

INSPECTION REPORT

SHERARD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Melton Mowbray

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 119991

Headteacher: Mrs M Smith

Reporting inspector: Mr S Lake
22191

Dates of inspection: 21st - 24th May 2001

Inspection number: 192242

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Grange Drive Melton Mowbray Leicestershire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Herlihy
Date of previous inspection:	17/05/1997

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1934 2	Tom Heavey	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2555 9	Liz Curran	Team inspector	Art and design Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities? The work of the special educational needs unit
1839 3	Joy Donovan	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Geography Design and technology	How well is the school led and managed?
2081 5	Pat English	Team inspector	Mathematics Music	
2083 2	Mohindar Galowalia	Team inspector	Science Equal opportunities English as an additional language	
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	21
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	21
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23
THE WORK OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS UNIT	24
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	25
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Sherard Primary School serves an area of mainly private housing with some local authority housing. It is above average size with 374 pupils on roll, including 22 pupils in an attached unit for pupils with special educational needs taken from the surrounding area extending well beyond the town. The school also serves the local community as a base in the evening. The special educational needs unit means that the school has a very high percentage of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need at over seven per cent. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is very low at three per cent. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic groups, although the percentage with English as an additional language is higher than in most schools. Attainment on entry varies considerably from year to year dependent upon the number of pupils from the attached unit in that year group. Currently attainment on entry is close to average, although still just below.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school with a unit for pupils with special educational needs that is a strength of the school. Pupils achieve standards that are at least satisfactory and in some cases good as a result of the good teaching. The school is led and managed satisfactorily and gives sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards attained in mathematics are above average at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs both in the designated unit and the main school is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes to work and behaviour are very good, reflecting the school's strong ethos.
- The links with parents and the local community are very good and make a significant impact upon pupils' learning.
- In the lessons observed the overall quality of teaching was good.
- The provision for the moral and social development of pupils is very good.
- The school cares for its pupils very well.
- The provision for pupils' personal development is very good and relationships between all groups are a strength of the school.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment in religious education are unsatisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 and poor by the end of Key Stage 2.
- The quality of writing is unsatisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 and the use of writing across the curriculum is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. This is addressed in the school development plan.
- The curriculum does not meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and although good quality schemes of work are in place they have not been drawn together into an overall curriculum plan thus reducing their effectiveness. Consequently the management of the overall curriculum could be improved.
- The provision for higher-attaining pupils is inconsistent particularly at Key Stage 1; this was an issue in the last report.
- Time could be used more effectively.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1997. Since that time significant changes have taken place in the governing body and the management structure of the school. Improvement since that time has been satisfactory and most of the issues from the last report have been addressed appropriately, although all of the measures to challenge more-able pupils have not had enough time to prove effective. This remains a key issue despite the considerable improvements that have taken place, especially the improvement at the end of Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics. Standards of attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have improved and the overall quality of teaching has improved. Attendance has improved as a result of the measures put in place to promote good attendance and the school has a sound base upon which to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	C	C	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	B	B	B	B	
Science	A	B	B	B	

The comparison with similar schools reflects the additional pupils in the unit for special educational needs, which would otherwise depress results slightly. The table shows that in comparison with those in all schools in the year 2000, at the end of Key Stage 2, results were above average in mathematics and science, and average in English. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were average in reading, mathematics and science and below average in writing. The trend in the school's results is rising in line with the national trend. The table shows that standards attained in English, compared with those in similar schools, were unsatisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2. This is mainly due to the quality of the writing.

The findings of the inspection are that attainment is above average in mathematics and average in English and science by the end of Key Stage 2. This does not represent a drop from last year as the current cohort of pupils contains a much higher percentage with special educational needs and achievement does not differ significantly from that in 2000. The appropriately challenging targets set for the school have been met. By the end of Key Stage 1 attainment is average in reading, mathematics and science, but attainment in writing remains unsatisfactory. There are clear inconsistencies between the two Year 2 classes, with one class achieving better than the other. Standards attained in religious education are below those required by the locally agreed syllabus for religious education at the end of Key Stage 1, and well below expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. In all other subjects where it was possible to make a reliable judgement standards attained at the end of both key stages are satisfactory. Attainment at the end of the Foundation Stage is broadly satisfactory, although there are inconsistencies in attainment between the two reception classes.

Pupils' achievements are good in mathematics and at least satisfactory in all areas except religious education and writing. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in comparison with their prior attainment. The contribution made to pupils' literacy skills by work in history, geography and religious education is unsatisfactory as insufficient time is allowed for the development of these skills.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and clearly enjoy coming.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good in and out of classrooms. A small amount of challenging behaviour was noted, usually linked to less effective teaching.
Personal development and relationships	The very good provision for the personal development of pupils and the very good relationships between all members of the school community are strengths of the school. Involvement in the school council and the pupils' charity committee makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development.
Attendance	Attendance is good. Unauthorised absence is well below average

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	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.

Overall the quality of teaching is good. Of the lessons observed, 92 per cent were satisfactory or better. Sixty per cent of all lessons were good or better, including 12 per cent that were very good and one per cent that was excellent. However, an examination of pupils' past work shows considerable amounts of unsatisfactory teaching, particularly in one reception class and one Year 2 class. This has had a negative effect upon pupils' learning. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good and makes a positive contribution to learning through the good teaching of literacy and numeracy. A particular strength of the teaching is the very good behaviour management. However, in a significant number of lessons time is not used well and the pace of learning slows as teaching becomes protracted. The school meets the needs of most pupils well, but the needs of more-able pupils are not addressed sufficiently rigorously especially in science, which limits the attainment of this group. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is consistently good. It was only possible to observe two lessons in religious education, one of which was unsatisfactory, but the limited amount of pupils' previous work available indicates that teaching in religious education is unsatisfactory and learning in this subject is poor. The quality of learning is satisfactory overall, and for pupils with special educational needs it is good. The quality of learning in reading and information technology is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school has revised all schemes of work and these now cover all aspects of the required curriculum. However, the schemes are not implemented consistently and this makes the curriculum unbalanced. In particular insufficient time is given to religious education to ensure that the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are met. As a result the curriculum is unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is strength of the school. Pupils in the unit are included in the normal classes and gain access to the same curriculum as other pupils, and all pupils with special educational needs, including those in the main school, receive very good support that enables them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils with English as an additional language are mainly fluent and bilingual. They need little additional help. This is available through the overall support process when required.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The overall provision is good and provision for the moral and social development of pupils is very good. Provision for the spiritual development of pupils, although satisfactory, is limited by the unsatisfactory provision within some assemblies and the unsatisfactory provision for religious education. The school does not meet the requirements for collective worship.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are cared for very well. The ethos of the school is one of caring and this is seen in the way pupils are supported in all areas of school life.

The school has very good and constructive links with parents that make a strong contribution to attainment.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides a caring and supportive leadership. The senior management team lead their areas appropriately. Most subjects are managed satisfactorily and, in the case of information technology and special educational needs, well. However, the current management structure does not identify clear procedures for management of the overall curriculum and this is a key factor in the inconsistencies noted in this area.

How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities satisfactorily and are very supportive of the school. Many are relatively new to the school and this, coupled with insufficient strategies for monitoring the work of the school, means that they are not involved enough in shaping the direction of the school. This results in an excessive workload for the headteacher. Money is spent wisely to the benefit of the pupils.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school development plan identifies appropriate priorities and is based upon an appropriate evaluation of performance, but it is not sufficiently rigorous and does not look far enough ahead or focus sufficiently upon raising standards of attainment.
The strategic use of resources	Most resources are used well. Little use was observed of the library during the inspection, particularly by older pupils pursuing independent learning opportunities. Information technology is used well by pupils and teachers.

The school is well staffed. In particular there are a good number of support assistants. The school has good accommodation that in most cases is enhanced by attractive displays of pupils' work, except the halls, which are bleak and unattractive. Resources generally are satisfactory apart from those for information technology, which are unsatisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • The teaching is good. • The school expects children to work hard. • The school is well led and managed. • Children are making good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of work that children get. • The information about how children are getting on. • How hard the school expects children to work. • The range of activities that the school provides.

