

INSPECTION REPORT

DARLEY CHURCHTOWN C.E. (C)

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Darley Dale, Matlock

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112839

Headteacher: Mr. N. Carr

Reporting inspector: C. D. Loizou
18645

Dates of inspection: 5 – 7 March 2001

Inspection number: 191619

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled Church of England
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Road Darley Dale Matlock Derbyshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr. N. Snowsill
Date of previous inspection:	8 December 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18645	C. D. Loizou	Registered inspector	Foundation stage curriculum English Science Art and design Design and technology Religious education	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9188	J. McHugh	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
4303	S. N. Reynolds	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Music Physical education	Equal Opportunities
3055	C. Tombs	Team inspector	Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the Churchtown area of Darley Dale, which is approximately two miles from the town of Matlock in Derbyshire. It is a very small Voluntary Controlled, Church of England Primary School and admits children from the age of four years in September and January each school year in the term closest to their fifth birthday. Twelve children are under five and they are taught in a class along with Year 1 pupils. There are 109 pupils on roll between the ages of 4 and 11. Most of the staff in the school, including the headteacher, have been appointed since its first inspection in 1997 and some staff were appointed since the last inspection in 1998. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language and none are from minority ethnic communities. There are 22 pupils (20 per cent) eligible for free school meals, which is slightly above average. Eighteen per cent of the pupils are on the school's special educational needs register, which is below average and two have a statement of special need. The inspection of this school included a detailed inspection of its provision for pupils with special educational needs. The attainment of the children under five on entry to the school covers a wide range and varies considerably, and in past years, it has been below average. It is currently in line with the standards expected of children of this age. This accounts in part for the fluctuating end of key stage test results in the National Curriculum tests.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides an effective education with many good features. The pupils achieve well and the teaching is good with a significant proportion that is of high quality. Standards are rising and the school is very well placed to improve standards further. The headteacher and staff monitor the pupils' work closely and they plan work which is well matched to the capabilities of all pupils. They have worked very hard to improve the school since the last inspection. During the inspection, inspectors found that attainment is in line with the standards expected in English and it is above average in mathematics and science. The school is very well led and managed and is providing good value for money.

What the school does well

- Currently, standards in mathematics, science, art and design and design and technology are above average.
- Pupils throughout the school achieve well, including those with special educational needs. The pupils are well behaved and attentive in lessons and at other times.
- The teaching is good with a significant amount that is of high quality.
- The good provision for the youngest children in the school prepares them well for learning.
- Teachers test and measure the pupils' achievements closely and their progress is monitored well.
- Parents think highly of the school and, together with governors, are very involved in its work.
- The school is very well led and managed at all levels.

What could be improved

- Raise attainment in English further, so that more pupils achieve higher standards in reading.
- The school's accommodation is not suitable if it is to provide the full programme of physical education to raise standards further.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The headteacher, staff and governors have addressed the issues raised, particularly in improving the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, the pupils achieve well in most subjects and standards are rising. The teachers plan their lessons carefully and effectively. The headteacher and governors have strengthened the teaching in recent years, ensuring that teachers' expectations of pupils are much higher. There are very good monitoring procedures in place, signifying stronger leadership and management. As a result, there have been good improvements in the teaching, the assessment and support of special educational needs pupils and in the management of the special educational needs provision.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	D	D	D
Mathematics	B	D	C	C
Science	C	C	B	B

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

Currently the attainment on entry of children who first started school is in line with the standards expected of children of this age. They make good progress in most areas of learning and are likely to achieve the early learning goals in the areas of learning except in physical development, where the lack of suitable space and access to regular physical play restricts the progress the children make. In the tests for 7-year-olds, results show that attainment in reading was well below the national average. A very small number of pupils took the tests last year and a large proportion are on the school's special educational needs register. By contrast, writing standards were above average and mathematics results were average. Compared with similar schools, standards in reading were well below average and in mathematics they were below average. Writing standards were above average. In science, teachers' assessments show well above average standards. The 2000 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds show attainment in English was below the national average and compared with similar schools it was also below average. In mathematics attainment was average and in science it was above average. Compared with similar schools, mathematics standards were average and in science standards were above average. Standards in writing, mathematics and science show good improvement and the pupils are achieving well. Lower reading standards reflect the fact that less emphasis is placed on reading compared with that on writing in literacy lessons.

The inspection findings differ from the test results, indicating that standards in English are now in line with those expected at age 7 and 11. The pupils make good progress in writing and mathematics. Standards are improving and are now higher than reported in the previous inspection. This is the result of much better teaching and closer monitoring of pupils' progress. During the inspection the pupils made satisfactory progress in reading but could do better, particularly in developing more advanced reading skills such as inference, deduction and prediction. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils try hard and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The pupils respect the views of others and behave well in class and at other times. They are polite and courteous to visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Good overall. The pupils show initiative and are willing to help around school. Good relationships exist between staff and pupils.
Attendance	Good. There is very little unauthorised absence.

The pupils are attentive and usually well behaved in lessons and at break-times. The staff support and guide the pupils well and this is evident in the positive relationships between pupils and staff. The pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their positive attitudes to school and work. They are polite and courteous to each other and to visitors. The school provides well for its pupils in a supportive and encouraging working environment where everyone is valued and their views are respected.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching is good overall with a significant proportion that is very good. Good lessons were seen in all classes. Consequently, standards are improving; expectations are higher than they were in the last inspection, and the work being planned for the pupils is well matched to their capabilities. In all of the lessons seen, the teaching was at least satisfactory and most was good. Seventy-six per cent of the lessons seen were of good quality and forty-four per cent of the lessons observed were judged to be of high quality. The teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' learning in all subjects, except in reading where teachers are less inclined to focus on reading activities in the same way they do for writing. The teaching of children under five in the Foundation Stage is usually good and is often very good. The teaching of writing and numeracy is good and this has had an impact on standards achieved in these areas. There are shortcomings in the way that reading is taught. The school does not sufficiently focus on the teaching of reading, especially for pupils who are achieving higher than expected writing standards and have the potential to achieve high standards in reading. Pupils with statements of special educational needs receive effective support in English and as a result make good progress in literacy lessons. Other pupils with special educational needs are well supported within the school's planned curriculum because accurate assessments are made, placing them at appropriate learning stages.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is good in the Reception year and satisfactory in the rest of the school. The curriculum fully complies with statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The pupils are monitored closely and they are provided with effective support in lessons and at other times.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Satisfactory overall. Spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory and there is good provision for the pupils' social and moral development. The good relationships that exist help the pupils to reflect on their experiences and share their ideas and feelings with others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. Procedures for monitoring attendance are inconsistent. Pupils' academic progress is monitored very well.

The provision for children under five in the Reception year is good, except for physical development because of the unsatisfactory accommodation and lack of space. The teacher and educational care officer prepare effective lessons and skilfully combine these with very good literacy and numeracy lessons alongside older pupils in Year 1. In the rest of the school the curriculum is well planned and has improved since the last inspection. There are now much better assessments made of the pupils' progress and this helps teachers' planning which builds on the work done in previous lessons. There is

a good range of extra-curricular activities which include sporting activities and a homework booster club which are very well attended by older pupils. The school identifies and assesses pupils with special educational needs and provides effective and appropriate support within the planned curriculum.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good and effective leadership. He is well supported by the staff who now have clearly defined and appropriate roles to manage the curriculum and monitor pupils' progress.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors provide very good support. They are visible and hardworking, fulfilling their responsibilities very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are very good monitoring procedures in place which help the headteacher, staff and governors to evaluate the progress of the school.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of the school's budget. The staff are well deployed but accommodation is unsatisfactory.

The staff and governors are greatly influenced by the headteacher's clear leadership and enthusiasm to improve the school further. The management of the school is very good with very good procedures in place that enable the staff and governors to monitor teaching and learning. As a result, the governors and staff have a clear programme for school improvement. The school is now well placed to raise standards further. Since the last inspection staffing appointments have strengthened the teaching and the school's curriculum, resulting in rising standards. Good use is made of the limited accommodation and improvements have been made since the last inspection. But the lack of space limits the physical education programme and disrupts school routines when classrooms are used for assemblies and lunch-breaks. Children under five have little designated space for regular outdoor play using climbing apparatus and wheeled toys.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress. • The quality of teaching. • The school sets high expectations and expects the pupils to work hard. • The school helps the children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount and consistency of homework. • To be better informed about their children's progress. • The range of extra-curricular activities.

The inspection findings support all of the parents' positive views of the school. The quality of written information for parents is judged to be satisfactory, although its presentation could be improved with more information to help parents interpret National Curriculum levels of attainment. The overall quality of links with parents and the contribution of parents to their children's learning at school and at home are judged to be good. Extra-curricular activities, including the homework club, are good features of the school's additional provision.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Currently the attainment on entry of children who first started school is in line with the standards expected of children of this age. They make good progress in most areas of learning and as a result of the good teaching and the good level of additional support provided by the educational care officer. The children are likely to achieve the early learning goals except in their physical development, where the lack of suitable space and access to regular physical play restricts the progress the children make. The children have settled into school very well, remaining on task during self-chosen free choice activities and learn to sustain their concentration on tasks including activities that involve role-play. In previous years, the attainment on entry has varied because in some years there are very small cohorts of children starting school and the proportion identified with special educational needs ranges from low to high. Consequently, the children's early achievements on entry to the school have been below the standards expected for their age in some years and, together with the small numbers taking the National Curriculum tests at age 7, test results vary from year to year.
2. In the tests for 7-year-olds last year, results show that attainment in reading was well below the national average. A very small number of pupils took the tests last year and a large proportion are on the school's special educational needs register. By contrast, writing standards were above average and mathematics results were average. Compared with similar schools, standards in reading were well below average and in mathematics they were below average. Writing standards were above average. In science, teachers' assessments show well above average standards. Standards in writing and teacher assessments in science show very good improvement and the pupils are achieving well, reflecting the school's focus on writing and mathematics since its last inspection. Reading and mathematics results have fluctuated, reflecting the very small size of the cohort of pupils taking the tests each year. The pupils who did so well in the writing tests, made unsatisfactory progress in reading, reflecting the school's focus on writing and the lack of attention given to the teaching of reading.
3. The 2000 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds show attainment in English was below the national average and compared with similar schools it was also below average. In mathematics attainment was average and in science it was above average. Compared with similar schools, mathematics standards were average and in science standards were above average. Standards in writing, mathematics and science show good improvement and the pupils are achieving well. Lower reading standards reflect the fact that less emphasis is placed on reading compared with that on writing in literacy lessons. Test results in English have fluctuated from year to year, reflecting the fact that in some years there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. However, when measuring the progress that the same cohort of pupils made since they undertook the tests four years ago at the age of 7, compared with similar schools, English standards improved significantly and the progress that the same pupils made in mathematics and science was well above average. This has been achieved because the school has improved the teaching significantly and pupils' progress is monitored very closely to ensure that they achieve the targets set for them.

