and numeracy seldom takes into account the differing needs of pupils in the class. The use of day-to-day assessments to target learning in the next lesson is infrequent. Marking needs to be used more positively to help pupils improve their work further.

22. There are still too few examples of varied, well-focused teaching which challenges the most able and increases the degree of pupil participation in lessons. Some teaching of this nature happens in mathematics lessons influenced by the National Numeracy Strategy, and good lessons for Year 6 pupils in both science and design technology stretched the higher attaining pupils by allowing them to explore their own ideas in these subjects.
23. This remains a weakness identified in the last inspection. The demands and expectations placed on pupils in some areas of learning are too low. These weaknesses are seen particularly in some music, religious education and physical education lessons where a lack of intervention by the class teacher to improve the quality of performance results in little progress being made and passive participation from the pupils particularly in music. However in a very successful design technology lesson in Year 6, pupils were systematically taught the skills to design and make their own models and then given the freedom to work imaginatively and challenged to modify and improve their models in a highly focused and successful learning environment. In very good lessons observed, pupils rise to the occasion in applying intellectual, physical and creative effort in their work and this high quality teaching has a significant impact on their progress. Frequently mathematics teaching does challenge higher attaining pupils to extend their thinking and understanding, although there still remains scope for greater use of investigative and problem-solving approaches. This is not a common feature of many other lessons. Questioning skills are generally used well to encourage pupils to think for themselves. They were well used in a geography lesson on India in Year 6 and helped pupils to acquire new knowledge and skills and to increase their understanding. Resources in all subjects except information technology, are generally well prepared and used effectively.
24. Pupils are given more opportunities to work together since the last inspection, particularly in information technology. However, in the Year 5 classes with large numbers of children, it is difficult for the class teacher to interact effectively with pupils who are all working on individual tasks.
25. A strong feature and strength of the teaching is the very good relationships established with pupils and the encouragement given to them to behave well and work hard. Such features help them to focus on their work, sustain concentration and work productively to make good progress. Staff provide a safe and secure environment in the classroom and encourage self-discipline, mature behaviour, the good presentation of work and the completion of tasks on time.
26. A homework policy was introduced in the last school year. This provides parents with a guide as to what their children will be asked to do each week and gives helpful details of the ways in which parents can reinforce the work in classes and help their children at home. Many parents express satisfaction at the level, amount and regularity of the homework, which includes project work, although some when consulted want more work and others believe their children are given too much to do. This improvement since the last inspection makes a good contribution to learning.

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

27. The school curriculum is sufficiently broad to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education is taught in line with the locally agreed syllabus.
28. Significant improvements have been made to the information technology and to the art curriculum, which were unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. In both cases pupils are now able to work within a planned subject curriculum which ensures that they can benefit from a variety of activities and develop a full range of skills. The school has effective strategies for teaching numeracy and literacy and is successfully implementing the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies alongside its own procedures. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is particularly successful in promoting lively sessions, which are improving the pupils' skills in mental mathematics. In the literacy sessions, sufficient attention is not always paid to the whole class shared text element of the lessons, and this is not fully exploited to enhance the pupils' progress.
29. A considerably higher percentage of the teaching time is allocated to English and mathematics than is found in most junior classes nationally. This reflects the school's strong commitment to maintaining its high standards in national tests, but is detrimental to raising standards in the broad range of other subjects, where attainment is average rather than good. The shortened time allocated to other subjects because of the predominance of English and mathematics means that the range of activities pupils can undertake in these subjects is less lively and interesting. Higher attaining pupils get both insufficient challenge and lack opportunities to engage in extensive work in these areas and the infrequency of lessons in some subjects inhibits pupils from developing particular interests. The quality of the pupils' experience also suffers in overlong teaching sessions, for instance, when literacy and numeracy lessons last well over the recommended time, or when history or geography lessons take almost the whole of the afternoon. Teachers need to adhere more closely to the timings as set out in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies which are proving effective in other schools.
30. Children arriving at the school with English as an additional language are well catered for by well-planned additional help, well structured work and careful integration into mainstream activities. Such children are particularly well helped in situations where they work with and co-operate in activities with classmates. Good detailed records are kept to ensure that good progress is made and that such children are quickly able to perform at a level commensurate with their abilities.
31. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. It is very well managed by a hard working and efficient coordinator. Excellent policies and procedures are in place which fully meet the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special needs. Classroom support is very well organised and provides effective support for pupils in their lessons. The quality of the teaching pupils receive when working outside their classrooms in small groups for intensive teaching of literacy is very good. It makes an important contribution to the good progress which pupils with special needs make in their learning, and their good levels of attainment. Expectations of the pupils are high: the coordinator aims for the higher attaining of her pupils to achieve the nationally expected standard by the time they leave the school. Pupils who are at the lower stages of the special needs register are generally given work suitable for their needs, but sometimes it is not sufficiently modified for them to be able to do it.

32. During their years at the school, there are opportunities for the pupils to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities although the majority of the opportunities are only offered to the pupils in Years 5 and 6. About forty-five of the pupils regularly attend football, netball and kwik cricket sessions in season and represent the school in sports tournaments and local leagues. Even more of the pupils drawn from all parts of the school attend weekly choir practices at lunchtime and take part in festivals, for instance, at Derby University. In the autumn term, about eighty of the pupils were involved in after-school drama sessions in preparation for the Christmas production, written by the headteacher. Students from Derby University helped in the production.
33. The school's provision is greatly enhanced by the contributions of parents: for instance, in running lunchtime sewing and craft clubs, and by the involvement of outside agencies, such as the University and, in the past, Derby County Football Club's Youth Coach. French lessons and peripatetic music tuition are available at a charge. Good support for learning in numeracy and literacy outside the school day is provided by the nationally funded booster classes and the school's own homework club.
34. The school makes good provision for the development of the pupils' personal and social skills as related to their health. Whilst there is no regular, separate time allocation within the curriculum, suitable provision is made through the science curriculum. The pupils learn about healthy life styles and gain an awareness of drug misuse. The school has sensitively consulted the parents and has adopted a sound policy for sex education.
35. The provision for the pupils' social, moral and cultural development is good. The school applies a consistent, very positive and encouraging behaviour policy and this enables pupils to develop a strong sense of right and wrong.
36. All of the staff provide good role-models, and have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour. The oldest pupils are made fully aware of their privileged position and of their responsibility to be a good example for the others. All of the pupils in Year 6 take turns to be prefects and are responsible for small administrative tasks around the school. The house-point system and weekly achievement assemblies encourage all pupils and reward their effort. The weekly celebrations of achievement are devalued however as the class teachers do not attend this assembly and are therefore not present to witness their pupils' success.
37. Good opportunities are provided for the pupils to learn about their own heritage and about the diversity of other cultures. In history, for example, the pupils are taught about the effects of the Roman Invasion and about life in Tudor and Victorian times. They are familiar with the work of famous writers like Dickens. The observation of traditions, such as Remembrance Day, throughout the year makes a regular contribution to cultural development. Studies of India in geography and World Faiths in religious education give the pupils an insight into cultures other than their own. Provision for the pupils' spiritual development, including the quality of the collective act of worship, is satisfactory. Whole-school assemblies are held daily and whilst mainly Christian in character, they concentrate particularly on a moral perspective. Hymn singing is not enthusiastic, but all pupils observe prayers respectfully. There is no long term planning to ensure the development of particular themes over time.