The inspection team agrees with the positive comments of the parents and inspection evidence confirms that there are inconsistencies in the amount of work that pupils get. However, inspectors do not agree with the other negative comments.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The quality and range of learning opportunities for the children in the nursery and reception classes are good. Children enter the nursery with attainment slightly below that expected for children of their age. This is confirmed by the initial assessments made when they first start in the reception classes. By the time they enter Key Stage 1 the majority have made significant progress and are set to achieve the Early Learning Goals (the expected national standards for all children starting in Year 1). Most children achieve close to these standards because of the good teaching and the wide range of activities provided for them, which have a positive impact on the way in which they develop knowledge, skills and understanding. All children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning.
2. The results of the national assessment tests for pupils aged seven and 11 vary from year to year as a result of the cohort differences created by the numbers of pupils with special educational needs in a particular cohort. The presence of such a large number of pupils with special educational needs as a result of the unit provision for these pupils also affects some of the overall scores, depressing them slightly.
3. The results of the year 2000 national assessments for pupils aged seven were average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. When compared with those in similar schools, results for reading are average and those in mathematics and writing are below average. The lower scores in reading and mathematics are due to the lower than average number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3¹. Over the last three years attainment in writing has dropped every year. The results of the year 2000 national tests for pupils aged 11 are above average in mathematics and science and average in English. When compared to that in similar schools, attainment is above average in mathematics and science and below average in English. When compared to the results attained by the same pupils at Key Stage 1, attainment overall is average. In all subjects the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was above the national average, although the difference is greater in mathematics and science. This is significant in English, where overall results are lower, as it reflects the work done by the school to raise the attainment of more-able pupils.
4. The inspection team finds that current standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with national averages in reading and mathematics and below national expectations in writing. The low attainment in writing overall is due to the fact that one of the Year 2 classes is not implementing the school's strategy to raise standards effectively. Standards in science meet expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above national expectations in

¹ On Levels: By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 3 are therefore attaining above nationally expected levels. It is a national expectation that all pupils should reach Level 4 by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils who reach Level 5 are therefore attaining above the nationally expected level for their age.

mathematics and in line with national expectations in English and science. This is an improvement on the standards noted in the last report and reflects the significant changes to teaching methods in Key Stage 2, for example the setting of pupils for English and mathematics. The standards are below those noted last year as a result of cohort difference as the current Year 6 has a much higher number of pupils with special educational needs.

5. Attainment in speaking and listening is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils listen carefully and attentively to each other and to their teachers. They speak clearly when answering questions or in discussion. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show that they have made good progress in speaking with expression and meaning; for example, when listening to an actor reciting Shakespeare and then repeating it with the correct rhythm.
6. By the end of Key Stage 1 attainment in reading is average. Pupils use suitable strategies to decipher unknown words and have a wide vocabulary of familiar words. They use their reading ability to access other areas of the curriculum; for example when reading text in science lessons. Most pupils enjoy reading and all look forward to sharing books and reading to others. They are able to talk about their favourite books and one boy expresses a preference for poetry, particularly by Michael Rosen and Spike Milligan. Pupils build steadily on their reading as they continue through the school and, by the age of 11, they are mature in their choice of books and attainment in reading is in line with national averages. Many read regularly at home, use the public library for research as well as a source for more fiction, and are confident in using library classification systems. The higher-attaining pupils show an in-depth understanding of text and tackle difficult text with ease and confidence.
7. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils reach the expected Level 2 in writing, but no pupils exceed it and move on to Level 3. This brings down the overall average as shown by the assessment at seven. A scrutiny of books shows higher standards in one Year 2 class than the other. This is as a result of differences in the quality of teaching. Overall, a lot of pupils use a clear script, but many do not have joined-up handwriting. Although most pupils show appropriate levels of spelling and punctuation, there are only limited opportunities for them, particularly those capable of higher attainment, to write at length and extend their use of imaginative and structured language. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils attain average writing skills. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils' handwriting and presentation develop well, and work becomes increasingly lengthy and shows good coverage of a range of writing for different purposes and audiences.
8. Although literacy skills are satisfactory overall, in subjects such as history, geography and religious education pupils are not always required to produce the written work of which they are capable, instead completing unchallenging worksheets or short pieces, which do not consolidate or extend their literacy skills. Pupils are able to choose their own reading material from a good selection of available books. They show appropriate research skills but prefer to use the Internet and CD-ROMs rather than the library, which was little used during the inspection.
9. Overall attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 is average and pupils make satisfactory progress. Most pupils enter Year 1 with an understanding of numbers, shapes and measures broadly in line with what might be expected of

children of that age. They build on their knowledge of counting and the associated numerals and begin to understand that in numbers greater than ten the value of each numeral depends on where it is placed. At the end of the key stage most pupils have an appropriate range of mathematical vocabulary so that they can explain their ideas. Most pupils count and use numbers up to 100, showing an understanding of place value. When adding or subtracting they readily use more than one strategy.

10. Overall, attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 is above average and most pupils make good progress. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils continue to explore and systematically develop a knowledge of important number facts and strategies for carrying out number operations and solving problems both mentally and in written work. Most pupils in Year 6 confidently use a series of operations in solving problems involving number, money and measures such as area and volume and use estimation to check whether the answer is likely to be right. All pupils orally explain their thinking, but the presentation of explanations of written problem-solving activities is not sufficiently developed. Higher-attaining pupils solve problems involving ratio and proportion and investigate probable outcomes. Most pupils have an appropriate knowledge of the properties of shapes. They investigate angles and the construction of triangles. Although pupils interrogate data presented in tables, graphs and pie-charts, they have only limited experience of using information technology in mathematics.
11. By the end of Key Stage 1 attainment in science is broadly in line with national expectations. However, whilst the proportion of seven year olds reaching the National Curriculum Level 2 is satisfactory, the proportion reaching the higher Level 3 is lower than would be expected, mainly due to the lower than average amount of time spent on science, and a lack of challenge for the potentially higher-attaining pupils. Over recent years, whilst pupils' attainment has remained above the national average, the proportion attaining the higher Level 3 has fluctuated strongly. The proportion of pupils reaching this level was almost twice the national averages in 1998 and 1999 but dropped to less than half the national average in 2000. By the age of seven, pupils have sound knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of science. For example, they plan and carry out investigations with teachers' help. Pupils have a growing knowledge of the characteristics and life cycle of living things. They have sound skills in scientific enquiry, but recording and presenting evidence, observations and comparisons are less well developed.
12. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in science are in line with national averages, but fewer pupils are attaining the higher Level 5 when all aspects of the subject, including investigations, are taken into account. Some of this is due to cohort differences. However, an examination of pupils' previous work shows inconsistent challenge for the potentially higher-attaining, inconsistent quality of marking and a lack of progressive coverage of the curriculum through the key stage. By the age of 11, pupils have good knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, of materials and their properties, and of physical process. They have good understanding of scientific ideas related to the solubility of substances: 'soluble', 'insoluble', 'dissolve', 'solution' and 'saturated solution'. Most pupils know the properties of light and of materials in relation to formation of a shadow. The standards in scientific enquiry are broadly average. Pupils' use of scientific vocabulary is inconsistent; for example, that of 'variables'. They are beginning to repeat observations and measurements to improve accuracy, but their conclusions are not always consistent with their recorded evidence. Most pupils do not

independently plan scientific investigations and their knowledge and understanding are not derived sufficiently from scientific enquiry.

13. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are broadly in line with national expectations as a result of the high profile given to the subject. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are confident in the use of keyboard and mouse. They understand simple menus and choose the correct icons; for example, when printing. They control external events using a programmable toy and use the computer appropriately to develop their art skills; for example, when looking at the work of Mondrian. At Key Stage 2, pupils build effectively upon the skills learned. They make effective use of word processing to present their work. For example, pupils in Year 3 presented work on the Vikings in an imaginative way, including information gained through use of the Internet and CD ROMs. However, the use of information technology to support learning in other subjects is inconsistent and overall not enough use is made of information technology as a tool to support learning. By the end of the key stage pupils use email appropriately. They collect information and present it using suitable data programs. However, a shortage of computers means that the oldest pupils have had only limited access to information technology and the highest standards are observed in Years 3, 4 and 5. Pupils are achieving appropriately when their previous experience and attainment are taken into account and some pupils in the lower part of Key Stage 2 are achieving well.
14. Attainment in religious education is unsatisfactory by the end of Key Stage 1 and poor by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils are making unsatisfactory progress as a result of the way in which religious education is delivered. Very little time is allowed in the curriculum for religious education and the school tries to deliver this subject through assemblies. This is ineffective. Hardly any work was available to examine in pupils' books, apart from in two year groups. In these year groups the work was minimal and poorly presented. Discussions with pupils from Years 4 and 6 revealed that pupils have little or no understanding and knowledge of the key elements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.
15. In all other subjects where it is possible to make a secure judgement pupils at both key stages are attaining standards in line with national expectations and are achieving appropriately. However, the amount of time given to history and geography means that standards in these subjects are only just in line with national expectations and no pupils are attaining beyond this level. As a result, although achievement is satisfactory overall, the potentially higher-attaining pupils are not achieving as well as they could.
16. At the age of 11, there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs related to language, both in the unit and the main school, make very good progress against their targets and are well supported. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the effective use of support staff, and the provision for them to work in mixed-ability groups when carrying out scientific investigations. As a result, they make good progress.
17. The progress made by potentially higher-attaining pupils is inconsistent. The strategy introduced by the school is beginning to have an effect in some year groups, particularly in Key Stage 2 apart from science, but pupils in this group at Key Stage 1 are not achieving satisfactorily. This is mainly due to the lower achievement in one of the Year 2 classes where teachers' planning does not focus enough on meeting the needs of more-able pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

18. Pupils have very good attitudes to school. Behaviour and relationships throughout the school are very good, and the very good levels of personal development are to be seen in the readiness to accept responsibility as the children progress through the school. These very high standards are a major strength of the school. They constitute an improvement on the good standards observed at the previous inspection, and greatly aid pupils' learning.
19. The very positive attitudes are evident in the very high attendance levels, and in the eagerness to arrive punctually at the school that children show. Parents responding to the questionnaire were almost unanimous in declaring that their children like coming to school. Pupils respond well to good teaching, applying themselves with interest to their work and showing high levels of concentration and perseverance in classroom tasks. They work productively in groups and pairs and without direct supervision, as in a Year 3 English lesson in which their co-operation enabled them to complete a research task on the Vikings within the given time limit. Such very good attitudes, as well as enhancing learning, also demonstrate a growing maturity and a sense of responsibility that promotes citizenship.
20. The judgement of the inspectors that behaviour at the school is very good is supported by 96 per cent of parents responding to the survey conducted prior to the inspection. Children are very polite both with one another and with adults in the school. There are no indications of aggressive or oppressive behaviour, and there have been no exclusions over recent years. Parents generally agree that where instances of bullying have been identified they are dealt with very sensitively. This is a very orderly school community in which, despite the openness of most classrooms, the noise levels are very low, resulting in an industrious atmosphere that helps to raise standards. Adults in the school present exemplary role models, behaving with a maturity and a mutual respect that are more and more reflected in the very good relationships and behaviour among pupils as they progress through the school.
21. The very high level of personal development shown by the pupils as they progress through the school provides a solid platform for learning, and is recognised by the overwhelming majority of parents responding to the questionnaire. Children act responsibly both within and outside the classroom, even without the usual incentives provided by a system of awards and merits seen in other schools. They are eager to accept responsibilities, such as taking the registers to the office and clearing away their utensils after lunch, and they tidy up their desks without delay at the end of lessons. In the formally-elected school council they play an active role in setting standards within the school, as when they proposed a five-point endorsement for inappropriate behaviour in the playground. They also demonstrate a growing sense of citizenship through their Charities Committee by allocating donations to selected charities both at home and abroad.
22. Attendance for the most recent reporting year was good, being above the national average, while the incidence of unauthorised absence was below the national average. In addition the school has improved on its attendance rate for the previous year. This achievement and the very good punctuality at both morning and afternoon sessions set a firm foundation for learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. The quality of teaching has improved from that observed in the last inspection. During the inspection the quality of the teaching observed was good and this is having a significant impact upon pupils' learning. Of the lessons observed, 92 per cent were satisfactory or better. Sixty per cent of all lessons were good or better, including 12 per cent that were very good and one per cent that was excellent. In some lessons observed, teaching challenged pupils very well; for example, a physical education lesson in which the enthusiasm of the teacher was infectious and motivated pupils to achieve the very best of which they were capable. An examination of previous work showed that this is the normal pattern in some classes. However, an examination of pupils' past work also shows considerable amounts of unsatisfactory teaching, particularly in one reception class and one Year 2 class. In these classes much work is not marked, there is little difference in the work given to less-able and more-able pupils and the quantity of work completed is much less than in the partner classes. The effect of these inconsistencies in teaching is to slow learning overall in these year groups despite the best efforts of the other teachers.
24. Teachers have a good understanding of what is needed to promote progress in English and mathematics, and subject knowledge is satisfactory in most other subjects apart from religious education. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good and makes a positive contribution to learning through the good teaching of literacy and numeracy.
25. Most teachers plan effectively and in the best lessons learning objectives are shared with pupils in order to help them assess what they have learned by the end of a lesson. Unfortunately this is not consistent across the school or across all subjects and this limits opportunities to further improve the quality of learning. In a small but significant number of classes marking does not contain helpful comments to pupils to enable them to improve their learning. A suitable range of methods are used to stimulate and motivate pupils and the setting arrangements for English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 are effective in raising standards. In particular the setting helps address the issue of potentially higher-attaining pupils whilst still providing good support for pupils with special educational needs. However, the needs of more-able pupils are not addressed sufficiently rigorously in other subjects or in parts of Key Stage 1, which limits the attainment of this group. In particular many lessons do not contain enough work planned to challenge the more-able pupils.
26. A particular strength of the teaching is the very good behaviour management, which ensures that pupils are ready and eager to learn, and contributes well to the calm and purposeful working environment. This behaviour management is based upon the very good relationships that exist in the school, particularly between teachers and pupils.
27. Teachers make satisfactory use of resources overall. Learning support assistants are used very effectively in many classes to support pupils with behavioural problems and keep them focused on the task set. In many classes learning support assistants also work well with groups of pupils, supporting them in the Foundation Stage and in English and mathematics at both key stages. Overall learning support assistants make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching and consequently to the attainment of pupils.

28. Although teachers are now more confident in using information technology, much of the work is planned without reference to other subjects and aimed at improving specific skills in information technology. The school is now well placed to extend this into using information technology more effectively to support learning in other subjects. This is beginning to happen in the lower end of Key Stage 2, where pupils used information technology effectively to support their learning in history.
29. In a significant number of lessons time is not used well and the pace of learning slows. Some lessons are extended to fill the slot available on the timetable, limiting opportunities for other aspects of the curriculum, and in many classes lessons do not start promptly after the mid-morning break. In some lessons observed the pace of introductory and plenary sessions was too slow, causing a significant number of pupils to lose interest in their task. In contrast, in those lessons where pace was good, pupils remained involved in their task and good learning took place.
30. It was only possible to observe two lessons in religious education, one of which was unsatisfactory, but the limited amount of pupils' previous work available indicates that teaching in religious education is unsatisfactory and learning in this subject is poor. The school attempts to teach some of the religious education through assemblies. This is ineffective as it is not possible to match the work to the age and needs of pupils, neither is it possible to ensure that all parts of the required curriculum are covered.
31. The previous inspection reported that assessment procedures were insufficiently used to plan future teaching. This is no longer so. Most teachers mark work carefully and thoroughly and use the information gained to plan the work for the next lesson. For example, in an English lesson at Key Stage 2 a teacher had noted that the pupils had not really understood the work set in one lesson and therefore modified the lesson for the following day, resulting in good learning and pupils gaining a clear understanding of the nature of persuasive writing in advertisements. However, as noted above there are inconsistencies in the way different teachers use assessment to plan work matched to the needs of pupils. This limits pupils' attainment and progress, and fails to follow the good practice noted above. For example, in one Year 2 class virtually no work had been marked since the beginning of the year.
32. In most classes homework is used effectively to support learning, but the inconsistencies noted above are also present here. A few parents were concerned about inconsistencies in homework and inspection evidence supports this. In the majority of classes homework is clearly linked to the work that pupils are doing in class and is marked appropriately, but in a few classes homework does not make such a good contribution to learning due to inappropriate tasks and a lack of marking.
33. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is consistently good. In particular, the quality of teaching for pupils withdrawn from their lessons for intensive literacy and numeracy work is good. It makes an important contribution to the good progress pupils with special educational needs make in their learning. A particular strength of the teaching with these pupils is the very good partnership between teachers and learning support assistants.