4. Throughout the school the pupils are making good progress because of the impact of the good teaching, which has continued to improve since the last inspection. This is reflected in the steady and sustained improvement in standards. The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has helped to raise standards, with most improvement shown in writing, numeracy and science. In the infant and junior classes, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher than average levels of attainment in the tests varies from year to year, with some years when the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is high. These fluctuating trends have a great impact on the overall standards achieved in the tests. Since the last inspection, the school has improved standards steadily, largely as a result of better teaching and very good management which has focused on measuring trends in test results and acting on any lapses in performance by individuals or groups of pupils. The intensive focus on writing has been successful in improving writing standards but this has been done without giving the same attention to reading. Consequently, the pupils have made less progress in reading compared with that of writing. Higher attaining pupils who achieved above average standards in writing did not make enough progress in reading and this is reflected in last year's test results.
5. Inspection evidence shows that the pupils are currently making good progress in English in both key stages, resulting in them achieving the standards expected for their age. Standards in speaking, listening and writing are higher than in reading because fewer pupils are reading to higher levels. One of the main reasons for this is that there is less emphasis placed on the higher levels of reading skills in literacy lessons. For example, most pupils can technically read well and with expression, recognising the punctuation, speech and narrative in the text. However, the pupils who achieve the standards expected and those who have the potential to reach high standards in reading do not read widely enough, nor is there sufficient emphasis placed on the more advanced reading skills of inference, deduction and prediction. Writing standards have improved in recent years because the school now teaches a broader range of writing so that pupils are able to write for different purposes and audiences. There are good opportunities for the pupils to use word banks or dictionaries in literacy lessons and, as a result, spelling rules are being consistently taught to consolidate the pupils' knowledge of words, letter sounds and spelling patterns.
6. In the infants, inspection evidence indicates that mathematics standards are in line with the standards expected of 7-year-olds. The pupils have a good understanding of number facts, and utilise different strategies to help them calculate problems mentally and orally. Junior pupils continue to make good progress, achieving standards that are above average for their age by the time they are 11. The teaching is well organised and challenging, enabling pupils of all abilities to improve their knowledge and understanding of numbers, shapes and measures. In science, attainment is above average. The pupils make good progress throughout the school and, by the time they are 11, standards are above those expected. The teaching enables the pupils to plan and organise simple experiments and investigations. The pupils are well supported by Educational Care Officers and this is particularly effective for the pupils with special educational needs. They understand how to prepare a fair test when undertaking their investigations.
7. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with those expected because the curriculum is well organised and the teaching is much better than it was in the last inspection, starting with infant pupils who are taught basic computer skills well. Teachers and support staff have improved their own competence and confidence in the subject, with many good examples of work being done in lessons across a range of subjects. As a result, the school provides a

balanced programme of ICT, with a combination of focused teaching of basic keyboard and computer skills as well as extension work when the pupils investigate or search for information as part of topics across a range of subjects.

8. The pupils make very good progress in art and design, achieving higher than expected standards for their age. In geography, history and music they make the nationally expected rate of progress, achieving the standards expected for their age. They make good progress in design and technology (DT) and religious education, achieving higher than expected standards in DT and reaching the standards expected in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The pupils make very good progress in swimming but the physical education curriculum is limited by the lack of indoor space and facilities. The school tries to compensate for this by using the local church hall and spaces around the school for outdoor games. Consequently, the pupils make satisfactory progress but have the potential to achieve higher standards if the facilities were available to extend gymnastics and dance further.
9. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall, particularly in reading, spelling and handwriting, as a result of precise and measurable targets in their individual education plans which inform all the teaching and planning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. All pupils, including those children who are not yet five and those with special educational needs, display very good attitudes to learning. In the lessons seen pupils concentrate very well, show an interest in whatever tasks are set them and are very keen to learn. It is to the credit of the teacher that attendance at the after-school booster mathematics class is 100 per cent and the pupils are enthusiastic about the subject.
11. Overall, pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good, with no recorded instances of exclusion. There are many examples of praise and encouragement being used by staff to promote positive behaviour. Pupils are polite and show respect for the books and resources they use. The different age groups mix well, both in class and at break and lunchtime. Messages of caring and sharing, spoken about during assembly, were observed in the playground. Two pupils were seen comforting another who had fallen over, while another pupil went for assistance. The playground has appropriate markings to assist with games but limited use is made of them. Instances of inappropriate behaviour are quickly and quietly dealt with.
12. Pupils with special educational needs display positive attitudes to work because they are given appropriate opportunities to succeed and their achievements are recognised and celebrated. They readily read aloud, conduct and record investigations and join in class discussions. Their behaviour is good, both in school and during visits to the swimming baths or in the local community. They are well motivated, attentive and co-operative. They are readily accepted by their peers and socialise independently in class and around school.
13. The school's approach towards encouraging good behaviour is effective and a variety of strategies are available for managing behaviour that is unacceptable. Generally, these work well, with staff having high expectations of how pupils should behave. While the staff are consistent in giving praise and encouragement, not all use the full range of strategies available to them for managing inappropriate behaviour within the classroom.

14. Relationships are good between all members of the school community. This is particularly noticeable in the tolerance and understanding pupils show to those who at times display some challenging behaviour.
15. The pupils willingly perform various jobs around the school such as ringing the bell for break times, and setting out equipment in classrooms. A regular feature of the school, caused by the lack of accommodation, is the removal of classroom furniture at various times of the day, in order that assembly can be held in two adjoining classrooms. Pupils perform this task with a minimum of fuss.
16. The level of attendance at the school is good. The consistently high expectation by staff of good behaviour contributes to the purposeful atmosphere of the school and good progress made by the pupils.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. The teaching is good overall, with a significant proportion that is very good. Good lessons were seen in all classes and appointments to the teaching staff since the last inspection have improved and strengthened the teaching. Consequently, standards are improving; expectations are higher than they were in the last inspection, and the work being planned for the pupils is very well matched to their capabilities. In all of the lessons seen, the teaching was at least satisfactory and the large majority was found to be good or better. Seventy-six per cent of the lessons seen were of good quality and forty-four per cent of all the lessons observed were judged to be of high quality. This standard of teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and their achievement in all subjects.
18. The teaching observed in the reception class was good, with a significant amount that was very good. The teacher and educational care officer have a very good understanding of how young children learn and provide a good balance of structured lessons as well as appropriate self-chosen and directed free choice practical activities for the children. The staff work well as a team, ensuring that work is well planned with clearly defined areas of responsibility for each adult when focusing on individuals or groups of children. The teaching is particularly effective in improving the children's speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. The children make good progress in all areas of learning, except in their physical development because there is insufficient space for the children to move around and explore and no regular access to climbing apparatus or the use of wheeled toys. The children are provided with good opportunities to read and write, with many children learning to spell simple words, recognising word shapes and letter sounds. Very good relationships exist with parents and it is encouraging to see so many of them helping. The school encourages parents to come into the reception class every morning to read with their children and help them change their books.
19. The teaching in the infant years is good. Half of the lessons seen were of high quality and the rest were good. As a result, the current cohort of Year 2 pupils are likely to achieve the expected standards in national tests. The small number of pupils taking the tests each year affects the overall results and the fact that in some years the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is higher than in other years. In the junior classes, the teaching continues to be good overall, ranging from satisfactory to very good, including one excellent lesson seen in Year 6. Throughout the school, literacy, numeracy and science lessons are well taught with good strategies used to provide work which is closely matched to the abilities of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The teachers prepare challenging

and interesting tasks that motivate and sustain the pupils' concentration, enabling them to work hard and persevere with tasks. There are some inconsistencies in the standards expected of pupils' behaviour and work rate in some classes. Nearly one in four lessons were judged to be satisfactory because expectations varied in different stages of the lessons. The most significant difference between satisfactory and good teaching is the pace and delivery of the introductions at the beginning and the plenary sessions at the end of the lesson. In the satisfactory lessons, which were mainly evident in junior classes, teachers sometimes labour a point or re-visit areas which are familiar to the pupils, resulting in some restlessness amongst pupils. The final summing up of these lessons is often too brief, leaving little scope for pupils to consolidate what they have learned. The most effective teaching brings together three distinct parts of the lesson, from introduction to the plenary with well-thought-out activities which challenge the pupils in the middle section of the lesson.

20. In most of the lessons seen, they had good structure so that time was provided for the pupils to ask questions and explain their methods, as, for example, in mathematics when calculating number problems mentally and orally. In literacy lessons, during individual and group work in the main part of the lesson, the teachers are clear about the support they are going to provide, ensuring that the planning each week enables them and the educational care officers to focus on particular groups of pupils. Most of the literacy lessons seen had a specific writing focus with some good reading activities planned. However, the same rigour applied to the quality of pupils' writing is not always evident when pupils are engaged in reading activities. Consequently, and over time, the pupils are making less progress in reading than in writing.
21. The teachers use good assessment procedures to monitor the pupils' progress in all subjects. Work is usually marked up to date and in some classes the marking is of a very high standard because it is clear what the pupils have to do to improve further. In the excellent and very good lessons seen, teachers were much more alert to the pace of pupils' learning, ensuring that there is sufficient time for the pupils to record their work and teachers circulating to ensure that the work is marked and the pupils remain on task. In the juniors, very good use is made of homework, including a very well attended homework club every week, which enables the pupils to practise mathematical skills and to reinforce their learning.

22. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is consistently good. As a result, the pupils achieve well and make good progress. Good assessment procedures accurately place pupils at learning stages and this enables teachers to build on their prior learning. Targets in pupils' individual education plans are precise and measurable and these provide a focus for the work. Teachers plan their lessons well, present work at an appropriate level, and ask questions so that all the pupils can succeed and participate in class discussions. They manage the pupils in a positive way. This helps them to settle into class routines and become more confident learners. Very effective and planned support from Education Care Officers, in, for example, the reception and Year 1 class, and in English, mathematics and science in the rest of the school, enables teachers to engage all the pupils in planned class discussions and investigative work. As a result, the pupils with special educational needs gain in confidence and self-esteem.

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

23. The school has improved and refined its curriculum since the previous inspection and now provides a broad, balanced and well-planned curriculum, which meets statutory requirements. The curriculum is socially inclusive and all pupils have equality of access and opportunity. The progress of pupils of all ages is effectively promoted.
24. Both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects of the curriculum and there is an appropriate range of activities for pupils aged under five. However, the physical development and personal, social and emotional development of pupils aged under five is restricted by the lack of a dedicated play area and large play apparatus. Similarly, the physical education programme for older pupils is compromised by the lack of suitable indoor facilities for gymnastics. Planning for all subjects is very good and includes long-term, medium-term and weekly plans. The school makes good use of teaching time to deliver foundation subjects and religious education with learning experiences which are of good quality.
25. While there is good informal personal, social and health education in terms of fostering co-operation and self-esteem, there is not yet a planned formal programme of lessons. The governors have decided that sex education should be included in the curriculum but have yet to produce a written policy with regard to the content and organisation. The school is aware of these shortcomings and plans are in hand to address them. Education about drug misuse is included in the initiative on healthy eating. Circle time is utilised to provide opportunities for pupils to express their feelings and share views.
26. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils who have special educational needs are identified as early as possible and appropriate steps are taken to assess their needs, write individual education plans and provide appropriate support. These plans are reviewed regularly and provide the necessary detail to enable teachers to plan relevant learning experiences. Appropriate emphasis is placed on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils with special educational needs have equality of access to the planned curriculum and the range of extra-curricular activities.

27. The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Whole school assemblies are undertaken in two adjoining junior classrooms because the school has no hall or space other than classrooms for large groups to gather in. This is disruptive to the normal routine of the day because tables and chairs have to be cleared and then replaced after assembly. Assemblies are satisfactorily planned and teachers share responsibility for leading these. In one assembly, the pupils were taught about the values that people hold in relation to money, wealth and material possessions. The headteacher evoked good discussion by involving the pupils. Work in religious education and in personal and social education provides the pupils with some opportunities to reflect on the spiritual and cultural dimensions to daily life. For example, the pupils learn about spirituality and cultures other than those experienced by the pupils in some world faiths such as Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Islam. Although sufficient attention is given to these aspects of the planned curriculum through religious education and personal and social education, there is still room for improvement as the school community is mainly monocultural and the pupils have little experience of other pupils and families from ethnic minorities.
28. The school provides well for the pupils' social and moral development. The pupils are given many opportunities to contribute to the life of the school. The school encourages the pupils to help others less fortunate than they are by supporting local and international charities. It arranges a good number of educational visits to places of interest such as the Manchester Jewish Museum, theatre visits, walks in the local area as part of environmental education, and a mosque in Derby. The staff are very good role models and reinforce good values every day. The school functions as a caring and supportive community where every pupil is valued and relationships are good as a result.
29. Extra-curricular activities are good and benefit the pupils significantly. In addition to a wide range of inter-school sports activities, there are weekly clay, craft and computer clubs and a residential week at an outdoor pursuits centre. Transfer arrangements into secondary school are good and the school benefits from its mutually supportive links with its local cluster primary schools.
30. The school has established good links with the local community to enrich curricular opportunities for all pupils. For example, the police, fire service, and representatives from the Royal National Institute for the Blind, National Children's Homes and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals are invited into the school to enhance the knowledge and understanding of pupils. These are in addition to the parents and ex-parents who come into the school regularly to assist in class, in swimming and with extra-curricular activities. However, more use should be made of the local environment to improve pupils' enquiry and investigative skills in history and geography.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. Arrangements for ensuring that the school is a safe, supportive environment are good. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. There are good procedures for the administration of first aid. Governors and staff have identified areas of the school in need of development regarding health and safety and take appropriate action. To date, the expertise of the building site supervisor is not utilised to its full extent to assist with routine health and safety checks and regular audits.
32. The school has very good systems to identify, assess and monitor pupils with special educational needs at an early stage. The subsequent support they receive to attain

individual targets enables them to make good progress. The school fully implements the requirements of the Code of Practice. The benefit of being a small school, where each pupil is known as an individual, their strengths encouraged and their weaknesses supported, is evident throughout the school. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress is very good and this has a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers keep good records of pupils' progress and these assessments help in their planning and monitoring of pupils' work. Learning support for pupils is targeted according to their specific learning needs and capabilities and is effective. An initial assessment is completed when the children start school. The National Curriculum assessment tests and results from other tests in reading, writing, spelling and numeracy are carefully analysed to set targets for groups and individual pupils. Tracking systems in English and mathematics provide valuable information about the performance of individual pupils and help teachers to plan future work. Teachers in other subjects store examples of the pupils' work periodically during the year. This work is dated, annotated and judged in National Curriculum levels and is used to demonstrate progress and inform curricular planning. All pupils' work, including homework, is regularly and positively marked but teachers' written comments as to how pupils might improve are inconsistent. Their work is not always marked in a way that helps them to make progress. Teachers' marking often consists of a positive comment without reference to the points for further improvement. However, in some classes, in addition to encouraging comments, teachers help pupils to identify exactly what they have to do next in order to improve. The monitoring of pupils' personal development as they move through the school is good.

33. The support for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school is successful in providing specific or additional support for pupils with special educational needs. All staff are aware of the procedures for identifying, assessing and providing for such pupils and the school fully complies with the legal requirements set out in the Code of Practice. Pupils' individual education plans and statements are regularly reviewed and parents are fully involved and kept well informed. The special needs co-ordinator is aware of the contents of all statements. She arranges, attends and invites key people to all reviews, and ensures that the provision is re-examined in the light of any progress or regression that the pupils have made. The school is able to call on the advice and support of a range of external services to improve its care and provision, including the Primary Support Teaching Service and Psychological Service.
34. Personal, social and health education, which includes sex education, bullying and drugs awareness, was seen as a weakness in the last inspection and remains so. The school is aware of this and has quite rightly identified it as an area for development.
35. Regular attendance at school is encouraged with clear messages to parents of the importance of contacting the school if their child is absent. Registers are checked regularly but an inconsistent approach by staff to recording attendance means the school's present procedure for recording and monitoring pupils' absence lacks rigour.

36. The high expectations set by the staff, the home-school partnership, the positive ethos of care and support with a clear commitment to raising standards, the good behaviour of pupils and the warm relationships throughout the school community, together make a positive contribution towards raising the pupils' achievements.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

37. The partnership with parents and use of the wider community to help support pupils' learning is good. Parents and carers speak highly of the school. They are supportive of its aims and values and appreciate the improvements in all areas during the past few years.
38. During the last inspection communications with parents were judged as poor. Significant improvement has been made in this area. There are now satisfactory written communications with parents, keeping them informed of day-to-day matters. Home-school reading records are used by parents and staff as a means of dialogue about pupils' progress in this area. The parents of children in the reception class are invited in to discuss initial assessments carried out soon after their children start at the school. However, the school has identified as a priority the need to improve home-school information and bring the school prospectus up to date. The inspection team agrees with this. Little information is available to parents about what their children are learning in school. The school prospectus, while satisfactory overall, still has some minor omissions. The governors' annual report to parents fails to comply with a number of legal requirements and the format does little to encourage parents to read it. Pupils' end of year progress reports are satisfactory though variable in quality. They explain to parents what their children have done in a particular subject but not always if progress is sufficient or how they can improve.
39. The partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. Parents are kept well informed by a booklet provided from the Local Education Authority and by the good information provided by the school. Pupils' targets, progress and achievements are shared with parents in order to maximise their support and co-operation. Annual reviews are well attended. Parents spoke positively of the school's special needs provision at the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector.
40. A large number of adults help at the school with a variety of tasks from listening to children read, to assisting with the organisation of swimming lessons. The school holds a number of social and fundraising events that are well supported. Parents are quick to lend support to specific requests for help such as the recent "grounds tidy" day and were responsible for making the blinds in one of the classrooms to help make it a bright and cheerful learning environment. The strong support of parents and the community to engage in a partnership with the school to support its aims does much to raise standards, enhances the self-esteem of the pupils and contributes to their development in all aspects. The partnership with parents and use of the wider community to help support pupils' learning is good. Parents and carers speak highly of the school. They are supportive of its aims and values and appreciate the improvements in all areas since the last inspection.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The headteacher provides very good, effective leadership. He has managed the school during a period of disruption and since its first inspection when it was failing to provide a satisfactory standard of education. Since then the school has embarked on a course of consistent improvement and since the last inspection this has continued because of the clear educational direction and support provided by the headteacher and senior staff. Teaching appointments since the last inspection have strengthened the teaching and at the same time increased the capacity for the school to improve further. There is a determination, which is being greatly influenced by the personal dedication of the headteacher, staff and governors to raise standards. The management of the school is very good, with very good procedures which monitor teaching and learning.
42. The governors are knowledgeable and experienced and are very committed to the needs of the school and its pupils. They are visible and involved in the work of the school and are often seen helping in classrooms. The governors monitor lessons along with the headteacher and subject leaders, and this gives them a clear insight into the work being done and the progress that the pupils are making. As a result of these monitoring visits, the governors produce written reports about the work that pupils do and these are shared at full governors' meetings along with the headteacher's report on the progress of the school. This is very good practice and it enables the governors to have a clear insight into the work that pupils do and the progress they are making.
43. Subject leaders draw up action plans and have good plans in place to monitor and support staff in their respective subjects and areas of responsibility. Resources are well managed and the co-ordinators look at teachers' planning. Co-ordinators are supported by the headteacher, who helps them prepare an effective curriculum and professional development programme for the staff. The deployment of educational care officers has been successful in helping them to provide highly skilled intervention programmes that involve teaching individuals and groups of pupils.
44. The accommodation is unsatisfactory and has a negative impact on pupils' attainment and progress. The physical, personal, social and emotional development of pupils under five is restricted by the lack of a dedicated play area and the lack of large toys and apparatus. The physical education programme for older children is compromised by the lack of a suitable indoor area for gymnastics. In addition, valuable curriculum time is wasted by the need to rearrange furniture and classrooms in order to bring all pupils together for assemblies and school meals. Despite the school's best efforts, the library area remains a corridor and is not conducive to pupils browsing or researching books and one classroom is too small so that pupils are more easily distracted and learning is less efficient. While the accommodation for pupils with the existing range of special educational needs is adequate, there are no facilities for pupils and adults with physical disabilities. There has been no major improvement in accommodation since the previous inspection other than in its security. The internal accommodation is in good decorative order and is considerably enhanced by attractive displays of pupils' work representing the range of curriculum subjects. While the accommodation for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, there are no facilities for pupils and adults with physical disabilities. The school makes good use of its limited space.
45. The special needs provision is well managed and co-ordinated by the special educational needs co-ordinator. She provides professional leadership for her