38. The school has good links with the community. Visitors such as the Community Police Officer, Road Safety Manager and fire-fighters, together with theatre and puppet groups make valuable contributions to pupils' learning. Fund raising events for the school and by the school provide good links with outside agencies, both local and national, and help the pupils to appreciate life outside school. The school maintains good links with the Tertiary College. The Year 6 pupils make two visits per term and advantage is taken of the College's expertise and equipment to extend the science and technology curriculum. Constructive links with teacher training providers and with the University enhance the curriculum in the exchange of ideas and particularly in the areas of drama and music.
39. Arrangements for transition from the infants' school and to the secondary school are assisted by the appropriate transfer of records and well organised pre-admission visits. Close curricular liaison with the infants and shared understanding of curriculum levels is not yet developed to help smooth pupils' transfer from Year 2 to Year 3 of the National Curriculum and ensure continuity.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

40. The school's procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good.
41. The headteacher is the designated person responsible for child protection and staff are aware of procedures. The school follows local authority guidelines. However, there has been no recent training to update staff. A suitable health and safety policy is in place and all the pupils are well supervised by the headteacher, staff and ancillary assistants at breaks and lunchtimes. There are several first aiders in school and arrangements for dealing with accidents and illness are good. Fire precautions, electrical checks and whole-school risk assessment have been carried out. Good records are kept and no risks were identified during the inspection.
42. The school provides good educational and personal support and guidance for the pupils. The teachers know their pupils well, have good relationships with them and respond positively to their needs. This contributes to the positive ethos of the school.
43. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. Attendance is monitored daily by class teachers who rigorously follow up absences. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are also very good. Effective behaviour and anti-bullying policies are in place. They are implemented consistently by the staff.
44. Praise, house points and certificates are used to promote good behaviour and achievement. A trophy is awarded at the end of each term for the house with the most points and another on sports day. The school has an small agreed set of school rules and a graduated scheme of sanctions is in place. The headteacher records all incidents of bullying and oppressive behaviour including racism if they occur and parental support is sought. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour are rare.
45. Procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are good. The procedures are underpinned by the very good relationship between staff and pupils.

46. Personal, social and health education is taught within the curriculum particularly in science lessons. Sex education is taught in Year 6 and Years 5/6 pupils receive lessons regarding personal safety and drugs awareness. Good support from staff and older pupils also assists the new Year 3 pupils in the autumn term. The school maintains effective links with outside agencies, such as educational psychologists and the Local Education Authority, which support the academic and personal development of the pupils.
47. The school has sound procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress. The annual progress reports are issued in the summer term. They provide all parents with information about their children's attainment and progress in all subjects and indicate areas for improvement. The parents return a response slip to acknowledge receipt of the report and submit any comments.
48. The use of assessment to guide planning is at an early stage under the leadership of two assessment coordinators who began this work at the start of this academic year. Management and development in this area up to this time has been unsatisfactory. The coordinators have started useful initiatives in English and mathematics. The school is beginning to analyse the results of optional national tests, administered annually in each age group, to track progress and standards over time, and to set targets for each class and develop ways of tracking the progress made by individuals. Analysis of national test results at the end of the key stage has identified areas of the curriculum, such as handwriting and story writing where improvement is needed. The school is currently investigating gender differences in attainment and in particular why boys do slightly better than girls at the higher levels in English, against the national trend.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

49. The parents' views of the school are largely good.
50. Participants at the pre-inspection meeting held for parents and carers stated that the school responds to their concerns, teaches the pupils right from wrong, promotes positive behaviour and a clear understanding of rules. This view was confirmed by the inspection.
51. Although not all parents agreed in their responses to the parents' questionnaire, the school does maintain good effective links with parents, who provide good support and raise significant amounts of money to support the school. In the last academic year almost £3000 was raised at the autumn fair and over £600 through sales from the Christmas catalogue. These funds support the purchase of resources and in these aspects parental involvement make a good contribution to the work of the school.
52. The quality of information for parents, particularly about the pupils' progress is good. This was an issue raised at the previous inspection which has now been rectified. Although not all parents agreed on the parents' questionnaire, comments from parents at the parents' meeting stated that there had been a vast improvement in the information received. This was confirmed by the inspection. Frequent letters are sent home informing parents of forthcoming events. The school issues an informative prospectus and governors' send their annual report to parents. Information sheets are now available informing parents about the curriculum and a numeracy workshop has been held. Translation of all information is available where English is not the first language and a support group for mothers has been formed. Parents' consultation

evenings are held in the spring and autumn terms and an open afternoon in the summer. Pupil progress reports are sent to parents in the summer term; these have been revised and improved since the last inspection. The pupils' attainment and achievement in all subjects is reported, individual targets are set and all results of national tests included. There is a parental response slip to acknowledge receipt and submit comments. The school has also developed, with help and guidance from parents, a clear Home/School Agreement which was introduced in September 1999.

53. Parents also make a good contribution to children's learning at school and at home in other ways. Parent helpers support teaching and learning in the classrooms and assist with design technology, information technology, reading, sporting activities and on educational visits. Inspectors confirmed that homework diaries are effectively used by the vast majority of parents and provide a good way of sharing information. In accord with the homework policy recently agree with parents homework is set regularly and parents support their children well with this work.

### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

54. The headteacher has a clear vision that the school should be a place in which children will be happy and secure and enjoy their learning. These school aims are achieved in all facets of school life.
55. Very good relationships are continually seen between teachers and pupils and between the children themselves. Children like school and display a willingness to learn. The head teacher sets high standards for himself in being prepared, organised and informed and offers sensitive and positive support to teachers. He has also shown the capacity to challenge poor performance, initiating and pursuing protracted and time-consuming competence procedures when required. Parents believe that school staff are approachable and appreciate the leadership and management of the headteacher.
56. The school's broad curriculum has appropriate aims to guide long-term planning and give focus to school life. The school is also evidently committed to achieving high scores in national tests. The school needs now to ensure that all children will reach the highest level of attainment of which they are capable in the rest of the curriculum, such as in the arts and humanities. The school admits pupils who have demonstrated high levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and they leave the school with test results at least equal to, and in English usually above, pupils in similar schools. These results show that some pupils are capable of performing in tests at a level two years above that expected nationally in English, science and mathematics. A renewed focus of teacher's, pupil's and parent's attention on achieving similar levels of attainment across other aspects of the curriculum, would be in line with the governors' belief in a broad and balanced curriculum which develops the abilities of all children.
57. The school has identified realistic development and improvement priorities, time scales and funding in the school improvement plan. The priorities within the plan are well chosen. However, by necessity, national initiatives have taken up much of the available time in the past academic year and some opportunities to improve other areas have therefore been delayed. The plan is well phased and identifies persons involved in the process but not who is responsible for the successful completion of each target. Success criteria based upon the impact such changes are intended to have on levels of pupil's achievements in each area are also not identified. In order to do this the school will need to improve its methods of assessing pupil's achievements

and monitoring the way the changes are implemented at classroom level. The previous inspection report cited a need to develop ... *'more rigorous monitoring of educational standards and evaluation of teaching methods with a view to sharing good practice and extending a range of effective teaching styles across the curriculum'*. School improvement is synonymous with the improvement of teaching and learning: this is insufficiently emphasised in the current school priorities which centre on systems and resources. The new type of school improvement plan currently being developed by the school needs to take this fully into account.