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

34. The planned curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has a clear view of the current strengths and needs and has worked hard to try to ensure that children in all classes receive the best possible provision. However, the delivery of the curriculum in one of the reception classes is unsatisfactory as a result of the unsatisfactory teaching. The co-ordinator supported by the rest of the senior management team is addressing this appropriately. Overall the provision for the Foundation Stage is good and the school is well placed to ensure that current inconsistencies between the two reception classes are addressed.
35. At Key Stages 1 and 2 the curriculum is unsatisfactory. The school curriculum is broad but not appropriately balanced across all subjects. The school has responded positively to the key issue raised in the previous inspection by providing schemes of work for all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. However, the schemes of work are not implemented consistently and this makes the curriculum unbalanced. In particular, insufficient time is given to religious education to ensure that the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are met. This is partly because this time is alongside that allocated to history and geography on the timetables. If all subjects are taught in these timetabled sessions it is barely sufficient to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The time allocated to science is also barely adequate.
36. The school has effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy and is successfully implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. At the time of the last inspection, however, it was judged that planning did not ensure that all more-able pupils made sufficient progress. This has improved significantly, but there are still inconsistencies, particularly in Key Stage 1 and in science throughout the school. This is because teachers neither provide a consistent challenge to these pupils nor spend enough time on teaching science. They spend about two and a half per cent (about 30 minutes) less time on teaching science than the national median every week. The evidence from this inspection indicates that, despite the clear improvements in planning for more-able pupils in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2, planning is still inconsistent and is not rigorous enough to improve the progress of all more-able pupils.
37. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. There are good structures in place that fully meet the requirements of the National Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. Classroom assistants are very well organised and provide effective support for pupils during lessons.
38. During their years at school, there are suitable opportunities for pupils to take part in a range of extra-curricular activities which include tennis, football, cross-country running, netball and a French club. An after-school club provides a range of activities, but this has to be paid for by parents, which limits its availability to all pupils.
39. Overall, the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, as it was at time of the last inspection. The provision of a daily act of collective worship is inconsistent. Worship is not of a mainly Christian nature and is missing from many assemblies. As a result collective worship does

not meet legal requirements. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies are used to reflect upon issues such as the creation. There is an appropriate focus on learning about the values and belief systems of different religions. Extensive and attractive displays in art and design and technology, computer-generated displays and pupils' writing; for example, about 'feelings' cause wonder and appreciation. The teachers talk about the lives of famous people such as Martin Luther King, and expect pupils to reflect on the contributions of these people; for example, 'darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that'. Pupils are encouraged to celebrate success and spontaneous clapping is common. However, much of the provision for spiritual development is incidental and opportunities for reflection are not planned enough through the curriculum.

40. The school gives a high priority to pupils' moral and social development. The provision for this is very good. The teachers and other adults in the school act as very good role models. They respect and value pupils' contributions and attach a lot of importance to good relationships. Pupils are asked to set their class rules and reflect on why they are necessary. They are taught the difference between right and wrong through daily routines of school life and specifically through assemblies where an understanding of issues such as power, influence, fair trade and respect for property and feelings and the values of others are well promoted. Sanctions are used effectively to promote responsibility and require pupils to reflect on their actions. Pupils are asked to think about the moral issues in life. The charities committee and the school council are very active and the issues they raise are given high regard. They decide on local, national and international charities, they would like to support. The school provides ample opportunities for social development. In classes, there are opportunities for pupils to work co-operatively and show the initiative to tidy up at the end of lessons.
41. The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development. Pupils are well involved in arts – performances, choir and orchestra, music workshops, musical concerts, the East Leicestershire festival and sports activities. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to study and experience aspects of other cultures through music, celebrations, talks by visitors and geographical tasks and stories.
42. The community, both local and more distant, makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning, further enhanced by the school's status as a community centre. The on-site community centre provides a base for a play group that feeds into the school's nursery class, while the shared facilities promote greater interaction with community groups such as Cubs and Brownies that help children's personal development. The involvement of the Friends of Sherard in the Sherard Stride sponsored walk, and in sponsoring flowers to adorn lamp posts in the neighbourhood, raises the profile of the school and helps pupils to see the school as part of a wider community. By attending fundraising activities, the community has helped to purchase toys for the reception classes, library books, literacy material, religious artefacts, a new football kit, a computer printer and many other items. For their part the pupils have also benefited greatly through the opportunity to demonstrate their concern for disadvantaged people in the local and wider community. Their charities committee is formally constituted and has a fundraising programme from which donations are made to selected charities. Involvement in such activities makes a great contribution to the pupils' citizenship skills.

43. The laying of a footpath to the adjacent secondary school cements the growing partnership with Sherard's main 'receiver school' by promoting the sharing of facilities. Further afield in the community the school makes very good use of facilities such as the Manor Adventure in Shropshire and the residential facilities at Castleton to enhance pupils' learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. The school makes very good provision for the welfare, health, safety and personal security of its pupils, resulting in a climate of confidence and well being that promotes learning.
45. The very good arrangements for child protection are based on the procedures laid down by the area child protection committee. The headteacher is the designated person, and is known as such throughout the school. She has attended appropriate training and has passed on her knowledge to all adults in the school, so that a high level of alertness prevails, as witnessed by the inspector. Proper arrangements are also made for the personal security of all pupils.
46. The comprehensive range of policies and procedures for health and safety comply fully with legal requirements. Fire drills, which take place at least termly, ensure that safe exit procedures are well rehearsed, while the procedures for reporting hazards have been recently upgraded along with the arrangements for conducting risk assessments of the premises. The nominated first aider, as well as several other colleagues, has received a certificate of competence after attending training. The inspectors saw evidence of the efficient application of the procedures during their visit to the school.
47. The very good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance, upgraded since the previous inspection, have resulted in improved attendance. Parents now co-operate more effectively with the school over term-time holidays and other absences, while the school sends regular reminders to parents in the newsletter.
48. The effectiveness of the very good procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour can be seen in the very good behaviour that pertains throughout the school. The behaviour code is on display around the school, and the assertive discipline approach praises good behaviour as an example to be followed. In that respect adults in the school are effectively deployed as very good role models. The active involvement of pupils in drawing up behaviour standards and sanctions adds to their status.
49. The very good procedures for monitoring and promoting personal development have the support of most parents – 93 per cent of them declaring that the school is helping their children to become mature. The procedures include the formation of a school council, about which pupils speak with pride. The council elects its representatives democratically from a list of nominees, and consults with the school's managers on matters relating to the day-to-day running of the school. Alongside the school council is the Children's Charities Group, a charitable trust that raises money and disburses donations to other charitable projects. They recently raised £220 for victims of the earthquake in India, and raised £400 for Comic Relief on Red Nose Day. Within the school day PSHE² and citizenship are assuming a

² Personal social and health education.

higher profile through the appointment of a co-ordinator. Her role is to ensure that the pupils' personal development and citizenship are promoted across the curriculum and this is done appropriately. 'Circle Time'³ has been introduced specifically to encourage pupils to develop self-awareness and consideration for others. Such a range of effective procedures helps the pupils to develop a sense of personal responsibility and citizenship that is part of the rounded education envisaged in the school's ethos.