colleagues and has raised the profile of special needs so that it is now seen as a whole school issue. Staff and resources are well deployed to match the needs of pupils. The special needs provision is effectively monitored by the headteacher and the governor with responsibility for special educational needs.

46. The overall number, qualifications and experience of teachers and educational care officers is good and matches the demands of the school curriculum, and the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those of children under five and in the infant and junior years. Pupil:teacher ratios are good. The newly qualified teacher is well supported and is made to feel part of the team. The number of midday supervisors available to supervise pupils on the playground is adequate. They have attended training, and as a result are more effective in their interactions with pupils. The cleaner in charge gives freely of her time and works hard to maintain the accommodation to a very high standard. The school secretary is efficient in helping the headteacher with the school's administration.
47. The resources of the school are good overall. They are well used and easily accessible and an improvement since the previous inspection. In particular, the resources for literacy, numeracy, children in the Foundation Stage and information communication technology have been improved. Good resources motivate pupils to learn and allow teachers to use a range of strategies to enhance learning.
48. Financial planning is good and specific grants are used well. The governors are prudent in their budgeting, and the short-term financial planning is good. The school development and strategic management plans are well set out, showing priorities for further improvement. The well-established finance committee targets specific areas for development and ensures that spending provides value for money. The commitment of the headteacher and governors is reflected in the significant proportion of the school's budget that is used for additional support for pupils with special educational needs. The recommendations of the local authority audit have been acted upon. Secretarial and administrative support is of a very high standard and this helps the school to operate efficiently and effectively. The school budget is managed well and financial control and administration are good. The full governing body agrees the budget allocations annually and governors monitor expenditure regularly. The local authority supports the school by providing financial statements and good use is made of information technology to support the smooth running of the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve the quality of education further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- * **Raise attainment in English further so that:**
 - more pupils achieve higher standards in reading to match the standards they achieve in writing;
 - reading activities are specifically planned in literacy lessons that are aimed at teaching advanced reading skills such as inference, deduction and prediction using progressively challenging reading materials;
 - better use is made of the library as well as improving library facilities further to improve the pupils' library and research skills.

(Paragraphs: 5, 20, 59-60, 62-63, 66, 69)

* **Improve the school's accommodation further:**

- to provide an adequate programme of physical education, particularly dance and gymnastics;
- to alleviate the disruption caused when classrooms have to be disturbed to accommodate school assemblies;
- to provide children who are under five with regular access to outdoor physical play using large climbing apparatus and wheeled toys.

(Paragraphs: 24, 44, 118, 120.)

OTHER LESS SERIOUS AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

* **Ensure that:**

- attendance registers are marked consistently by all staff and monitored more closely.
- the annual governors' report to parents and the school prospectus have all the required information and there is a need to review the way these are presented so that the school's work and progress is clearly reported to parents.

(Paragraphs: 25, 35, 38, 57.)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	29
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	41	31	24			

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	109
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	22

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	22

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000			10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	8	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (67)	100 (67)	100 (80)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	9	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (70)	100 (70)	100 (80)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	8	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	11
	Girls	6	5	7
	Total	15	14	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (75)	70 (76)	90 (75)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	10
	Girls	6	5	7
	Total	15	14	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (75)	70 (75)	85 (75)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	100
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.3
Average class size	22

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	46

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	195,219
Total expenditure	198,312
Expenditure per pupil	1,627
Balance brought forward from previous year	26,432
Balance carried forward to next year	23,339

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	109
Number of questionnaires returned	63

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	41	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	41	3	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	52	8	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	41	16	5	3
The teaching is good.	68	27	2	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	33	17	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	30	8	6	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	35	0	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	49	37	8	6	0
The school is well led and managed.	56	32	10	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	49	5	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	32	25	8	8

Other issues raised by parents

The parents are pleased with their children's progress and they believe that the staff work very hard to ensure that standards rise. A large number of parents feel that the school is very approachable and they feel welcome and involved in school activities.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

49. When the children are first assessed, the records show that, on entry to the reception class, children have a wide range of attainment in their language skills, in mathematics and in their physical, personal and social development. The children's attainment is broadly in line with the standards expected for their age when they first start school. This has varied from year to year, so that in some years attainment is lower than expected overall because of differences in the cohort size and the proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs. There are twelve children in the reception class; six of them began school in September because they will be five years of age before the end of April. The rest of the class joined the school in January. The reception children are taught alongside Year 1 pupils in a large and well-resourced classroom which has appropriate facilities and designated areas for children under five as well as facilities for the Year 1 pupils who are taught the early stages of the National Curriculum. Relationships with parents are very good and this helps the children to settle quickly and begin learning.
50. Provision is good in all the six areas of learning which comprise the new Foundation Stage for the early years. Detailed planning ensures that the curriculum is based on the six areas of learning appropriate for reception children. It includes specific learning objectives for all of the activities. There is an appropriate balance between teacher-directed learning and 'free choice' activities which are structured to allow pupils to develop their creative, imaginative and physical skills.
51. Teaching in the reception class is good and this ensures that all the children achieve well. The teacher and educational care officer work very well as a team and they have a very good understanding of how young children learn, resulting in activities that are well chosen to achieve appropriate learning objectives. Work is planned to provide challenge for all of the children. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught and this is giving children a firm grounding. The adults use regular assessments of the children's progress and these are used well to plan the next steps in their learning. The children with special educational needs are identified very early and are given good support. By the end of the reception year most children are in line to attain the early learning goals in all the areas of learning and some will exceed these.

Personal, social and emotional development

52. The provision for personal, social and emotional development is given a high priority by the staff and they soon get to know the children well. There is a wide variation in the children's development in this area and most show a good degree of independence and confidence for their age because the teaching is good with many very good features. Most can concentrate for appropriate periods in group or class sessions and are enthusiastic about their learning, wanting to share their ideas and experiences, for example when talking during the "Show and Tell" sessions. One child enjoyed talking about his toy spaceship and other children were invited to ask him questions about it. They are learning to share and take turns and to say 'please' and 'thank you.' Routines are well established and the children know what is expected of them. Their behaviour is good. They are beginning to take responsibility for themselves and others by helping to tidy up and clear away. When the children are involved in directed and self-chosen activities, especially during role-play in the mock

“Travel Agents”, the children are thoroughly absorbed in their roles, talking, listening and responding, co-operating and sharing. The children stay in role and sustain an activity when choosing from those provided by the staff. All the children are in line to achieve the early learning goals in this area and a few have already done so. This is due to the skilful intervention and teaching by adults which has helped the children, through play and instruction, to improve their confidence, self-esteem and independence in a secure and varied learning environment. The children make good progress in this area of learning and are likely to achieve the early learning goals.

Communication, language and literacy

53. The children are given many opportunities to speak and to listen, including informal times such as “Show and Tell” and focused literacy lessons. The teaching is very good in this area of learning. The children learn their letter sounds and distinguish print from illustration in books during very good shared reading sessions. All of the children are able to express themselves and some use words well for their age, matching rhyming words. The children enjoy listening to stories and join in the reading of the ‘big’ book together, and some are beginning to recognise words and phrases. The educational care officer skilfully teaches the youngest reception children as they focus on a “Monster Story”, looking at words and pictures and responding well to questions such as “Can you remember which character was last in the story?”. They like to discuss the story and to predict what might happen. Older children work with the teacher who uses very effective teaching techniques when asking the children to spell out words by “stretching them”. The children respond by “picking up the word”, gesturing with their hands as they do so, then sounding out the letter sounds in the word; for example, “cram” is stretched out as “*crrraaammm*”. They are beginning to learn the names and sounds of letters and how to write them. They write their own names and are forming their letters accurately. Higher attaining children read simple books by themselves and are starting to tackle new words, using their good knowledge of initial letter sounds, but are less confident when identifying letter sounds at the end of words. Other children know some key words and ‘read’ stories by using the pictures as clues.
54. During role-play in the “Travel Shop”, good spoken language is used and the children respond well because resources are available for them to talk, listen and respond. For example, the toy telephone is situated next to the office table in the shop and alongside there is a notepad. The children answer the phone, take notes and place orders for holiday destinations. The teacher and educational care officer take turns to evoke language and link this very well to other areas of learning, especially when they tell the children “I would like to go somewhere hot”. The children respond by scanning through the travel brochures and pointing out “hot places” where there are pictures of beaches and sunny holiday locations. The teaching is good and, as a result, by the time they enter Year 1, almost all the children will have achieved the early learning goals, with some exceeding them.