58. A well organised and experienced governing body with a full complement of members with a high level of expertise is committed to and supportive of the school.
59. Governors nominated to take particular interest in aspects of school life and the aspects of the curriculum have been appointed and contribute to the governing body's understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, alongside the regular reports from the headteacher. Parent governors also play an important and valued part in this process. The chair of Governors recognises strengths in the way governors work with the headteacher and the way teams of teachers work together. He identifies weaknesses in the use of Information and Communications Technology, some teachers' reluctance to embrace change and the lack of an effective, and systematic performance management system.
60. The effectiveness of the governors is helped by delegation of work to recently formed admissions, premises, personnel and finance sub-committees. The committees report back to the full governing body. The finance sub-committee have been able to support several educational priorities albeit within very difficult financial circumstances. They have developed plans to maintain appropriate staffing for the next two years when numbers are projected to drop. Financial planning has improved since the time of the last inspection. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities except in the setting of performance targets for the headteacher and some aspects in the governors report to parents. The chair of governors is aware of these omissions.
61. The headteacher's day to day management of the school is competently assisted by the deputy headteacher but there is insufficient delegation of management beyond the deputy. The school does not have a senior management team beyond the headteacher and deputy headteacher, and coordinators do not feel accountable for standards in their subjects.
62. The school has improved in that it has now appointed coordinators for each area of the curriculum - a key issue in the January 1997 inspection. Subject coordinators and consultants have job descriptions which include: encouraging and helping to coordinate planning; being aware of developments in their subjects; attending courses and organising equipment. Many coordinators have insufficient impact upon the improvement of teaching and learning. They are not required, nor given the time, to monitor quality of teaching and learning or the standards achieved in their subjects. Hence there is no systematic reporting on such matters to the headteacher and governors.
63. Effective monitoring activities both within school and with Local Education Authority support, have been undertaken to support the implementation of the numeracy and literacy strategies. Close monitoring of teachers' experience in implementing the literacy strategy identified the need for additional materials which were subsequently obtained and proved to be effective in improving its implementation. Diagnosis of the

school's strengths and weaknesses through the analysis of results in national tests, and through an item by item analysis of non-statutory QCA tests taken throughout the school has begun to lead to action designed to effectively secure improvement. Government funded booster classes and additional classes run on a voluntary basis after school by both the headteacher and deputy head have been started to remedy weaknesses found by this means.

64. The school uses its accommodation imaginatively but it is only just adequate for the large number of pupils, access to a full range of curriculum activities and storage of equipment. The interior is clean and well cared for but governors are aware that money must be found this school year for some external repairs which will be needed to maintain the fabric of the building. Effective use is made of resource rooms between classrooms particularly for withdrawal groups by classroom assistants and ICT work with small groups of children. Playground surfaces are adequate although walkways are worn and uneven in some places. Extensive grassed areas are a further educational resource as is a wild-life area, although this is only used occasionally.
65. The school has an appropriate number of suitably qualified staff to teach the curriculum with a balance of recently qualified to very experienced teachers. Other adults make a significant contribution to the life of the school and the well-being of the pupils. The supervision of pupils at lunchtime is very good, as is the care offered to pupils by the school secretary and the effectiveness of the cleaning staff. The school secretary has also played a key role in the effective use made by the school of new technologies, particularly the new finance management system. With an average class size high for English primary schools, the availability and deployment of classroom assistants contribute effectively to standards. Documents detailing staff duties and expectations along with a staff development policy which covers training for teaching staff, adequately help new staff to understand their responsibilities.
66. Staff are allocated 6 hours per school day under the direction of the headteacher and contingencies are provided for. This generous time allowance should be sufficient to allow all staff to organise and run extra-curricular activities which only a minority do at the moment. A high level of parental concern about the range of activities currently provided was recorded in the questionnaire.
67. Staff appraisal has not taken place since July 1998. This, allied to the lack of performance targets for the headteacher, which should have been set by the governing body by September 1999, is unsatisfactory. Thus performance review has not been available to hold staff to account for the work they do, including the quality of their teaching, and the results of such reviews are not available to be fed into the school improvement plan and priorities in training and development. There is no system to take account both of teacher's classroom role and also their responsibility to develop and enhance teaching, learning and pupil's achievement in the subjects they lead. A system to provide Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) with mentor support is appropriate and members of staff new to the school are officially linked to nearby teachers for guidance. The school's programme of staff development including the use of training days has been dominated recently by the need to develop national initiatives, however several teachers have been able to attend courses to develop their own specialities.

68. Resources although not plentiful are adequate in all subjects to allow for teaching of the National Curriculum. However, the range of software owned by the school is not sufficient for information technology to be used to support all areas of the curriculum. Purchase of new software is becoming increasingly important as the school replaces older machines with modern PCs.
69. The school has received specific grants to support literacy initiatives and children with special educational needs and uses them effectively to deliver improvements in these areas. The school is allocated one of the lowest levels of income per pupil and consequently one of the highest pupil/teacher ratios compared to the rest of England. The governors and headteacher have skilfully used the funds available to maximise the benefit to pupils. The effect of some very high class sizes, two of 42 pupils, has been partially mitigated by the use of a small budget surplus from the previous year to appoint a part-time teacher with the effect of reducing these numbers for lessons in the priority areas of literacy and numeracy.
70. The governing body and headteacher are aware of and apply best value principles. They take a keen interest in the way the school is perceived locally. The school maintains a strong profile frequently cited in local papers through many of its extra-curricular events and is particularly aware of the school's performance against similar schools. Staff are jointly concerned to promote pupils' progress. Assessment monitoring has identified Year 3 children who, despite high test scores, benefit from additional literacy help. Parents are consulted about areas of school life - for example, changes to the reading scheme, homework policy, and the limit on the number of school visits asked for by some parents, although many still do not feel that the school works sufficiently closely with them. Parents were not involved, for example, in the drawing up of the previous post-Ofsted Action Plan nor about the school's adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy. They were however informed as to how and when the numeracy strategy was to be introduced and sent copies of the action plan. Principles of competition are frequently used when contracts are awarded.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. The focus for further improvement must be to combine management, curriculum and teaching quality initiatives in order to create the conditions for each child, especially the more able pupils, to make the maximum gains across the whole curriculum during their time at Ravensdale. The action points below draw the attention of governors, managers, teachers, children and their parents to this end. In this way the governors' ambition for pupils to gain a wide range of curriculum experience should be realised and those children who have demonstrated an ability to excel in the core areas of the curriculum may be given the opportunities, quality of teaching and support to match this elsewhere.
72. To promote these improvements and achieve the above ambitions, the headteacher, teachers and governors need to:
- (1) allocate sufficient time and resources to work with all pupils, particularly the more able, in order to help them achieve their highest potential across the whole curriculum. In this way children will achieve standards commensurate with their abilities in all subjects; (paragraphs 9, 56)
  - (2) work closely with teachers so that they can help each other to increase the range of lively, varied, well-focused teaching which challenges all the school's pupils in all subjects and increases the degree of pupil participation within lessons. This will identify good practice and disseminate it across the school; (paragraphs 22,23)
  - (3) work with and support subject coordinators to develop their effectiveness in improving teaching, learning and achievement in their subjects. This will involve the allocation of sufficient time for them to monitor colleagues' teaching; (paragraphs 57, 62)
  - (4) develop and agree effective performance management systems for both management and teaching staff so that staff are answerable for their impact on pupils' achievements. (paragraphs 60,67)