50. Assessment procedures at Key Stage 1 are firmly established and are particularly effective in determining pupils' progress at an early stage. At Key Stage 2, pupils are formally assessed throughout the key stage and this assessment information is used to place pupils into higher- and lower-ability sets for English and mathematics. At the beginning of Years 2 and 6, teachers use a range of assessment information to make predictions and set targets for all pupils at the end of the key stage. The school collects assessment information for all pupils and is beginning to analyse this information to track their progress and attainment. The use of this information for setting targets for groups of pupils and monitoring their progress towards them is still an area for development. Detailed information is not used effectively to monitor the progress of all pupils. Targets for English and mathematics are written in the pupils' annual reports and shared appropriately with parents.
51. Arrangements for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs are very good. Targets in individual educational plans are focused on pupils' needs and are monitored and reviewed regularly. Pupils who are experiencing difficulties in literacy are well supported by classroom assistants and work on an intensive programme to improve their literacy skills.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. Parents attending the meeting with inspectors and those responding to the questionnaire expressed positive views about the school. More than 90 per cent of them agree that their children like school, that they behave well and that they make good progress. Similar numbers declare that teaching is good, that the school expects their children to work hard, that it helps them become mature people, and that it is well led and managed.
53. Opinion is more divided about the amount of homework, the view of a significant minority being that there are inconsistencies in the allocation of homework and in marking. The inspectors have some sympathy with that view after scrutinising pupils' work records.
54. Some 20 per cent of those responding to the questionnaire suggest that they are not sufficiently well informed about how their children are progressing at school. Inspectors support the majority view that the quality of information provided for parents is good. The fully compliant governors' annual report, the prospectus, the annual reports on pupils' work and the three parents' evenings are supported by newsletters, occasional letters and notices on the parents' notice board in the school. In addition parents are invited to attend information meetings on developments such as those relating to literacy and numeracy. If they require

³ Circle Time is a recognised method of providing opportunities for personal, social and health education. Its name derives from the fact that pupils usually sit in a circle during discussion in order that every person can be seen and is closely involved.

further information they can either chat to teachers informally at school or arrange a meeting with the headteacher.

55. Inspectors also support the view of those parents who say that the school works closely with parents, and that it provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The school's links with parents are very effective, up to ten parents regularly helping out in the classroom to relieve the teachers' workloads, and many more assisting on outings such as swimming lessons and educational excursions. They help to raise standards by ensuring that their children attend school regularly and punctually, and by supporting the home/school agreement. The Friends of Sherard perform a valuable role in raising funds for school equipment to support learning and to raise standards further.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. A conscientious and hard-working headteacher provides sound leadership for the school. A senior management team (SMT), that consists of three senior teachers who each effectively lead a team of teachers, supports her. The headteacher and senior teachers provide a strong lead in determining the very positive ethos that is a strength of the school. A great deal has been accomplished since the last inspection in terms of planning schemes of work to cover each area of the curriculum and a comprehensive set of non-curriculum policies that cover each aspect of school life. However, the SMT has yet to develop formal systems for monitoring how well the curriculum is delivered to the pupils, and to what extent school policies are embedded in practice. A performance-management system for teachers has been put in place with appropriate targets for individuals
57. The school development plan clearly identifies appropriate priorities for improving the work of the school and is based on a sound evaluation of current performance. However, it is not sufficiently rigorous in terms of clear targets for improving the attainment of all pupils. In addition it does not yet identify the school's priorities over the longer term, and therefore does not contribute to the strategic direction of the school. Although much has been achieved, the school's stated aim *"to provide a rich and challenging learning environment where expectation is high"* is not yet consistently met. The school does, however, meet its aim to ensure that *"each child is given equal value"* and this is a direct result of the clear leadership provided by the headteacher and her senior staff in setting the inclusive ethos of the school.
58. The management of curriculum subjects is satisfactory overall but with some inconsistencies. The majority of staff are developing their role in terms of monitoring and evaluating their subject in the school, but the management of geography is unsatisfactory and the management of religious education, whilst providing support in the shape of a scheme of work individual to the school, does not include monitoring the delivery of religious education. The management of information technology is good and is ensuring rising standards even with unsatisfactory resources. The management of the provision for children with special educational needs in the school is good.
59. The school has a committed team of governors that consists of a small core of experienced members and several who are newly appointed. They have an established committee structure, but the constitution of committees has not yet been completely established for this new governing body in order to enable them to focus on particular aspects of the role and so develop their expertise. For example, the

structure does not follow good practice in having a group focussing on pupil and curriculum matters, and governors' knowledge and understanding of this area are consequently unsatisfactory. Governors do have a clear view of the school's strengths and priorities for development but have yet to develop a full understanding of their strategic role in shaping the direction of the school, although this is beginning to take place and many governors are aware of the importance of addressing this issue. Similarly the new special educational needs governor is well informed on special educational needs issues but has not yet developed her role in evaluating the provision made for pupils. Overall the work of the governing body is satisfactory, with some areas for development, and it fulfils their statutory responsibilities.

60. To date, financial planning and the monitoring of expenditure have been led by the headteacher, who has managed them effectively, but as a result governors have played too small a part in strategic planning for the school. This is already changing as the new governors develop their roles. Currently the school has a large deficit resulting from extensive sick leave of a member of staff last year. The deficit remains in the budget as a result of changes in numbers and the good decision of the governors to support teaching and learning by trying to avoid mixed age classes wherever possible. The deficit has been agreed with the local authority and the school is addressing this over several years. The last auditors' report found financial administration to be of a very good standard. The minor recommendations made to ensure that systems meet requirements have been addressed. Additional grants are used effectively for specified purposes. Resources to support pupils with special educational needs are directed appropriately.
61. Resources are overall satisfactory. There is a good provision of reading books, even allowing for the considerable number of out of date books, including specific books for pupils with special educational needs, and there are good resources for physical education. Resources are barely adequate for geography, and the school does not have enough computers to enable all pupils to have easy access to information technology as a learning tool. More computers are due to be installed later this term in Key Stage 2, but this will still leave the school below the recommended ratio of computers to pupils, which will continue to make it difficult to ensure that all pupils get sufficient access to information technology. This is addressed in the school development plan.
62. The school has a full complement of qualified teachers well supported by a capable team of classroom assistants. There are appropriate induction and mentoring arrangements for new staff and provision for performance management is in place. Teachers are encouraged to attend in-service training, while subject co-ordinators are allocated non-contact time to discharge their additional duties. Professional development for teaching assistants has only recently been available and many of these people would welcome more opportunities to be involved in professional development, especially in areas such as child protection and understanding of the curriculum.
63. The spacious and well-maintained accommodation makes a good contribution to the delivery of the curriculum. Most classrooms accommodate pupils comfortably, and open areas have been well used to provide computer suites. The two halls provide additional flexibility for a variety of activities, as do the ample hard and soft playing areas outside the school buildings. However, in contrast to the well-presented displays of pupil work throughout the rest of the school, the halls are bleak and unattractive environments. The absence of display boards makes it difficult to

provide displays to enhance the environment for assemblies and the lack of any form of screen or board on which to write limits the way in which these spaces can be used for teaching purposes. The joint use of the halls with the community does create some difficulty here but this is a minor issue that can be easily addressed.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. In order to build upon the good foundations and continue to improve, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:

- (1) raise standards of attainment in religious education (paragraphs 14, 137) by:
 - ensuring that all teachers plan for and deliver the required syllabus in religious education;
 - raise teachers' confidence in this subject by providing all of them with suitable professional development;
 - ensure that the co-ordinator has sufficient time to monitor the implementation of the sound scheme of work that has been developed;
 - ensure that suitable records are kept of the work that pupils complete in religious education;
- (2) raise standards in writing (paragraphs 7, 81, 84) by:
 - improving the quality of writing at the end of Key Stage 1;
 - improving the use of writing across the school by providing more opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in subjects such as history, geography and religious education;
- (3) draw together all of the good work done in developing schemes of work (paragraph 35) by:
 - extending this into a whole-school curriculum map that states clearly what will be taught and when;
 - ensuring that all elements of the National Curriculum and religious education have appropriate amounts of time allocated to them;
 - including planned opportunities for areas of the curriculum to link and support each other;
 - setting up monitoring procedures to ensure that the planned curriculum is being delivered and time is being used effectively throughout the school day.