Mathematical development

55. The children make good progress in their mathematical development and the teaching is very good. By the end of the reception year most children will have reached the early learning goals and some will have exceeded them. The attainment of the children is variable but work is well matched to individual needs and assessments are carried out regularly to ensure this. The educational care officer and teacher share the teaching well so that children can work in small groups with an adult. All the children confidently count sets of objects, usually up to ten, and they understand the meaning of 'one or two more or less.' They recognise numerals up to ten and can write most of them. The younger children are beginning to count accurately with support. Higher attaining children are able to carry out and record simple addition and subtraction sums, using the appropriate vocabulary. Good teaching techniques are used to reinforce their learning; for example, the teacher draws the shape of a number in the air and says "What's my number?". As a result, the children are developing an understanding of number, shape and pattern. Very good counting techniques are used by both adults to reinforce important stages in counting sequences; for example, when counting to 10 and 20 the children show their hands and fingers, calling out every time they reach "five" by lifting up the whole hand. In this way the children learn the importance of the value of numbers as well as their position on a number line and are beginning to count in groups of five and ten. All of the children know the names of simple two-dimensional shapes and can recognise them quickly. Very good use is made of practical resources and counting apparatus; for example, younger children are making very good progress in learning to recognise numbers and matching this by connecting duplo bricks. Real-life experiences are also used well to reinforce practical and real-life situations. The teacher shows the children items bought from a supermarket, each labelled with its price. They successfully work out how much they spend and how much is left when giving the shopkeeper the specified amount, using money items up to £1. Throughout the focused numeracy lessons the very skilful intervention and teaching by both adults makes a significant contribution to children's learning in this area of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

56. The teaching is often good because opportunities are not missed to discuss the wider world. As a result, the provision for the development of the children's knowledge and understanding of the world is good and ensures that they all have a wide range of experiences. The children were observed choosing materials, textiles and resources to test which materials stretched the most. Good links were made with the story of the "Enormous Turnip" and this helped the children to visualise the effects of stretching and forces. In another area, the children have made models and have investigated "How things work". The children enjoy talking about other places when they roleplay in the "Travel Shop". They enjoy talking about holidays, journeys and the differences between hot and cold places. In this way the children are beginning to compare their own experiences with real and imagined places in the wider world. The children use the computer, some dressing 'Teddy', and discuss how they could be dressed in different situations or climates. Other activities are planned to develop their wider knowledge and understanding of the world, for example of plants and animals. They build and construct using a range of construction kits and have used boxes, card and a range of materials to produce models that represent a story or a vehicle. Computers are used regularly in the classroom to support literacy and numeracy and the children enjoy using the computer to observe and listen to stories and to create simple pictures. The children are becoming confident in using the computer's pointing device to click, drag and rearrange images or click and point at familiar

objects in the storybook programs. They enjoy listening to stories using tape recorders and are learning to use new technology to support their learning. A strength of the teaching is the way in which each area is linked to the specific topic or theme of the week. In the water play area the children discuss what happens to ice blocks as they are placed in the water. This evoked good discussion with the educational care officer who probed and questioned further, resulting in the children pausing to think about their answer and sharing ideas about the changes to water and ice.

Physical development

57. Despite the lack of facilities caused by the limited space in the school, the physical development of pupils is as expected and most will achieve the early learning goals by the end of the year. The children have limited access to a secure outdoor area, therefore restricting opportunities to ride tricycles and use climbing and play equipment regularly. The children have planned sessions of physical education every week in the classroom, and they participate in activities enthusiastically to develop appropriate skills. This is also very limited because the adults have to supervise very closely to ensure that the children do not run into each other or stretch too far and collide with others. The children were observed during a gymnastics and movement session where, together with Year 1 pupils, they skilfully adapted body shapes and movement, improvising to instructions by the teacher. They listen well to instructions and are able to co-operate, working individually to produce some good balances and body shapes. Their movements are restricted by the lack of space but fine and gross motor skills are generally well developed and most children show good control. The children demonstrate good control and skill when using scissors and pencils. A range of tools has been used to create models and collages. Children spread glue very carefully when making their own collage. Most are able to use the computer mouse confidently and skilfully.

Creative development

58. Provision for creative development is good and a wide range of activities is provided which allow the children to use malleable materials to sculpt and mould, paints to produce pictures, for example the "Big Bad Wolf" in the "Little Red Riding Hood" story, and other artefacts and materials such as paper and card when making models of vehicles, spaceships and houses. The children sing nursery rhymes and songs from memory along with Year 1 pupils, although younger reception children are a little tentative and try to keep up with others. They listen to recorded music on a compact disc player and can explain what they hear; for example, the rhythm is "like a heartbeat". In assembly they sing confidently, along with older pupils, and know all the words and actions to songs. Other materials, including textiles, are provided to allow them to make collages. The children enjoy choosing their own materials by texture or colour and use them creatively to make their pictures or collages. They enjoy imaginative painting and experimenting with ready mixed paints. The children are making good progress and are in line to achieve the early learning goals because of the good teaching they receive.

ENGLISH

59. The standards the pupils attained in the national tests in 2000 were below the national average in reading at age seven and above average in writing. Standards were below the national average at 11 in English. Compared with similar schools, attainment at age 11 was also below average. However, standards in English are improving, in line with national trends, and are now much higher than four years ago. This is the result of better teaching the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, closer monitoring of how well the pupils are doing and the effective grouping of pupils during literacy lessons so that all pupils are provided with challenging work. The impact of the improvements made since the appointment of the current headteacher is beginning to be realised, resulting in standards that are now in line with those expected. The evidence from pupils' work in English books in all year groups shows that the majority of pupils are achieving the standards expected for their age and they are making good progress. Writing standards have improved significantly because the school has focused on writing over the last two years and has managed to broaden the range and scope of pupils' writing. However, reading standards are not high enough because too few pupils are reading with understanding and those with the capability to read to a high standard are not reading widely enough. The school has monitored pupils' work closely and has identified areas for further improvement, especially in reading standards which show that they are lower than those in writing. This is also confirmed in inspection findings and the results of last year's National Curriculum test results.
60. Throughout the school, the pupils are making good progress in speaking, listening and writing because the teaching is good. In particular, when the pupils' end-of-Key Stage 2 results are compared with their results at the age of seven, good progress is seen over the four years. However, reading standards vary across the school because the range and quality of reading material is not challenging enough, especially for those pupils who have the capability of achieving higher than expected standards in reading and writing. The school has recognised this and has been addressing it as a priority in the school's development plan. The improvements in the planning, teaching and resources are having a significant impact on the standards that the current cohort of pupils are achieving and, consequently, they are likely to achieve the levels expected for their age in reading, but higher attaining pupils are underachieving in reading because the focus of most literacy lessons has been on writing development with less emphasis placed on the teaching of reading.
61. Attainment in speaking and listening is in line with that expected at age seven and 11. By the age of seven the pupils are interested in their work and in making contributions to the class's discussions about stories and non-fiction accounts. Throughout the school, both boys and girls respond well to the texts they share in whole class work and class discussions are an important part of literacy lessons. Younger juniors are able to work co-operatively when, for example, they listen to each other's suggestions as they discuss the use of speech marks and can distinguish between speech and narrative when reading aloud. By the age of eleven, the pupils make useful contributions to the introductory and plenary sessions of lessons. In an excellent lesson on "Issues in the news", the pupils confidently answered questions about the way that language changes to create different effects, such as that found in newspaper headlines. Year 6 pupils use a good range of vocabulary to explain their ideas. For example, when discussing persuasive arguments for and against the way animals are treated, the pupils suggested good alternatives when the teacher revealed descriptive words from the text, such as "neglectful" or "harmful" instead of "cruel". Across the curriculum, good opportunities are provided for the pupils to use

speaking and listening skills. In assemblies the pupils express their opinions about the stories they have heard.

62. The school's successful implementation of the literacy strategy is beginning to have a positive impact upon standards. However, reading standards, although broadly in line with those expected in all year groups, ought to be higher so that they match the high standards that older pupils achieve in writing. Boys and girls achieve similar standards in reading but those pupils who have the capability to achieve high standards in reading do not because they are not specifically targeted or provided with extended reading activities in most literacy lessons. Overall the pupils are keen readers but they are not reading widely enough, nor are they interrogating different types of text sufficiently to be able to infer, predict or offer opinions on different genres or styles. They enjoy reading aloud to a group or an adult and are technically good readers. However, when asked about the context of the text or the setting and the intentions of the author, the pupils are less confident and offer simple explanations, signifying that they do not read regularly enough or experience a broad range of reading. The most able infant pupils know how to use the contents, index and glossary sections of non-fiction books to help them to locate information. The junior pupils review the books they have read and explain why they like particular authors or types of books. When they read aloud they can read with expression, recognising that punctuation is used to change emphasis or denote narration and speech but do not always understand subtle changes in the text where the author uses figurative language.
63. In a very good literacy lesson, infant pupils in Year 2 were able to identify key words and information from non-fiction books about insects. The lesson rightly focused on reading and enabled the pupils to improve the way they gather information. Higher attaining pupils produced some good quality writing as a result but insufficient time was spent focusing on the reading to provide them with challenging activities that enabled them to interrogate the text further or to cross-reference information from other related books. The Year 6 pupils scan information text efficiently and are able to pick out relevant parts to identify key messages but they need to have the interpretation or meaning explained to them, for example when forming an argument about issues related to animals, the environment and the way that humans influence or affect these. The structure of literacy lessons includes the recommended whole class shared reading where the text is displayed on a white board or an overhead projector. Reading aloud in a group is used to improve fluency but there is less focused reading in small groups with an adult, which enables the pupils to interrogate and deconstruct what they read. Parents are encouraged to come into school to hear pupils read, especially in the infant classes, and most pupils regularly take home books to read to their parents and other adults. The school does not fully utilise its library areas, partly due to the limited space available. During the inspection very little use was made of the library as a reading resource.
64. A key issue in the last report in 1998 was to monitor pupils' progress more closely. This has been achieved successfully, resulting in higher standards in writing. The school has improved the teaching of spelling, punctuation, and handwriting, as well as improving the quality of pupils' writing for a range of purposes across the curriculum. The whole school follows a scheme of work for spelling; the pupils work systematically on the exercises and take spellings home to learn on a regular basis. In the infant and junior classes, a good range of opportunities for writing for different purposes is provided and there is an improving trend in the quality of the writing. This improvement is the result of good planning and clear teaching of the skills required, together with the accurate way in which the pupils' work is marked and assessed.