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

- revise and set end of Key Stage 2 pupil achievement targets in mathematics to make them more challenging; (paragraph 5,87)
- re-examine the value to pupils of the current length of English and Mathematics lessons and bring them more into line with the recommendations of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies; (paragraphs 20, 81, 94)
- Ensure that all staff receive updated training on child protection issues; (paragraph 41)
- ensure that the governors' report to parents meets all statutory requirements; (paragraph 60)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	60
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	80

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	5	31	58	7	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y 3 – Y 6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		316
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 –Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		16

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	11

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

### **Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	43	34	77

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	42	39	40
	Girls	31	28	31
	Total	73	67	71
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	95 (82)	87 ( 69 )	92 ( 82 )
	National	70 ( 65 )	69 ( 59 )	78 (69)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	33	35	40
	Girls	28	29	28
	Total	61	64	68
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (63)	83 ( 60 )	88 (76)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	2
Indian	5
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	300
Any other minority ethnic group	6

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28
Average class size	35

#### **Education support staff: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	75.5

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	75.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	22
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1998 - 99
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	£
Total income	374 272
Total expenditure	363 018
Expenditure per pupil	1167
Balance brought forward from previous year	10 454
Balance carried forward to next year	21 708

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	316
Number of questionnaires returned	138

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	46	6	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	31	64	4	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	57	1	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	53	16	4	3
The teaching is good.	30	61	4	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	20	46	28	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	40	54	5	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	43	51	4	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	20	44	30	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	28	58	7	1	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	28	60	8	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	10	28	29	20	12

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

### **ENGLISH**

73. The majority of the pupils enter the school with well above average attainment in English as judged by the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1.
74. In national tests in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils who reached the expected level, was well above the national average. The percentage who reached the higher level, level 5, was above the national average. When compared to schools with similar characteristics the percentage who reached the expected level was above the average. The percentage who reached the higher level was broadly in line with the average for similar schools. Boys did slightly better than girls at the higher level, against national trends.
75. Test results have been maintained at well above the national average for the last three years, and are generally at a similar level to that noted at the time of the last inspection. Scrutiny of the work of the present Year 6 pupils indicates that, whilst standards of attainment overall are above the national average a lower percentage of the pupils are likely to reach the average or higher levels than last year. This is due mainly to the nature of the particular cohort and the high degree of transience in this year group.
76. Standards in speaking and listening throughout the school are well above average. In all classes, the pupils listen carefully to each other and to their teacher and follow instructions well. The pupils throughout the school are confident and articulate in answering teachers' questions and in participating in class and small group discussion. By the end of the key stage, the majority are able to explain a point of view and argue their case: for instance, when debating environmental issues in geography. A large number of the older pupils took part confidently in the school's dramatic production last term, and Year 5/6 pupils regularly make class presentations on topics of their choice. However, the opportunities for Year 3 & 4 pupils to speak in front of a larger audience, for instance in assembly, are limited.
77. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards in reading are above those found in other schools. On entry to the school, most of the pupils read aloud with accuracy and expression. They use knowledge of letter sounds, context and picture clues to work out unfamiliar words. They show good understanding of what they have read, can retell the story and identify their favourite part. The vast majority have well-developed reading skills which support their learning across the curriculum. In class, they locate information efficiently in text books: for instance, in English exercises and in subjects such as history and geography. The majority of the pupils are developing their understanding of words beyond the literal, and are beginning to use inference and deduction to gain insight into the meaning of some difficult texts. Whilst pupils are very successful in displaying their understanding in comprehension exercises, and in reading set texts provided by the teacher, there are few opportunities for the pupils to carry out their own research in the library. The high level of parental support and good home/school liaison in reading diaries has a significant beneficial effect on the standards reached by the pupils.

78. Attainment in writing is satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2. The pupils write for a range of purposes although opportunities to write at length are often limited by the school's organisation of the curriculum, and the frequent use of worksheets requiring one word or one sentence answers. In Year 3, the majority of the pupils show some imagination when writing autumn or winter poems. They develop their ideas from contributions to a whole class poem. When redrafting their work, they consider how they can improve the effect by a more meaningful choice of adjectives. Spelling is generally phonetic and handwriting is not joined. By the end of the key stage, the pupils use their writing skills across the curriculum, for instance, when making notes in history, or recording investigations in science. They are beginning to use subject specific vocabulary accurately. The majority are able to adapt their writing to specific purpose and are able to write from a particular point of view. When responding to the stories, such as 'Cliffhanger' they clearly express the mother's or father's differing viewpoints in post-cards to their unhappy son. Most of the pupils present their work well, but standards in handwriting vary from class to class. The school is currently dissatisfied with its own handwriting scheme and policy with regard to the formation of handwriting, and liaison with the Infant school in this matter is currently under review. Spelling and punctuation are usually of a high standard. The majority of the pupils display a secure understanding of the basic rules.
79. The quality of English teaching is less variable than at the time of the last inspection, when teaching ranged from very good to unsatisfactory. In this inspection, three-quarters of the teaching observed was satisfactory and one quarter was good. Progress overall for the majority of the pupils is satisfactory. There still remains some under-expectation of the pupils' achievement and this is also reflected in the discrepancy between the teacher assessment and the test results at the end of the key stage, when the tests yielded better results than teachers anticipated. Whilst there are good instances where tasks are well matched to the full range of ability in the class, there are still occasions where the pupils are not fully challenged by mundane tasks and do not make the good progress of which they are capable.
80. Provision for pupils with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language is good. They are well supported in class and when taken out of classes in groups and consequently make good progress.
81. All teachers have a secure knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy and teach the basic skills competently. Lessons have a clear focus, and generally build on earlier work to develop skills in a systematic way over time. Teaching points are made clearly so that the pupils know what is expected of them and can make satisfactory progress. Good use is made of the pupils' own ideas to reinforce learning and extend thinking further during special sessions held at the end of lessons. Most of the teachers are skilled in asking questions, which prompt the pupils' responses and heighten understanding. The practice of allowing extra time for literacy sessions which regularly last well over an hour, rarely results in higher quality teaching and learning. Often this extra time is not used efficiently, the pace slows and tasks are spread out to fill the time.
82. Lessons are characterised by good relationships and the pupils are very well managed throughout the school. Teachers use praise effectively to spur the pupils on to greater achievement. The pupils' very positive attitudes, their co-operation and perseverance even in dull tasks, also contribute to their progress.

83. The National Literacy Strategy is being efficiently implemented in all classes alongside the school's own system of teaching and learning. All recommended elements of the 'hour' are usually included, but insufficient attention is occasionally given to the whole-class shared reading session, and opportunities to improve the pupils' competencies in this area are missed. Literacy skills are practised effectively across the curriculum. For instance, debating skills are honed in geography and the pupils read efficiently to find information in set texts for example in history. They write for particular purposes such as recording investigations in science.
84. The curriculum coordinator has disseminated training in the National Literacy Strategy and has begun to monitor its implementation in the classroom. The information so obtained is not yet being used effectively to improve the school's provision or raise standards. Formal assessment of pupils is being made in each year and the school is beginning to analyse test results and identify areas of the English curriculum, which need further development. Improvement in this area is therefore satisfactory.