A number of minor issues that the governors should consider when drawing up their action plan are identified in paragraphs 11, 17, 23, 25, 29, 32, 50, 57, 58, 59, 63, 94, 104, 115, 120, 123.

The work of the special educational needs unit

65. The previous inspection reported that the special unit for pupils with moderate learning difficulties was a strength of the school. Evidence from this inspection indicates that those high standards have been maintained.
66. The unit provides places for up to 20 pupils, but because of local demand there are currently 22 pupils, all of whom have moderate learning difficulties combined with moderate or severe speech and language difficulties. Two full-time teachers, a part-

time nursery nurse and four specialist learning support assistants staff the unit. The pupils from the unit are all very well integrated into the mainstream school and as a result gain access to the same curriculum as the rest of the school. This does affect the results of national assessments as pupils who would normally be excluded from the tests are entered in line with school's policy on inclusion. Many of these pupils achieve results that are good for them given their difficulties but are below those normally expected of pupils of the same age.

67. The support provided for these pupils is based on their needs and balanced against the needs of the class. At Key Stage 1 pupils are either supported in class or withdrawn to teach specific skills. Good examples of effective support were in evidence throughout the inspection. With this very good support pupils in classes in Years 2, 5 and 6 were able to make good progress in physical education lessons. At Key Stage 2, pupils are withdrawn for literacy and numeracy and small groups may include mainstream pupils. Pupils made good progress in a literacy lesson where a range of teaching strategies were used to challenge them and keep them focused.
68. All aspects of the unit are very well managed. This ensures that the integration of pupils into mainstream classes is well organised and that the staff allocated to pupils in the unit provide good support to these pupils within the normal classroom setting. Records of pupils provide good quality, detailed information and are kept up to date. External agencies such as speech and language support teachers visit the school regularly and there is very good liaison between staff.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	87
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	12	47	33	8	1	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6]
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	7	367
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	27
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		79

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	12

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	35	22	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	31	33	34
	Girls	18	20	20
	Total	49	53	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (86)	93 (86)	95 (93)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	34	34
	Girls	20	20	20
	Total	52	54	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (84)	95 (93)	95 (98)
	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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	29	28	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	23	28
	Girls	23	22	26
	Total	44	46	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (78)	81 (78)	95 (96)
	National	75 (70)	72 (68)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	20	25
	Girls	21	20	25
	Total	38	40	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (73)	70 (76)	88 (82)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (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	1
Black – other	0
Indian	8
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	300
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)	15.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.37
Average class size	24.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	375

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	10

Total number of education support staff	0.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	12.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
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	£
Total income	694,937
Total expenditure	735,120
Expenditure per pupil	1,956
Balance brought forward from previous year	20,249
Balance carried forward to next year	- 19,934

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	374
Number of questionnaires returned	60

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	43	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	33	60	7	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	58	0	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	58	17	7	0
The teaching is good.	50	45	2	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	52	18	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	33	7	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	42	2	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	25	53	18	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	58	33	2	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	57	5	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	40	20	7	22

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

69. Attainment on entry varies considerably a result of the number of special educational needs pupils in any one year group. For several years it has been below average. Although this year it is close to average, it is still just below.

Personal, social and emotional development

70. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children make good progress and reach the expected level in their personal, social and emotional development, although some differences are seen between the two reception classes with one class attaining better than the other. Even allowing for the slightly younger ages of children in one class, it is clear that an unsettled period in recent weeks with some changes of teacher has not enabled them to develop the social skills of all other children in the school. Some in this class find it very difficult to take turns, sit and listen and contribute sensibly. Overall, however, children in all three Foundation Stage classes co-operate well, play with and alongside each other amicably, take turns with equipment and make choices about what they will do. When listening to the story "This is the bear and the scary night" they are able to discuss how the bear feels and empathise with his emotions. Most children are developing competence in dressing themselves independently. The children are interested and keen to learn because of the stimulating learning environments offered to them. Teachers use praise effectively to encourage good behaviour.

Communication, language and literacy

71. Many children begin school with skills in language and writing below those expected for this age group. Most make good progress but overall are not in line to achieve the expected levels in writing by the time they enter Year 1 as a result of the inconsistencies mentioned above. Children speak willingly, but many still use a limited vocabulary, speaking in short phrases rather than complete sentences. Children are encouraged to talk about their activities and to take part in imaginative play. Staff provide good models for language development and encourage children to speak in sentences; for example, when talking about a book about tadpoles, "They wiggle their tails". In the nursery class children enjoy a story with puppets in which the nursery nurse tells the story and encourages the children to join in.
72. Teachers promote a love of books by demonstrating their own enjoyment while reading stories. The children generally listen attentively and respond by joining in. Many in the reception classes are able to recognise some simple words and can use 'letter sounds' to build simple three-letter words. They read simple texts with adult support. In the nursery class children enjoy a game when they identify objects beginning with the letter 't' and some can even identify blends of letters; for example, they say that twig begins with 'tw', but stick has an 'st' sound.
73. Childrens' writing skills are less well developed. The majority can copy their names, but letter formation is poor in many cases. In one reception class the nursery nurse fails to take the opportunity to help children form their letters properly. However, some children can write a few familiar words and are beginning to attempt their own spellings using their knowledge of letter sounds.

74. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good overall. Staff question children skilfully and provide good models of language. The teachers give clear explanations and are continuously extending the children's vocabulary. The use of praise and good relationships enable children to "have a go" without fear of failure.

Mathematical development

75. In mathematics most children are on target to achieve the standards expected by the time they enter Year 1. They make good progress in their learning. In the nursery class children count groups of objects and are developing the use of mathematical language. They enjoy finding objects shorter or longer than a ruler. In the reception classes pupils enjoy number rhymes and count accurately to at least ten, and many can count to 20 and beyond. They can count in twos and about half can recognise which number has been removed from a number line of multiples of two. They enjoy drawing matching patterns on a pair of socks and can identify similarities and differences in their patterns.
76. The quality of teaching observed in mathematics is good overall, but in one reception class the slow pace and toleration of noise and poor behaviour prevent children from making the best use of the learning opportunities available to them.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

77. Most children make good progress in their learning and are set to achieve the expected standards by the time they join the Year 1 class. Children in the nursery class plant seeds and understand that they will need water and light for them to grow. They closely observe 'mini beasts' and make careful drawings of them, know that living things need food and comment "We have to put them back in the garden now or they will die". Two children in a reception class notice that their sand wheel will not turn because the sand is too wet. They persevere in removing and replacing the sand and watch their wheel turn freely. On another occasion two children were observed using the computer independently to play a mathematics game, and operating the mouse with skill. Although no direct teaching of this area of learning was seen in the reception classes, evidence from planning files indicates that children are offered a good range of activities to provide first-hand experiences to provide the foundation for later work in science, history, geography, design and technology and information technology.

Physical development

78. By the time they enter Year 1 most children will have achieved the expected levels in physical development. Staff provide many valuable opportunities for children to use small tools such as spades, pencils, paintbrushes, glue spreaders and scissors, and as a result they develop these skills well. In the small outdoor areas attached to both the nursery and the reception classes children ride small trikes, and push prams and trolleys confidently, showing a good awareness of the limited space available. However, there is no climbing apparatus available outside or in the classrooms to help children develop their skills of balancing, climbing and sliding. However, children have access to the school hall for physical education where they can use the main school equipment. In the only lesson seen during the inspection, children in a reception class practised their skills of throwing, catching and balancing, showing a satisfactory level of attainment. Most move with control and

co-ordination and enjoy the physical activity. Teaching is satisfactory and support staff are used effectively to help individuals and groups.