65. The pupils are making good progress in developing writing skills and standards are in line with those expected at age 7 and 11. By the age of 7, the pupils are able to use capital letters and full stops. They are able to use their good knowledge of letter sounds to spell words correctly and teachers use good techniques to encourage writing. For example, in a very good infant lesson, the pupils used small individual white boards and marker pens to write with. As a result, the pupils are beginning to make good progress in word and sentence work throughout the school. Year 1 and 2 pupils are writing clearly with well-formed letters and spelling is usually accurate. Year 3 and 4 pupils are able to write sentences using commas to break up each sentence. In the lesson observed, the pupils read aloud, recognising that the text requires commas to help them pause when reading. These reading and writing activities show good progress in the development and use of relevant vocabulary. The older junior pupils make useful notes after discussing the characteristics of persuasive arguments in writing. They can draft a clear account of the information discussed in the text and interrogate the writing further to contract the writing to produce headlines and captions. By the age of 11, a significant proportion of pupils are able to produce writing of a high standard. In the excellent lesson observed, Year 6 pupils were able to produce a balanced argument about the treatment of animals. Their writing was clear and well illustrated with descriptive language using adjectives and adverbs.
66. Overall the pupils' presentation of written work is good and teachers demonstrate or model a good joined style when writing on white boards. This helps the pupils to produce a fluent and joined handwriting script which is developing well as the pupils move through the school. The writing shows that the pupils are using their knowledge of letter sounds to spell regular and common words accurately. The school has rightly focused on writing using the recommended structure of the National Literacy Strategy but the same attention is not always given to reading, especially in improving further the standards of reading among higher attaining pupils.
67. The pupils with special educational needs have detailed individual action plans; these are followed carefully and the teaching is well focused on the areas for development. The pupils are very well supported by educational care officers within the literacy sessions and, as a result, the pupils work confidently and make good progress. Some pupils are provided with additional literacy support sessions which are aimed at ensuring that the pupils reach the learning targets in line with the standards expected for their age.
68. The teaching is good and there were no unsatisfactory lessons seen. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent. Most of the teaching seen was good. The teachers have a good understanding of how to teach reading and writing; they are very clear about what will be learned in lessons and plan work that builds successfully on what the pupils of all abilities already know and can do. They choose texts that will appeal to the boys as well as the girls, ensuring that the pupils have access to a rich and wide vocabulary to promote the use of interesting descriptive words. The teachers understand the need for the pupils to think through their ideas before they begin to write. The discussion, for example, about key words in the non-fiction text about "Mini-beasts" in Years 1 and 2, and the characteristics of writing in a balanced argument in Year 6, help the pupils to improve their reading and writing skills. The teaching has concentrated on improving the quality of handwriting, spelling and punctuation by giving the pupils time to construct and redraft their writing. The same attention and focus is not always evident in reading and this is demonstrated in the difference between attainment in reading and writing in the National Curriculum tests.

Teachers mark work regularly and test the pupils often, helping them to set individual learning targets linked to the National Curriculum levels.

69. The teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and work rate and this helps the pupils to settle quickly and complete their work. The pupils are clear about the work they are to carry out individually and the tasks are sufficiently challenging with teachers revisiting work from previous lessons to help them build on what they already know. The pupils are being consistently taught common spelling patterns to learn spelling rules. During literacy lessons, teachers and educational care officers provide support for groups of pupils during guided reading or writing tasks. These sessions are well organised and provide opportunities for small groups of pupils to read together and focus on the same text. However, the tasks are not always sufficiently challenging or long enough to extend the pupils' reading further, especially in developing the higher reading skills of inference, deduction and prediction. Too much time is spent on improving fluency and vocabulary and less time devoted to the meaning of text or the interpretation of the author's intention.
70. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator has a clear overview of the subject and has identified areas for development. She has been able to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in other classes. Teachers have confidently implemented the Literacy Strategy through effective training. The resources are well managed and organised to support literacy lessons and there is a good range of reading books for the pupils to use at home. The lack of space limits the school's capacity to have a fully functional library.

MATHEMATICS

71. Standards in mathematics are improving and are now higher than reported in the previous inspection. This is the result of better teaching and the successful adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy in all classes. Test results for 7-year-olds are about average and have improved more quickly than in most schools over the last three years. Results for 11-year-olds are now slightly above the national average, not least because of the good number of pupils reaching the higher level 5. In the 2000 tests, the 11-year-olds achieved particularly well compared with their results four years earlier when they were 7. At the end of the infants and juniors, test results are now about the same as those found in similar schools. The school has achieved its targets for the number of pupils reaching the expected level in Year 6 and is well on course to continue the improvement.
72. Attainment by the age of 7 is average and almost all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving appropriately. Infant pupils are confident in number work where they can identify sequences and patterns, for example counting forwards and backwards in ones, twos and tens. They all understand addition and subtraction well, using secure mental recall and practical equipment such as number rods and 100 squares to help them. Brighter pupils are beginning to use their understanding of tens and units to develop their own calculation methods for bigger numbers. Some could achieve more in using their good estimation and number skills to investigate and solve problems.
73. By the age of 7 pupils can recognise and name the common two and three-dimensional shapes. They can tell the time and make money calculations, although there are some gaps in their understanding of standard and non-standard units of measurement and in applying mathematics, mainly because it is not emphasised enough in the teaching.

74. By the age of 11, pupils have made good progress in all areas of mathematics. A real strength in Year 6 is the enthusiasm almost all pupils show in tackling big challenges, for example sums that involve very large numbers, to “show off” their understanding and enjoyment of number. This is a result of the teacher’s own enthusiasm, promoting confidence that wrong answers are entirely acceptable as part of learning through trial and error. Through the junior classes, they develop a sound knowledge of decimals and fractions, for example recognising that three sixths is the same as a half, with higher attaining pupils having good understanding of the underlying mathematics when working with fractions, using terms such as “numerator” and “denominator” correctly. Understanding of shape, space and measures and handling data develop well in the junior classes.
75. Throughout the school pupils sustain positive attitudes to the subject. Boys and girls are equally enthusiastic and involved in lessons. This is reflected in the test results over time. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress, although some individual education plans do not identify the precise mathematical needs that pupils have.
76. Pupils learn to use numeracy skills well in other subjects. For example, in science, understanding about graphs is applied well to an investigation about heart rate and careful measurements using centimetres and millimetres are taken in a Year 3 and 4 lesson on magnets. In all classes, work is presented well, so that pupils learn to be careful and logical in their calculations. The computer is increasingly used to support mathematical learning, for example in the Year 1 and 2 class where pupils made good progress in understanding numbers up to 100 in ways that would not be possible with pencil and paper methods. The use of information and communication technology is, therefore, good.
77. Teaching and learning are good in both key stages. The school makes very good use of the National Numeracy Strategy to structure mathematics lessons in three linked parts. Mental mathematics sessions are almost always vigorous and well resourced so that all pupils learn to think quickly. A notable teaching strength is the way that teachers design the work to match the needs of everyone in the class. In mixed age classes, care is taken to identify what is to be covered by each year group and in all classes groups are set up according to their attainment levels and appropriate work is provided. In the best teaching, questions are also pitched skilfully at different pupils in the class so that everyone is kept on their toes. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 lesson the teacher continually varied the questions “What is one more than...?” and “What is ten more than....?”, ensuring that all pupils experienced success at their own level.
78. Occasionally the final class plenary sessions begin too abruptly, so that pupils have to leave work unfinished and some of the pace seen in the introductory session is lost. Even then, teachers are skilled in praising pupils’ success whilst checking that the well-defined lesson objectives have been achieved. In the infants and younger juniors, open-ended work is too often set only as an extension activity for pupils who have finished the main task. This reduces the opportunities for problem solving, for example with pupils who work more slowly and with higher attaining pupils who do not always need to spend so much time on relatively easy sums. In these classes, too few opportunities are provided for pupils to explain their different methods and reasoning.

79. Teachers have taken full advantage of the training associated with the National Numeracy Strategy and consequently have good subject knowledge as well as a range of effective class management strategies. Whilst good oral feedback is usually given to pupils, the marking of their work is less detailed and does not give clear information about what the pupil is doing well and what needs improving. In the Year 5 class, where the marking is significantly more analytical, pupils' individual written work benefits and they show pride in what they have covered.
80. Resources are chosen and used very well, resulting in good support for learning. For example, pupils use individual white boards well to show their work and the overhead projector is often helpful in allowing everyone to see teaching aids, such as the 100 square, clearly. Assessment systems are comprehensive and are used well, including a valuable tracking sheet that predicts and records the levels that individual pupils are capable of through the school.
81. The subject benefits from very good leadership. The school as a whole shares a commitment to improving standards in mathematics and the co-ordinator is both knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Good monitoring systems have been established, although not yet fully implemented, to identify strengths and weaknesses as a basis for further development and training. The curriculum is well structured to ensure progression and challenge for pupils of different ages and abilities. Assessment is regular, thorough and used very well to adjust the teaching and the curriculum.