## **MATHEMATICS**

85. Pupils enter the school with above average levels of attainment. The majority achieve the national average (level 2 of the National Curriculum) in national tests for seven year olds at the end of Key Stage 1 and many exceed it.
86. In the latest national tests for eleven year olds, at the end of Key Stage 2 (1999) the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level 4 of the National Curriculum was well above the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 5 was above the national average. When compared with schools with similar characteristics, the percentage of pupils who achieved the expected and higher levels of achievement was broadly in line with the average for such schools. Girls did slightly better than boys in the tests which reflects the national position.
87. The school's performance in tests over the past three years, has been maintained at well above the national average. The school expects a slightly lower proportion of pupils than previously to achieve the expected level in the next tests, in 2000. The cohort of pupils is characterised by a significant degree of mobility: movement of pupils in and out of the school. Nevertheless, observation of lessons and analysis of pupil's work during the inspection, and discussions with pupils, suggests that standards are such that the school should challenge itself to achieve levels slightly higher than its target. In 1999 teacher's assessments of the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels of attainment was below the national average whereas in tests they achieved above it. This indicates expectations of higher attaining pupils which are too low.
88. Attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2, particularly in numeracy, is above average. Achievement is good throughout the school and the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in learning mathematics. Pupil's understanding and use of mental calculation strategies is impressive. Pupils in Year 3 can add to a two digit number using principles of rounding up to a hundred and some can round three digit numbers to one thousand. Most pupils in Year 3 can use their understanding of how the position of a digit in a number changes its value to make the smallest and largest numbers from two or three digit numbers and can put a series of such numbers in order of size. They respond rapidly and accurately to oral mental questions: counting on and back using units, tens and hundreds; good recall of addition and multiplication facts. They recognise odd and even numbers and most can tell the time accurately.

89. Pupils in a Year 4 lesson made responses to the question “what do you know about 64” which demonstrated their understanding of the number system: it’s 8x8; it rounds up to 100; it is between 63 and 65; it is even; the nearest 10 is 60 and so on. They double and halve numbers and higher attaining pupils use estimation to find solutions. They recognise missing numbers in various sequences and can balance equations by supplying the appropriate number. They understand and use time, with an appropriate vocabulary and convert between twelve and twenty-four hour clock times, from analogue to digital.
90. Pupils in Year 5 read and write large numbers up to millions. They use their understanding of how the position of a digit in a number changes its value to divide and multiply numbers by 10,100 and 1000. They can put large numbers in order and estimate positions accurately on a series of numbers, for example on a number line. They use correct mathematical vocabulary when talking about numbers: zero; digit.
91. In Year 6, the most able pupils are already working at the higher level 5 of the National Curriculum. They use their understanding of how the number system works to multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals by 10, 100 and 1000. They are confident working with negative numbers and can calculate with decimals to two places. They can utilise inverse (using that vocabulary) operations to check solutions. Some pupils carry out mathematical investigations which demand the solving of open questions, such as those in a Year 6 lesson who investigated patterns in number sequences, including square numbers. Overall, though, investigative work is not given a high enough priority in teachers’ planning of their mathematics lessons. In data-handling, most pupils can carry out surveys to construct bar, pi and line graphs and use them to interpret data. They estimate the size of angles and measure them accurately using a protractor. They use standard paper and pencil methods well. They recognise simple equivalent fractions and answer questions such as how many halves are in one-and-a-half. Many pupils understand the principles of probability. All pupils demonstrate rapid re-call of calculation facts and use good strategies which demonstrate their understanding of the number system and its properties. Pupils with special educational needs show good progress in their learning and achieve standards which demonstrate this. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve standards comparable to those for all pupils in the school.
92. Standards of teaching are always at least satisfactory with more than a third of teaching seen being good. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning, with progress being good for most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Teaching challenges higher attaining pupils to extend their thinking and understanding, although there remains scope for greater use by teachers of investigative and problem-solving approaches. Overall, the level of expectation of more able pupils represents an improvement since the school’s previous inspection. In the best lessons, teachers intervene to probe and challenge pupil’s thinking, and use their responses, including their errors, to extend their knowledge and understanding of mathematics.
93. In about a third of the lessons observed, throughout the school, the pace of teaching and learning drops because too long is taken on the various parts of the numeracy sessions. When sessions at the end of lessons are used to re-visit the original aims of the lesson, to check the extent to which they have been achieved by various groups of pupils and to set the scene for future lessons, they make an effective contribution to learning. Some of the review sessions are too brief to meet these purposes. Generally, homework is used well to support and extend work in lessons. Work in books is

marked regularly but feedback aimed specifically at helping pupils to get better is infrequent. Older pupils set some of their own targets for improvement at the beginning of a term but there is little indication in lessons or marking of how progress towards their achievement is followed up. Assessment records are being kept and make a satisfactory contribution to future planning and teaching.

94. Teaching has embraced the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy and on the whole it is taught well. Attention needs to be given to the timing of the lessons, which can be too long, and to the consistency with which the review session is used to evaluate the extent to which lesson objectives have been achieved.
95. The use and development of pupil's numeracy skills in other subjects is under-developed. Some good work involving estimation and measurement was seen in design and technology, and graphs are used in science and in history and geography, but too few opportunities for this kind of cross-curricular work are planned into the curriculum. Relationships in all lessons are good, teachers manage behaviour very well and pupils display very positive attitudes towards their work. Pupils listen well and respond fully to questions in whole class sessions. Speaking and listening abilities are developed well in whole class question and answer sessions, particularly when pupils are given the opportunity to explain and explore their responses. Attention should be given to the balance between the work pupils complete in their mathematics work books and that which is completed on photocopied worksheets.
96. Resources are adequate to meet the requirements of the curriculum. The coordinator for the subject is implementing the numeracy training effectively. Teacher's planning for mathematics is monitored and national test results are used to identify areas of the curriculum that need further improvement. Although management of the subject is satisfactory overall, the limited amount of direct monitoring of teaching which takes place is not leading to consistent improvement in teaching and the raising of standards. Such activity could be used to disseminate the good practice found in Years 5 and 6 to the rest of the school.

## **SCIENCE**

97. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 indicate that pupils attainment is above the national average and broadly in line with similar schools. These standards have been maintained over the past three years. Inspection findings are that standards are above average although fewer pupils in the current Year 6 cohort are likely to achieve the higher levels of attainment shown in the 1999 results. The projections set by the school on levels of attainment for Year 6 largely match the inspection evidence. The school in recent years has experienced an increase in the numbers of families moving in and out of the district and this has had some effect on the levels of attainment in the current Year 6. Pupils with SEN and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress and achieve at the expected levels. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.
98. Pupil's attainment when they enter the school is sound and by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have a good grasp of scientific vocabulary, a broad and secure base of knowledge and are developing a secure approach to investigations. They make well informed predictions into testing materials that conduct electricity, and base conclusions on a good understanding of scientific processes. However higher attaining pupils are not given many opportunities to plan their own investigations, select resources or evaluate the validity of their conclusions. In their study of water, pupils

understand the practical application of storing and saving water and how this affects their everyday lives. They also know the effects of pollution on water caused by nitrates and phosphates. This study is heightened by a visit to a local reservoir.