Creative development

79. The children's creative development is in line with standards expected when they join Year 1, and they make good progress in their learning. Children in the nursery are offered a very good range of creative activities and in one session were observed working with clay, painting pictures of their teddy, improvising a rhythm with box lids, taking roles in the play house and pretending to make sweets in the sand. In the reception classes children are offered opportunities to experiment with paint, collage and other materials to make different pictures and patterns. They play imaginatively both with small 'table top' toys, like 'play people', and in the role-play area. One class has been transformed into a travel agents and children act out the world of work. In a good music lesson seen children use percussion instruments skilfully to accompany the rhyme "I'm going on a bear hunt". They play rhythmically and speak the rhyme in unison with good expression. They also move carefully and quickly in a listening game, and move to a drum beat, changing speed and stopping and starting as required. The quality of teaching is good and teachers plan activities well to provide both structured and independent opportunities for creative development. Support staff are effective in helping all children, as well as those with special educational needs, to take part in the activities.
80. Learning in the Foundation Stage is well managed. There are good links with the private playgroup on site and staff co-operate well together. Teachers plan thoroughly to ensure that all children have the same access to a well-organised and stimulating curriculum. The contribution made by support workers is of a very high standard in the nursery but is of a more variable quality in the reception classes due to the significant differences in the way that support assistants are used in each class. The quality of teaching is good overall. However, there are some inconsistencies, particularly in one of the reception classes with teaching much better in one class than the other. The inconsistencies noted have a significant impact upon the learning of some children in reception and hold down attainment for the group overall. Most teachers and assistants manage the children well and have high expectations of both work and behaviour. Teachers assess children on entry and keep careful records of assessments and observations which are used effectively to track progress. Links with parents are satisfactory and some parents volunteer to help in class. The majority of children take home a reading book and are supported in their learning at home. The accommodation provided for these young children is small and staff make the best use of the space available to them. Resources for learning are adequate but not generous; for example, the two reception classes share a computer. The learning environment is very attractive, with well-displayed examples of children's work, although one of the reception classes appears a little shabby and untidy.

ENGLISH

81. Standards at Key Stage 1 are similar to those at the time of the last inspection and remain generally typical for seven year old pupils. In both reading and writing the percentage attaining the national expectation is broadly average, but the percentage exceeding it is below average. Standards in English at Key Stage 2 are average and have been maintained since the last inspection. Results in the year 2000 national tests results show that standards for both seven and 11 year olds are

comparable with those in all schools, but below those found in similar schools. The trend over the past four years at Key Stage 1 shows an erratic profile in reading but a slightly falling one for writing since 1997. This is linked to the changes in the quality of teaching at Year 2. At Key Stage 2 there is a trend of consistently rising standards since 1997 as a result of the initiative put in place by the school such as the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Inspection findings reflect the test results. Over the past four years there has been no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

82. By the ages of both seven and 11, standards are average in speaking, and in all years pupils listen attentively to their teachers and each other. In a Year 1 class, pupils retell the story in sequence and in a Year 2 class they are engrossed by the teacher's skilled reading of 'Dogger' and are keen to talk about the structure, characterisation and dialogue. In a Year 4 lesson on advertising, pupils are keen to answer questions and discuss the advertisements. Two good lessons in Year 6 showed pupils making good progress in developing both their spoken expression and body language in drama. They listen to Shakespeare's language read by an actor and then speak it the correct rhythm. In another lesson they listen attentively to a demonstration by the teacher and show sound understanding of how to plan and practise their prepared oral presentations.
83. By Year 2, most pupils achieve average attainment in reading. All pupils quickly gain a sound understanding of the use of letter sounds, which enables them to decipher unknown words. The good support provided for pupils with special educational needs enables them to know and understand how to use letter sounds, which increases their ability to read and to access other areas of the curriculum. Most pupils enjoy reading and all look forward to sharing books and reading to others. They are able to talk about their favourite books and one boy expresses a preference for poetry, particularly by Michael Rosen and Spike Milligan. Pupils build steadily on their reading as they continue through the school. By the age of 11 they are mature in their choice of books and attainment in reading is in line with national expectations. Many read regularly at home, use the public library for research as well as a source for more fiction, and are confident in using library classification systems. The higher-attaining pupils show an in-depth understanding of text and tackle difficult text with ease and confidence. Pupils with special educational needs related to language, both in the unit and the mainstream, make very good progress against their targets and are well supported. Pupils are able to choose their own reading material from a good selection of available books. They show appropriate research skills but prefer to use the Internet and CD-ROMs rather than the library, which was little used during the inspection.
84. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils reach the national expectation in writing (Level 2), but no pupils exceed it and move on to Level 3. This brings down the overall average as shown by the assessment at seven. A scrutiny of books shows higher standards in one Year 2 class than the other as a result of unsatisfactory teaching in one class. Overall many pupils use a clear script, but for many handwriting is not joined. Although most pupils show appropriate levels of spelling and punctuation, there are only limited opportunities for pupils, particularly those capable of higher attainment, to write at length and extend their use of imaginative and structured language. This is partly due to too few opportunities to use writing skills in subjects such as religious education, geography and history in some classes.

85. By Year 6, most pupils attain average writing skills. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils' handwriting and presentation develop well, and work becomes increasingly lengthy and shows good coverage of a range of writing for different purposes and audiences. This is already evident in the work in both Year 3 classes both in their books and in lessons. In the top set they are very keen to write about the Vikings and extend their understanding and use of paragraphs. In Year 4 they build steadily and Year 5 work shows an extending range of audience and purpose. For example, pupils develop a sense of persuasive writing and argue a point of view in writing a letter. Pupils in Year 6 show sound levels of understanding in sustaining ideas and choosing more adventurous language. There is a good range of writing within English lessons and pupils show they understand characterisation and the structure of story writing. A pupil in the lower set shows developing use of language to explore the senses as the poem starts:

"Fear is red.
It tastes like old mouldy socks.
It smells like a dead rat lying in the street...."

86. It is disappointing that in subjects such as history, geography and religious education pupils are not always required to produce the written work of which they are capable, instead completing unchallenging worksheets or short pieces, which do not consolidate or extend their literacy skills.
87. At Key Stage 1, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but vary from unsatisfactory to good. The quality of the teaching and learning is good at Key Stage 2, with one unsatisfactory lesson seen in a Year 4 class. Some very good teaching was observed in classes in Year 3 and Year 6. Overall, this shows improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was judged to be sound throughout the school. In the unsatisfactory lesson in a Year 2 class there was insufficient challenge for the more-able pupils, and in pupils' books the work showed low expectations. Work was not well marked and was often incomplete. In the other Year 2 class the teacher expected much more of the pupils. Her marking was encouraging and evaluative, and suggested ways to improve. Although the school is working hard to improve the attainment of more-able pupils, this is not consistent between different classes. For example in a Year 4 lesson the task was the same for all pupils, and as they only copied a letter it was difficult to assess any progress. Furthermore, support staff were not well used. In the very good lesson in Year 3 the teacher's very good management created an industrious working environment where pupils made good progress in using paragraphs and classifying nouns. In the very good Year 6 lesson the teacher gave a very good explanation to develop pupils' understanding of strategies for remembering the unstressed vowel in polysyllabic words. The work challenged the top set in the understanding of subordinate clauses, and the construction of complex sentences. All teachers work hard to create an environment that is rich in language and provide good role models by the way in which they use language themselves. In all classes they extend pupils' scientific, technical and mathematical language, and generally ensure that they listen well. Pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate, good support, which enables them to make good progress. They have detailed individual action plans and they receive well-focused teaching. The learning support assistants provide pupils with many, varied opportunities to reinforce their learning. The setting arrangements in Key Stage 2 are proving successful.
88. The English co-ordinators have worked hard to ensure the introduction of the literacy strategy. They have analysed the data from assessments to determine

areas for development and have set appropriate targets. There is a good supply of books for English, but the library contains some out-of-date stock. The library was rarely used during the inspection. Discussion with pupils indicates that it is little used for individual research, which limits opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning skills. The range of display supports the subject well and information and communication technology is used well to support English across the school.