SCIENCE

82. Overall, the attainment of pupils in the national tests is above the national average, and is above that achieved by pupils in similar schools. Inspection findings confirm that standards in science are above expected levels at the age of 7 and 11. There has been good improvement in all aspects of the subject since the inspection in 1998, improving the planning of the curriculum and producing schemes of work. The school is using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority science scheme of work and has established a two-year cycle of topics to ensure continuity and progression in the learning of scientific knowledge and skills. Standards are above average because the teaching is good; there is consistency in the planning of work, science is well managed and there is effective support provided by educational care officers who work with pupils who have special educational needs.
83. Only three science lessons were seen during the inspection and evidence of standards is also drawn from a sample of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils. Most science lessons are very good because teachers plan lessons that build on previous lessons and provide secure foundations in the pupils' understanding of how to organise a fair test and investigate the properties of materials. In the most effective lessons, the pupils enjoy practical investigations and are motivated by the work. They are able to work co-operatively during investigative work and record their results clearly.
84. By the age of 7, infant pupils develop their skills in carrying out investigations. They are able to identify what is likely to happen, based on their increasing knowledge, and can carry out fair tests with support from the teachers. Infant pupils were observed investigating the way that solids and liquids change. The pupils make predictions about how ice melts and what happens to the ice. They show understanding and skill in carrying out investigations and are able to record their results. They give thoughtful reasons for the results, even if they are not always accurate. The pupils' recorded work shows that infant pupils understand the different effects produced by light

sources, knowing, for example, that the moon shines because it reflects the sunlight. The pupils know that plants grow from seeds and need light, water and soil to grow successfully. They can explain how an electrical circuit can be constructed. They have a growing knowledge of the properties of a variety of materials such as plastic, metal and wood.

85. Junior pupils are introduced to an appropriate range of experimental work, enabling them to construct and carry out fair tests. The teachers help the pupils to record the results of their investigations and their work shows good use of mathematics skills. The pupils make good use of computers to present their information in Years 5 and 6, for example, where the pupils used a data handling program to present their results as graphs when investigating the rate of evaporation of water. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils learn how to prepare a test which will help them to identify the relative strength of different magnets. They predict which magnets are likely to be weaker or stronger than others based on their knowledge of magnetism from previous lessons. The older pupils develop skills in carrying out fair tests when they investigate the rate of evaporation of water in different places. Year 6 pupils can explain why evaporation occurs and the conditions in which it is likely to happen more rapidly with a clear understand of the scientific principles.
86. The quality of teaching is good overall with some very good work seen. The teachers plan lessons carefully with an appropriate balance of practical activities, discussion and recording of the work done. In most lessons, there is good interaction between the teacher and pupils, which challenges the pupils to think about their suggestions and check their results. In the most successful lessons, the teachers have appropriately high expectations of the pupils' work and behaviour, which motivates the pupils. The teachers' subject knowledge is good. They use scientific terms correctly and ensure that these are reflected in the pupils' explanations of what they see and deduce. Teachers test what the pupils know every term and this helps to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject.
87. The subject co-ordinator provides highly effective support for teachers. There is a clear view of what needs to be done to maintain high standards, and the school has identified ways in which this can be carried out by extending the monitoring of pupils' recorded work. Overall, the resources for science are sufficient to allow the teachers to develop the planned work and they are well organised and stored.

ART AND DESIGN

88. Only one art and design lesson was seen during the inspection. Evidence was taken from pupils' work displayed around the school and from discussion with pupils and staff. The work displayed demonstrates that standards in both key stages are above the expected levels because art and design is well taught throughout the school and is a subject which the pupils enjoy and is improving their confidence and self-esteem.
89. By the age of 7 pupils have gained experience of a variety of techniques using paint, crayon and pastels. In the lesson seen, the pupils made good progress when studying the work of Paul Klee's "The Golden Fish". They used a range of language to describe the texture and appearance of the picture, noticing that the contrast in colour, form and design produces different effects. For example, the pupils described the shapes in the picture as "shiny", "spiky" and noticed that contrasts are used to exaggerate the shape and colour of the design. As a result of this well-planned and presented lesson, Year 1 and 2 pupils produced very effective pictures of fish, using line and tone well and blending colours together using pastels and crayons. Other work displayed around the school shows that the pupils have experienced a range of media and art and design techniques. Year 1 and 2 pupils have produced very effective print using block printing techniques.
90. By the age of 11 pupils have experienced a wider range of two and three-dimensional work. The Year 6 pupils have created very effective paintings after studying the work of Van Gogh. The class display, entitled "Flower Power", shows that the pupils have carefully observed the work of a well-known artist, recognising that still-life paintings require distinctive skills of observation, perspective, tone, texture and colour. As a result of the good teaching and very good development of skills, the pupils have produced paintings of a high standard. The pupils have responded to the topic well, using the style of the artist in their own painting. Their work shows experimentation with colours and techniques to create similar effects. Most pupils show an understanding of perspective.
91. The teaching is good. In the lesson seen, it was well planned and organised with good quality resources to support learning. An effective demonstration and explanation of the techniques used by the artist gave the pupils an understanding of the concept, enabling them all to experiment through trial and error and self-correction with some success.
92. Provision for the subject is good. Planning is detailed because there is a clear scheme of work for teachers to follow which is planned in a two-year cycle. This is intended to ensure that pupils revisit skills at a higher level as they progress through the school as well as ensuring that younger pupils in each mixed age class do not repeat work in the following year. The teachers keep examples of work and monitor how well the pupils are doing, although this is informal and is not yet consistently established across the school. The co-ordinator is good at monitoring the provision and the quality of pupils' work through planning and looking at finished work. Resources for art are of good quality and enable the pupils to experience a wide range of media.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

93. Only two design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection, both in junior classes. Evidence is drawn from the scrutiny of the pupils' previous work, some of which is displayed around the school or recorded in books or folders, and from discussions with staff and pupils. Standards are above those expected. This is an improvement since the last inspection because the teaching is much more effective. Planning has improved so that teachers prepare lessons that enable the pupils to evaluate simple designs, exploring ideas and improving the finished products. Design and technology is also well linked to other subjects or topics.
94. In the juniors, the pupils make good progress because the work is planned so that topics and skills are revisited every two years. Year 3 and 4 pupils were observed making hats with fabrics and using sewing and pinning techniques. This has been achieved over a series of lessons and the pupils' work shows good development and progress because the teaching is good and well planned. Year 6 pupils were observed designing and making moving toys, for example a "Jack in the Box". They explore simple mechanisms to produce movement, for example pop-up toys which convert rotary movement to linear movement. The teaching has enabled the pupils to follow a structured programme through the exploration of ideas and sketches through the investigation and experimentation of the effects of different mechanisms. The pupils were observed planning the sequence of actions and the possible materials to be used. Previous work in the juniors includes the design and modelling of torches. The pupils have investigated how a torch works and this work is well linked to their science work about light sources and the effect that lenses have on images.
95. The teaching observed was good overall. It included the contribution of parents and classroom assistants who worked with individuals and groups of pupils, providing them with very good focused support. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator has ensured that a scheme of work is used to help teachers to plan their lessons.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

96. Standards in history and geography are broadly in line with those in other schools and pupils achieve appropriately, particularly in acquiring knowledge about different time periods and places. Although some work needs to be done to update the subjects in response to the most recent national requirements, pupils cover the required material through termly topics. Geography is generally taught more successfully than history. Current standards are an improvement on those reported for 7-year-olds in the last full inspection and maintain the position for 11-year-olds.
97. By the age of 7 most pupils have a secure knowledge of a selection of famous historical figures such as "Florence Nightingale", who lived locally, and events such as the "Fire of London". At the time of the inspection they had less understanding of more recent history such as the similarities and differences between their own lives and those of their parents and grandparents, or stages in the history of the village and school. In geography, pupils make good progress in writing about different places in the world. By Year 2, for example, more capable pupils can write a comprehensive list of physical and climatic features in Florida or Antarctica, whilst others can distinguish the most important such as temperature. They can understand simple maps and interpret some symbols. Year 1 pupils show an impressive knowledge of the globe, several recalling that the north and south poles are the coldest parts of the world and that Ayers' Rock is in a desert in Australia.

98. In the juniors, pupils study time periods such as “Greeks”, “Tudors”, “Victorians” and “Britain since the 1930’s” to a good depth, usually completing a substantial folder during the term. Some opportunities, such as a visit to ‘Haddon Hall’, are made to enrich the learning with first-hand experience, but generally there is an imbalance between learning historical facts, which most pupils do well, and learning historical skills such as gathering evidence, examining artefacts and interpreting different perspectives. For example, while older pupils last year completed some empathetic work on evacuees during the second world war, the folders were entirely based on secondary sources, with no reference to local villages being involved in receiving evacuees and that some evacuees and foster families still live in the area.
99. In geography, mapping skills are advanced through the junior classes so that pupils can draw and use keys, compass directions and co-ordinates. The majority of pupils gain a satisfactory knowledge of the countries and continents of the world. Most develop an adequate understanding of the environment, for example identifying features that they like and dislike about Darley Dale. The two-year cycle for topics is working well to ensure equal access and, generally, the older pupils are expected to work at a more detailed level than the younger year groups.
100. In both subjects, there is insufficient emphasis on pupils posing questions in order to research aspects for themselves. A promising start has been made in using the Internet for this, although library resources and organization are restricted and do not help pupils to acquire the necessary research skills. Because they are not clearly identified in the school’s schemes of work, key historical and geographical skills are not taught to the expected level and progress in these through the school is slower than it should be.
101. The teaching and learning of geography are good in the infant classes and satisfactory in the juniors. History was not being taught at the time of the inspection and no judgement is made. In most geography lessons, teachers successfully match the work to the needs of different pupils. For instance, in a very successful lesson on Antarctica with the youngest class, the Year 1 pupils worked in their own group. This allowed the teacher to extend their vocabulary using words such as “island” “globe” and “south pole”, encouraging all pupils to think about the features of different climatic conditions and getting the more confident pupils to talk to the group. Very good links were made in this class with displays and the structured role-play area imaginatively set up as a travel agency.
102. Teachers have clear objectives for each lesson, sometimes usefully sharing these with the class. In some cases, teachers’ subject knowledge is limited, reinforcing misconceptions amongst the pupils. Whilst lessons have a good balance of exposition and practical work, the introductory session is sometimes too slow, leading a small number of pupils to become restless and inattentive, which then further slows the pace of the lesson. Teachers provide older pupils with insufficient opportunities to pursue their own research using a range of primary and secondary sources.
103. The subjects have not been a focus for recent development and the improved standards at the end of the infants are a direct result of better teaching. The co-ordinator is looking forward to history and geography taking their turn as development priorities. She has the enthusiasm and skills to lead this work well. Her influence is currently informal and time has not been allocated to enable the monitoring and staff development necessary if standards are to be raised further. Resources are unsatisfactory, as at the time of the previous inspection. Useful assessments,

focusing on the knowledge pupils have acquired, are undertaken at the end of each topic. The assessment of skills is unsatisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