99. On several occasions pupils work at a local college where they study forces. Their knowledge of different kinds of forces is good. Higher attaining pupils know that by changing the voltage of an electrical motor the speed at which loads are lifted will be affected. Lower attaining pupils indicate what forces are acting on different objects when rolling balls down a ramp. Pupils know many facts about the human body, a healthy lifestyle and the need for a skeleton to support the body joints. They understand the conditions that affect plant growth and the relationships between plants and animals. Most can explain the effects caused by the movement of the earth and how a solar eclipse occurs. All pupils can construct a basic circuit correctly to light a series of bulbs.
100. Literacy and numeracy skills are used well to discuss, record and measure scientific findings in experiments and observations. Listening and speaking skills are good in all lessons and pupils measure with increasing accuracy. They use information technology well in the upper junior classes for research and collecting information. Information technology is less well used in the rest of the school.
101. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with a quarter of the teaching of science observed good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. A similar picture was found at the last inspection. Most staff have a secure and confident subject knowledge that extends pupils thinking well. There is a good focus on developing key vocabulary and this was particularly well done with Year 4 pupils who tested dissolving materials. In the most successful lessons planning focuses on practising and improving key skills that are matched correctly to the stage of pupils' learning. Teachers have realistic expectations of pupils and challenge them well through good levels of questions and discussion. A good example of this was seen in a well organised practical session in Year 6 where good strategies and resources were used to help pupils successfully acquire new skills and develop their ideas and understanding of how their body joints work. Not only did the teacher draw the pupils together regularly to clarify points but he planned additional work for the higher attaining pupils to research the human body on the CD-Rom and collect and present the findings of their measurements on a spreadsheet on the computer.
102. There is however a lack of consistency in the quality of teaching due to limited teaching strategies. This was a weakness at the last inspection and has not been fully eradicated. In these less successful lessons planning is insufficiently detailed. Teachers are not always clear about the methods or organisation they will use, nor how they will take into account the differing needs of pupils in the class, especially the higher attaining pupils. There is also at times an undue emphasis on the use of routine worksheets that limit the opportunities for pupils to apply intellectual effort or interest to their work. These strategies and methods slow the pace of the lessons and adversely affect. Staff adopt a positive and consistent approach in their good relationships and pupils are well supported and encouraged to do their best. When time limits are set, pupils work productively but occasionally when these lessons last for two hours, levels of concentration are not sustained. However pupils' behaviour is always good.

103. There is now a coordinator for science. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. However this is a relatively new position and the effective management of the subject is in the very early stages of development. The coordinator is very committed to maintain and improve further the standards of attainment, but has not yet developed a sufficiently wide understanding of the current provision within the school. This is because there has been little monitoring or evaluation of the subject's performance and no monitoring or evaluation of planning and teaching in the past and these aspects are still unsatisfactory.
104. The scheme of work is broad and balanced across the programmes of study, although aspects of investigative science are not sufficiently detailed. This particularly applies to pupils carrying out their own ideas. Good use is made of the facilities and staff expertise from the local college but the schools' own wild-life area which is a valuable learning resource is used infrequently. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. However, day-to-day assessment does not enable the teachers to have a clear picture of individual pupils' progress. This explains, in part, the discrepancy in the teacher assessments in the National Curriculum assessments at the end of Key Stage 2. Marking, noted as a weakness in the last inspection still does not help pupils to understand how well they have done and how they can improve. Homework is used well to support learning.

## **ART**

105. Standards in art at the end of Key Stage 2 are similar to those found in most schools for pupils of this age and progress is satisfactory. This is a good improvement from the last inspection where standards and progress were unsatisfactory. Only two lessons were observed during the week of the inspection. However sufficient evidence is available from pupils' work on display, photographs of previous work, teachers planning and discussions with staff and pupils to judge the quality of the work.
106. Year 6 pupils show sound observational skills in the control and detail of their work using pencil, pastel, paint, chalk and brush. Good shading and line are used in the drawings of house plants and Indian patterns on leaves show imagination and a satisfactory attention to detail. Pupils have a well developed understanding of the materials and methods used by a number of important artists and this represents an improvement since the last inspection. Several of these artists are used as a basis for developing pupils' own skills in the techniques of art. In Year 5 they use the techniques of Turner to produce a sunset picture and demonstrate average skills in mixing and applying paint. In Year 4 Paul Klee's 'Cracked Ice' design is used to produce patterns that show a good awareness of colour and shape. Although the range of materials and techniques used by the pupils has now improved along with a more balanced breadth of experiences there is still less focus on craft, modelling and three dimensional work than there should be.
107. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and this represents an improvement since the last inspection when the majority of teaching was unsatisfactory. The scheme of work is closely linked to National Curriculum requirements and staff confidence and subject knowledge have been enhanced by training. In most lessons there is now an emphasis on acquiring and improving pupils' skills in drawing, painting and collage. Works of celebrated artists are used well by teachers to demonstrate techniques and to help motivate pupils in their work. Pupils do not systematically assess their own art work across the school or discuss how to improve it. On balance, teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment in art is undeveloped and therefore unsatisfactory.

108. Links with other subjects are satisfactory, although the use of information technology to support art and the use of art lessons to allow pupils to practice information technology skills is unsatisfactory. A recent visit to the Joseph Wright gallery was followed up with some good role play and speaking and listening activities based on the characters in the paintings. Although there is generally a good balance between teaching art for its own sake and the links with other subjects, the quality of art work in some other areas of the curriculum is sometimes of an inferior quality especially when felt tipped pens are used to colour in pictures which happens too frequently. Most pupils take a pride in what they do, enjoy discussing their work on display and show appreciation of the work of others. Resources are generally well used and appropriate but in one lesson the brushes in use were too thick for the pupils to achieve the detail required in their designs. This frustrated some of them and adversely affected their progress and created dissatisfaction with the final product. All pupils share resources well and use tools and materials safely.

109. Many of the unsatisfactory elements of art have been rectified by the coordinator. There are guidelines to support the teaching of the subject. These provide clear guidance to staff on the development of skills and the activities suitable for each age range. A lack of monitoring of the teaching and planning has however resulted in some inconsistencies in provision, notably the absence of sketch books in many classes. The grounds are attractive and include a wild-life area, which is used occasionally as a stimulus for art in the school. Art makes a satisfactory contribution to the social, moral, spiritual and particularly the cultural development of pupils in their study of Indian art. However teachers only provide limited opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively on tasks.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

110. Although few lessons were observed in design and technology during the inspection, sufficient evidence is available from pupils' previous work, teachers' planning and discussions with staff and pupils to judge that attainment matches the level expected for the pupils' age by the end of the key stage. Progress is satisfactory although design and food technology skills are a weaker element in the progress made.

111. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils consider several ideas before selecting their designs for a fairground ride or windmill model. They select wisely from a good range of materials and by planning carefully the appropriate sequence of work, they are successful in making a good quality product. Materials and components are cut, shaped and joined with confidence and pupils safely use drills and saws in the assembling of their product. They also apply good finishing techniques with paint and paper. To increase the complexity of the product scientific skills are used to add an electrical circuit to light their models. Pupils draw suitable designs and write simple lists of materials and tools, and learn to produce scaled drawings in Year 6. They evaluate their work well and identify some areas for improvement. Pupils are also in the early stages of using control technology to drive their models.

112. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound but there are inconsistencies in expectations and challenge for the pupils in their work and planning for the lessons is only satisfactory. For the pupils in Years 3 & 4 there is still a tendency for over direction by the class teacher which limits the pupils' development of skills and ideas and the benefits of evaluation. This was a weakness identified at the last inspection and has still to be eradicated. For example all pupils are given the same

template and materials to use in the making of their puppets which limits the purpose of the task in helping pupils improve their own ideas and designs. However, the children did design their own character based on their own ideas and, in a very successful lesson in Year 6, very good progress resulted from the confident teaching of the basic skills which then challenged the pupils to experiment with their own designs and materials and modify their ideas and methods. In this lesson behaviour was exemplary especially when using potentially dangerous equipment. Pupils were proud of their achievements and rose to the challenge in high levels of productivity and concentration. In Years 3 & 4 the 'pop up' cards made by pupils are given to relations and friends and so pupils see the relevance of what they are doing and this helps to motivate them to work well. On occasions sound links are made with other subjects such as the Tudor houses in Year 5, and the opportunity to talk through models in Year 6, but there are missed opportunities elsewhere to develop meaningful links with speaking and listening. For example the puppets made by Year 3 and Year 4 classes remain on display and are not used for any drama or role play.

113. Although there is no monitoring or evaluation of the subject the scheme of work has been modified well to accommodate the increased time allocation for literacy and numeracy and the reduced time for design and technology. A reasonably broad and balanced curriculum has been maintained although food technology is now limited to only Year 5. The health and safety documentation for the subject is good. The balance of judgements means that improvement in this subject is satisfactory.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

114. The school has maintained the satisfactory levels of attainment at the end of key Stage 2 noted in the last report. Evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of teachers' plans and discussions with the pupils indicate that the standards reached by the vast majority of the eleven-year-olds are similar to those found in most primary schools. The pupils have appropriate knowledge as specified within the National Curriculum programmes of study encountered and are developing sound skills of enquiry in geography and history.

115. The pupils in Year 6 can locate India on a world map, and some main geographical features on a map of India. They know that climates vary and show some appreciation of the pattern of the seasons including the monsoon in India. They are able to draw relevant conclusions when examining data on rainfall in Bombay and London. The majority of the pupils can compare several facets of life in an Indian village with their own experience. When considering the possible effects of deforestation on village life, they become increasingly aware that there are important environmental issues for people in all localities. The Year 6 pupils are able to talk knowledgeably about life in Tudor times and show satisfactory recall of some of the main events of the period, and of their visit to Wollaton House. The pupils in Year 5 show a sound grasp of some aspects of life in Victorian society. They are able to compare and contrast the role of children from poor or wealthy families, and empathise with old people entering the workhouse. They are developing sound skills of historical research and collect information from a variety of sources including photographs, video and reference books.

116. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and the majority of the pupils make satisfactory progress. In two out of the three geography lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory. In one lesson, teaching was good. In history, of the two lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory in one and good in the other. The secure subject knowledge displayed by all teachers and clear focus to the lessons enable the majority of the pupils to be clear about what they are learning and to make satisfactory progress. The good relationships, and effective management, based largely on praise is effective in increasing the pupils' self-esteem and promoting their best efforts. When lessons go on too long, often for almost the whole of the afternoon, and a high proportion of time is given to filling in worksheets, the pace of learning slows. Tasks are not always matched to the differing levels of attainment of the pupils and this leads to a lack of challenge and sometimes restricts progress particularly for the more able. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported through extra attention from the class teachers or additional help from support workers, and make good progress. Educational visits, theme days and visitors to the school make good contributions to the curriculum, and enhance learning. Insufficient use is made of the school library, however, to enable the pupils to carry out their own research independently.
117. The positive attitudes of pupils and their ability to cooperate in discussions and persevere, even when tasks are uninteresting, has a substantial positive effect on their progress. Their enthusiasm to bring in artefacts and information from home is often instrumental in extending their learning.
118. Whole school schemes of work provide reasonable coverage of topics over time, but do not highlight the skills to be taught in each age group. The curriculum coordinators realise the need to review current practice and are considering recent national guidance. No action has been taken to use the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) schemes to develop the curriculum. However, this will be reviewed as the school implements Curriculum 2000. Joint planning within year groups provides consistency. Whole school systems of assessment to measure progress and attainment are not in place. The role of the curriculum coordinators in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning or standards of work in order to improve the school's performance has not been developed.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

119. By the end of Key Stage 2 many pupils are able to: describe some of the uses of computers in society; use control technology to drive simple motorised models they have made; connect to and use Intranet facilities to search for and download documents to enhance the information available on topics they are studying; and interrogate database files they have created, printing out the results in graphical form. The information technology competence to do this represents the standard as set out in the National Curriculum for children of their age and one which can usefully be built upon when pupils transfer to secondary school.

120. Word processing was highlighted as an area of weakness in the previous inspection report. Work and achievement within this strand of information technology has much improved. Children's skills are developed satisfactorily as they move up through the school. They are confident in their use of a wide range of word processing applications, easily swapping from one type of machine to another - some being able to describe the difference in facility and usefulness of each. The displays and files of work kept by teachers show that pupils are able to make sensible choices of types, sizes, and colours of fonts to suit the intended audience; incorporate borders, pictures and graphics into their work, and use justification to enhance interest according to the purpose of the writing. Pupils can use pull down menus, edit and move sections of text and use spellcheckers and other tools. Some pupils have progressed to using desktop publishers to further enhance the work such as brochures and advertisements.
121. Teaching both with information technology and about information technology is satisfactory overall. Pupils have been given the opportunities, instruction, time and encouragement as they move through the school to develop the skills and knowledge detailed above. The fact that some pupils have access to information technology facilities at home has contributed to the levels of achievement described but is also well used by teachers to develop skills in other children and they have encourage pupils to use their computers for educational purposes. However, some teachers do not display confidence in their own use of information technology, for example by creating their own worksheets. No direct teaching of information technology was seen during the inspection, no periods of time are allocated to the teaching of information technology on timetables supplied by the school and planning for information technology is weak, usually recorded as the intended use of a particular program, rather than detailing the skills, knowledge or understanding that teachers intend pupils to learn. Even when pupils are working on the computer, intervention to challenge and help pupils develop additional skills in order to make progress is rare. Pupils keep a log book which indicates usage of various programs and this is currently underused in the assessment of pupil's skills and attainment.
122. Some information technology work was seen in design technology and science but the period of the inspection was characterised by a very low use of computers to support learning across the curriculum. For example, teachers were not seen to use information technology to help pupils achieve objectives in the National Numeracy Strategy at all. Many chances are therefore lost to reinforce and extend learning in other subjects, as well as opportunities for pupils to practice the skills which will become increasingly important to them as they grow up. One reason for this is that teachers do not appear to give work in information technology a high priority, another is that the range of software owned by the school is not sufficient for information technology applications to support all areas of the curriculum. Purchase of new software is becoming increasingly important as the school replaces older machines with newer PC machines.
123. Pupils are keen and respond well to work in information technology. They use computers and talk enthusiastically about the applications they have used. Pupils demonstrate that they are able to work co-operatively in pairs when given the opportunity, and to use each other as a resource to overcome difficulties they encounter when saving, reloading their work or using search engines to surf the Internet.