104. The inspections in 1997 and 1998 found standards to be below those expected for 7 and 11-year-olds. Resources were very limited and staff lacked experience in working with computers. Standards in both key stages have risen and are now in line with expectations, predominantly because the provision of computers is now good and staff are more confident and systematic in planning for the subject. The school's aim is to promote the use of information and communications technology (ICT) as a tool for learning across the curriculum. Good progress is being made in this and the school is very well placed to improve standards further.
105. By the age of 7, pupils can use the keyboard and mouse to control the computer. They can key in and alter text and most can use the "return" and "enter" key to set their work out, for example as a list. They can control the cursor in a drawing program, for instance, producing and printing out very competent self-portraits or vivid and imaginative patterns. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, can collect and enter simple data to make a table or chart. They are becoming aware of the uses of ICT in everyday life and can accurately describe the functions of a range of electronic equipment in the home.
106. Pupils in the younger junior class choose from a range of fonts to make their word processing more interesting and are beginning to combine pictures and text. Their use of punctuation, such as speech marks, is improving, although throughout the school pupils have too little opportunity to draft, edit and improve their writing on the computer. Thus, whilst ICT supports pupils in literacy and numeracy, there is room for this to be developed further. By Year 4, most pupils can enter data to make a block graph and, working in pairs, use a logic tree, for example to identify different two-dimensional shapes by their properties.
107. By the age of 11, pupils have begun to experience the use of the Internet and compact discs to access information, for example gathering information about the solar system or the working of the heart. Currently too little time is available for them to use this information, with the result that printouts are often simply added to the topic folders, without the pupils being expected to interrogate the information to answer specific questions. A valuable start has been made in teaching Year 6 pupils to log and evaluate the web sites they have visited. They can save and print their own work and some higher attaining pupils are beginning to "trouble shoot" when something goes wrong. Generally pupils' skills in control technology are less well developed, although the older pupils have some experience in controlling the "screen turtle".
108. Through the school, pupils of all abilities make sound progress and achieve appropriately across a range of different and relevant programs. Their enthusiasm for the subject is demonstrated by the number of older pupils who take advantage of the availability of computers in some classes before school and at break times. Good use is made of programs specifically designed to meet pupils' special educational needs, who consequently make good progress.
109. Too little direct teaching of ICT was seen during the inspection to judge the quality of teaching and learning. However, there are some important strengths and some areas of inconsistency as the school goes through a period of rapid change. A technician, jointly funded by a small cluster of schools, currently supports teaching. He has

helped install the new hardware and software and, as a qualified teacher, is now more directly involved with teaching small groups under the direction of the class teacher. This works well.

110. Teachers, encouraged by the subject co-ordinator, make good use of the opportunities in planning for ICT to enhance the teaching and learning in different subjects. For instance, in a Year 6 science lesson, pupils entered measurements relating to water evaporation into a data handling program which they saved onto their own floppy discs. Some staff include specific time to teach ICT each week, although this is not universal. In some classes ICT work is gathered in individual pupil folders, giving pupils, staff and parents a clear picture of the range of work covered and progress over time. In the best cases, teachers annotate these work samples, summarising the key skills and competencies being demonstrated by each piece of work.
111. Teachers' subject knowledge is improving, but the school now needs to complete an audit of individual professional development needs as a basis for further training. It is proposed that this will be arranged by the cluster of schools to maximize resources and flexibility. Some staff are undertaking training in their own time.
112. Improvements in the subject have been strongly led by the co-ordinator. He is well informed and ingenious in finding solutions that work in a relatively small school. The school has met the need to develop the subject with appropriate urgency and the leadership is clear that there is still some way to go. The decision to upgrade resources, employ a technician and then to complete the staff training programme is working well. Planning and management of special funding through the National Grid for Learning is good. At the time of the inspection, staff training through the New Opportunities Fund was at a very early stage. Agreement is now needed on the detail of the scheme of work and the ways the subject will be taught, assessed and monitored through the school if the improvement in standards is to continue.

MUSIC

113. Due to the inspection timetable, only one music lesson was seen during the inspection. Consequently, no overall judgements can be made about teaching and standards. The school recognises some weaknesses in the subject, including a lack of confidence and expertise amongst staff. The position has changed little since the last inspection. A funded proposal to employ a music specialist has been delayed due to ill health and class teachers retain responsibility for teaching their own classes. Planning covers the required elements of the National Curriculum.
114. The singing in assemblies indicates that, while most pupils can hold a melody and sing with reasonable enthusiasm, they tend to sing at one dynamic level and many older pupils choose not to participate. Those leading the assembly do not usually challenge this by raising expectations and so standards are not as high as they should be. Similarly, whilst opportunity is provided for pupils to listen to music as they come into assembly, this is not sufficiently highlighted in terms of the kind of music being played or the specific things pupils might listen for and discuss. However, assemblies are severely constrained by the accommodation.
115. In the lesson observed, Year 1 pupils showed good creativity in making a range of sounds from familiar objects such as a plastic bottle of water. They listened intently to each other and many were able to copy or invent a simple sequence of repeated sounds, talking very maturely about what different sounds reminded them of. In this

lesson standards were high and attitudes very good. A small number of older pupils benefit from paid keyboard lessons as an extra-curricular activity and the school plans to make greater use of these skills in future to give opportunities for performance. Improved access to a hall space has increased the opportunities for pupils to respond to music through dance.

116. Resources remain inadequate as at the last inspection, although some useful teaching resources have been purchased to support “non-specialist” teachers in planning and organizing a progressive programme that meets National Curriculum requirements. Opportunities to use music and musicians to extend pupils’ cultural development are unsatisfactory. The school will need to focus on this subject at an early stage if standards are to be improved. The policy is now out of date, no longer reflecting the provision in the school. The subject has not been a recent development priority as the school has, rightly, focused on other areas of its work in accordance with national priorities and targets.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. The inspection timetable allowed only one physical education (PE) lesson to be observed and consequently no overall judgements about standards and teaching can be made. However, the school has made significant progress in provision for the subject since it was last inspected. As a result, pupils now benefit from a full, if constrained, PE programme, in line with National Curriculum requirements.
118. In both key stages, pupils now have access to dance, games and gymnastics throughout the year. The junior curriculum is appropriately supplemented with swimming and athletics. Good provision is made for outdoor and adventurous activities through the recently introduced residential visit. In the last inspection, the lack of a hall was a serious block on the PE curriculum. The school has now partially solved this by agreeing use of the nearby church hall, although the facilities do not include the range of PE equipment found in most schools and necessary for a full gymnastics programme. Staff in the youngest class work very hard to convert the classroom into a space for some physical activities, recognising that this is more appropriate for some lessons. They are careful to do this during break times to avoid cutting into teaching time, but the accommodation for physical education continues to inhibit the raising of standards.

119. In the Year 6 swimming lesson observed, pupils made very good progress because of enthusiastic, well-informed teaching. Pupils were given clear instructions and demonstrations at levels appropriate to their current skills and confidence. Less confident pupils were supported well and made very good progress. By the age of 11 the majority can swim at least 25 metres and have a secure understanding of survival techniques and water safety. Participation in a local swimming gala allows higher attaining pupils to practise and demonstrate their advanced skills.
120. The PE curriculum is substantially enhanced in the juniors by extra-curricular sporting activities, open on an equal basis to boys and girls. Planning is supported by a commercially produced scheme of work, reflecting the school's well-judged decision to focus on the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT before moving onto the non-core subjects. The co-ordinator administers a small budget and supports staff mainly by looking through their planning. In due course, it will be necessary to monitor the standards and teaching more systematically if achievement is to be raised. The accommodation and resources for PE continue to be unsatisfactory, in spite of the school's efforts to compensate for the limitations.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

121. It was only possible to observe one lesson being taught in the Year 6 class. Evidence from this lesson, teachers' planning and work in the pupils' books or on display indicates that by the end of both key stages, attainment is in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and the pupils make good progress.
122. Infant pupils learn about the major festivals in the Christian calendar such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter. There are good links and comparisons made with other world religions and belief systems. In Year 2, the pupils discuss the symbolism of 'light' and 'dark' when discussing the significance of the Hindu story of Rama and Sita. They make Rangoli patterns and understand that these are used as a sign of welcome and that in some cultures there are comparisons with welcoming the light, which are also prevalent in most religions, including the coming of Christ. The teaching is good because it enables the pupils to consolidate their understanding by looking at pictures, illustrations and, in the case of the Festival of Light in the Hindu religion, handling Divas.
123. Junior pupils continue to increase and deepen their knowledge and understanding of the significance of religion and how this affects society. In the very good lesson seen, Year 6 pupils were beginning to understand the importance of Christianity to society. The pupils are learning that Christian values can be used to help others under the heading "Belief into Action". Thoughtful work has been done on the symbolism of religious stories and sayings from the New Testament which are directly related to the way that Jesus expected his followers to lead by His example. Very good reference was made to parts of the Bible, with pupils linking phrases from the Book of Isaiah, Chapter 58, "Share your good with the hungry....". The teacher skilfully led the pupils through the texts, linking this to real-life situations, signifying very good subject knowledge which enabled the pupils to think about ways in which they might help specific groups in society.
124. The teaching is well planned and lessons build on the work done previously. The locally agreed syllabus provides a good framework which supports the school's scheme of work and long-term planning. This ensures that the pupils receive a balanced programme of studies which are relevant to their age and which are interesting, evoking good quality discussion and recorded work. Good links are made

with the work that pupils do in other subjects, for example English, history, art and geography. Resources are good and well managed. There is a good range of reference books, posters, illustrations and basic artefacts to support the pupils' understanding, ensuring they make good progress in religious education.