124. The school has developed a manageable scheme of work which should guide teachers in the development of pupil's skills, knowledge and understanding of information technology and to use as a planning aid. However, it is not followed systematically by teachers and hence progress although satisfactory is not as strong as it should be for all pupils. The school has sufficient computers for more than one machine per classroom but again these are not fully used.
125. An enthusiastic teacher is ambitious for the development of information technology within the school and has undertaken extensive training to enhance his own capability. He has recruited parents to help children to use communications technology to join the school to the *National Grid for Learning*. He has good information technology knowledge and information technology teaching skills and has provided training for other staff. To be successful in continuing to build up information technology in the school he will continue to need the full backing of the senior management team; access to resources and sufficient time to monitor work in parts of the school with which he is unfamiliar in order to promote information technology throughout the school. This will be needed to overcome the currently unsatisfactory level in the use of resources, the lack of a shared commitment amongst staff to the improvement of information technology and develop the capacity to succeed through consistent monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching and learning in information technology.

## MUSIC

126. Standards in music at the end of Key Stage 2 match national expectations. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 sing well, with phrasing enabling performance to reach a good standard. They learn new songs quickly, are aware of and can reproduce rhythms using instruments and clapping. Pupils in Year 6 show satisfactory knowledge of musical notation and can relate pitch and pattern to the notation of simple melodies.
127. Pupils are eager to do well in music lessons and this shows particularly in choir rehearsals and in individual and group music tuition, in response to teaching which is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and challenging. Pupils sing to good standards from memory, including singing in two parts, listening and responding to other pupils' phrasing, tempo and dynamics. When given the opportunity, as in the Christmas production, pupils can rehearse and present their performance to a high standard. Pupil's ability to perform and listen is stronger than in composing and appraising.
128. The teaching of music in class lessons is limited by the extent of teachers' subject knowledge: it relies heavily on pre-taped radio broadcasts. Teachers intervene to reinforce the content of the radio programmes but pupils are not always given guidance to improve their learning and achieve higher standards. Music teaching is enhanced by links with the University, the continued involvement of peripatetic teachers, the choir and children's work with music specialists at a local secondary school, Murray Park. The quality of teaching by peripatetic specialist music teachers is good, resulting in very good learning and high attainment by the children involved, although only few in number. The singing of pupils in assembly is poor, often restrained, half-hearted and lacking in enthusiasm. Many pupils do not join in. This is true whether they are accompanied by taped music or the piano. During the inspection no intervention was seen and pupils were not shown how to improve.
129. The subject needs to be more actively managed. There is little monitoring and evaluation of the quality of the music curriculum or the standards achieved. The subject has improved little since the previous inspection. The school does not currently provide a culture of high achievement for music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

130. Standards of attainment in physical education at the end of Key Stage 2 match the national expectation. Pupils in Year 3 are developing good skills in controlling large and small balls and are able to move and control a football in a variety of ways. Most can throw accurately and catch well. They are aware of how to use space effectively and most pupils understand the principles of net games. Pupils in gymnastics lessons can use different body parts to transfer their weight as a preliminary to devising simple sequences of movement. Pupils in Year 4 are developing control in jumping and landing in floorwork and using simple apparatus. They employ different methods of turning, rolling, jumping and travelling. In dance, pupils compose and control good movement in response to musical and voice stimuli, for example in a lesson where Year 6 pupils made up "cat walk" dances, creating characterisation and mood. Most pupils are competent swimmers when they leave the school.
131. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning in physical education but it is limited when teaching does not intervene sufficiently to make it clear to the pupils what they have to do to get better, for example in a gymnastics lesson for Year 4 pupils. Good teaching was seen when Year 6 pupils watched each other's dance performance and evaluated and intervened to describe and model different qualities of movement.
132. The coordinator for physical education, who was appointed in September 1999 has focused on improving the provision and organisation of resources but has not yet undertaken significant monitoring of quality of teaching and standards achieved. The recent provision of more extra-curricular sports activities, from September 1999, includes football, netball and athletics. They support the raising of standards in physical education. This constitutes satisfactory improvement since the previous report.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

133. Pupil's attainment in religious education is in line to reach the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus by the time they leave the school. At other ages pupils acquire religious knowledge and understanding relevant to their developing maturity and age. In most classes pupils show good understanding of Bible stories and through teachers' continuing emphasis many display a developing ability to take from these texts important points relevant to their own lives. Year 3 pupils during the inspection studied the tale of the Good Samaritan and were able to relate the principles to what they would do if someone were hurt or upset. The eldest pupils show satisfactory understanding of important concepts such as fairness and an appreciation of each other's feelings. In a religious education lesson a Year 6 class showed that they understand that most religions have special books which are precious to them and that such books, for example, the Bible and the Qu'ran, hold special significance because they give important messages to believers and are meaningful for everyday life.
134. Throughout the school pupils have a growing knowledge of Christianity whilst developing some understanding and respect for the diversity of beliefs and their common values such as caring for others. However, retention of knowledge regarding other faiths and multicultural issues is vague and some, when asked, are confused between Sikhism, Buddhism, and Hinduism - a few can remember learning about Diwali but not about Eid. This is because RE is not taught in a sufficiently systematic manner and consideration of the role played by the 'All Our Worlds' scheme will be needed. Examination of pupil's work shows very great differences between the volume

and frequency of work from class to class. Some children also claim RE teaching to be boring - and certainly by comparison to many schools, there is a low frequency of visitors and visits to other faith centres. There is also considerable repetition as each class looks at for example, the Christmas story each year for three or four weeks. This amounts to 16 lessons over the time children attend Ravensdale - a considerable proportion of the lessons devoted to religious education.

135. Teaching is satisfactory although one good and one unsatisfactory lesson was also seen. Weaknesses in teaching this subject included the quality of planning and the methods used which too frequently involved children responding to questions on a worksheet without the opportunity to explore the meaning of the work in group discussion or expand answers in written form. In the sound and better lessons purposeful teaching takes place and the objectives of the lesson are explained to the children beforehand. Such lessons also involve discussions between pupils with a teacher who exhibits a good knowledge of the subject. In one lesson judged to be of a good standard, the teacher introduced the 10 commandments as 'God's rules' and helped the children to relate this to an imaginary club which needed a set of rules which would benefit everyone. The pupils enjoyed a lively discussion where the teacher's expertise enabled her to make continual reference to the religious aspect allowing children to discuss their lives openly making reference to Sunday School and to the churches to which many belong. In the unsatisfactory lesson, children did not understand its purpose, the designated tasks were unclear and there was a lack of challenge to motivate the pupils. Much work was unfinished and consequently children did not learn what was required. Standards of assessment of pupils attainment in religious education are unsatisfactory.
136. In the majority of lessons pupils concentration and effort is good, for example, most pupils complete their work and persevere with the allotted task throughout the whole of the lesson. They generally respond well and make adequate effort on given tasks, however some of the tasks they are given are undemanding and there is an over-reliance on worksheets. These lessons are not yet used as an opportunity for extensive and non-chronological writing as well as speaking and listening and practising presentational skills. During discussions pupils do contribute enthusiastically, but they report that normally much of the work does not involve their participation. Throughout the school, religious education as well as being a subject in its own right, makes a contribution to the moral, personal and social development programme. The daily acts of collective worship also make a useful contribution to the religious education of pupils. They incorporate singing, prayer and reflective periods.
137. A scheme of work for Years 3 & 4 and another for Years 5&6 have been developed and reflect the requirements of the Local Education Authority's Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The subject has an appointed coordinator and is adequately resourced for the work currently taking place. Pupils will make greater progress, if the way in which the scheme is translated into lessons and implemented in the classroom is monitored as a means to improving teaching and learning in this area.