MATHEMATICS

89. The national tests for seven year old pupils in 2000 showed that the proportion attaining the expected Level 2 or above was average in comparison with that in all schools, but below average when compared with similar schools. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection but represents a drop in standards of attainment in relation to the well above average standards in national test results over the previous three years. The drop in overall standards is linked to the variations in the numbers of pupils who have some degree of learning difficulty and the below average proportion of pupils attaining at higher levels.
90. In national tests for 11 year old pupils in 2000 results showed that the proportion attaining the expected Level 4 or beyond was above average when compared with that in all schools and in similar schools. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. When comparing the test results of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 with the results in tests taken when they were at the end of Key Stage 1 there is evidence of good progress being made. It is significant that over this period the major changes have been the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the institution of setting by ability in Key Stage 2. From talking with teachers it is evident that the improvement owes much to the use made of the advice of the strategy and the opportunity, provided by setting, to focus more closely on planning to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities.
91. Inspection evidence indicates that overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is average and pupils make satisfactory progress. Most pupils enter Year1 with an understanding of numbers, shapes and measures broadly in line with what might be expected of children of that age. They build on their knowledge of counting and the associated numerals. For example, pupils enjoy counting in twos and tens and find the double of a number by counting on. They begin to understand that in numbers greater than ten the value of each depends on where it is placed. Pupils consolidate their understanding of the operations of adding and taking away mentally and in pencil and paper work. At the end of the key stage most pupils have an appropriate range of mathematical vocabulary so that they can explain their ideas. Most pupils count and use numbers up to 100, showing an understanding of place value. When adding or subtracting they readily use more than one strategy, which may involve their knowledge of number bonds of ten or doubles and halves to speed up calculation. For example, when finding the difference between 24 and 32 a pupil explains, "I know four add six makes ten, so 24 needs six to get to 30 and I need two more to get to 32." Most pupils decide the operation to use in shopping situations to find the total cost or the change to be expected. Pupils develop their knowledge of the basic properties of simple two- and three-dimensional shapes and can recognise examples of reflective symmetry. Pupils use centimetres and metres with an appropriate measure of accuracy. They know the relationships between measures of time and numbers on a clock face. For example, when timing an event a pupil explained, "I knew it took 15 seconds because the second hand went from the seven to the ten".
92. Inspection evidence indicates that overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is above average and that most pupils make good progress. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils continue to explore and systematically develop a knowledge of important number facts and strategies for carrying out number operations and solving problems both mentally and in written work. Pupils are able to quickly add two two-digit numbers and confidently exchange explanations with one another. Pupils in

Year 3 are beginning to understand, through practical activities, that division is both sharing equally and arranging in groups of a given size, both of which may result in a 'remainder'. They recognise lines of symmetry and organise and gather information through tally charts and block graphs. Pupils in Year 4 explore number patterns such as 'a magic square', identify prime numbers and recognise the relationship between simple fractional and decimal numbers. This develops further in Year 5, where pupils find fractional parts of two- and three-digit numbers. Higher-attaining pupils convert fractional numbers to decimals up to two places and vice-versa. They use calculators to check their predictions. Pupils are beginning to understand the idea of percentages; for instance, 'It's like 2p out of a pound', and to express them as equivalent fractional parts. They are developing an understanding of ways of representing and interpreting data using such terms as 'range' and 'mode'. Most pupils in Year 6 confidently use a series of operations in solving problems involving number, money and measures such as area and volume and use estimation to check whether the answer is likely to be right. All pupils orally explain their thinking, but the presentation of explanations of written problem-solving activities is not sufficiently developed. Higher-attaining pupils solve problems involving ratio and proportion and investigate probable outcomes. Most pupils have an appropriate knowledge of the properties of shapes. They investigate angles and the construction of triangles. Although pupils interrogate data presented in tables, graphs and pie-charts, they have only limited experience in using information technology in mathematics.

93. Overall, pupils enjoy mathematics lessons. Their consistently good attitudes and behaviour make a significant contribution to their attainment. They are eager to be involved in whole-class numeracy activities, readily settle to group activities and concentrate on their work for the appropriate time. Relationships are good and they are happy to share ideas and support one another. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior learning. Teachers are concerned to include them in whole-class activities and to provide individual or group activities that challenge them appropriately. Their learning is enhanced by the sensitive support provided by the adults who work with them.
94. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall and two-fifths of the lessons were judged to be good. At Key Stage 2 teaching is good overall, with three-quarters of lessons judged to be good or very good. Teachers use the guidance of the National Numeracy Strategy effectively to support their planning so that pupils systematically learn skills and knowledge and develop understanding. However, planning for the needs of more-able pupils is often reliant on providing extension activities to be tackled when the class activity is completed. Where teaching is most successful teachers have a good knowledge of both the subject and of how children learn. Precise learning objectives are identified. These build directly on what pupils already know and are shared with them so that they can recognise the purpose of the activities and, thus, both pupils and teacher can easily assess the progress made in the lesson. The lessons have a bright, interesting introduction that catches the attention of pupils so that they want to be involved. This interest is sustained by the provision of learning activities that suitably challenge all groups and are timed to ensure that the lesson moves at a brisk pace. Visual aids are well prepared to support the direct teaching of knowledge and skills, and practical resources are on hand to support pupils' understanding until it is secure. This was well illustrated in a Year 5 lesson on percentages and in both Year 3 lessons on division. Questioning is used well to assess understanding and to move learning forward. For example, in Year 2 the question, "Can we take six

from 15?" was followed by "Why not?" which was followed by "What will happen if you try?" and a higher-attaining pupil suggested, "You get a minus number". Weaknesses occur where teachers' explanations become long and drawn out. The pace of the lesson drops and pupils become quietly distracted. Where activities challenge pupils inappropriately they become confused and lose confidence. Marking does not consistently inform pupils of what they must do to improve. The consistent provision of opportunities to exchange ideas and explain their thinking contributes to the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. However, they do not have enough chance to use their mathematical knowledge in other subjects, nor do they have sufficient opportunities to use their information technology skills in mathematics.

95. The subject is effectively managed. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully introduced and funding is used wisely to provide suitable resources for the subject. The subject manager has also been able to monitor the quality of the provision in the school. The information gained has already identified areas for improvement, such as the use of information technology, and prompted the development of a useful system of tracking pupils' attainment and progress. It is too early to judge the impact of this initiative, but the school is well placed to improve standards further.

SCIENCE

96. In the 2000 national assessments for pupils aged seven, the results were above average, 86 per cent of pupils attaining Level 2. However, only nine per cent attained Level 3, which is below average in comparison with both the national average and the average for similar schools. Over recent years, whilst the pupils' attainment has remained above the national average, the proportion attaining the higher Level 3 has fluctuated strongly. The number of pupils reaching this level was almost twice as many as the national averages in 1998 and 1999 to less than half as many as the national average in 2000. The school explains this as being due to variations in the cohort characteristics.
97. The standards of work seen in Key Stage 1 are in line with the national expectations and are similar to those reported in the last inspection. Whilst the proportion of seven year olds reaching the National Curriculum Level 2 is average, the proportion reaching the higher Level 3 is below average. The teachers neither provide a consistent challenge to the more-able pupils nor spend enough time on teaching science. They spend about 30 minutes less time on teaching science than in most other schools. Satisfactory teaching and learning lead to satisfactory achievement.
98. Since 1996 the school has consistently produced at least above average results at Key Stage 2. In 1998 these were well above average. In 2000 they were above average in comparison with the national average and the average for similar schools, and with respect to pupils' prior attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. The standards of work seen in Key Stage 2 are in line with the national average and similar to those seen during the last inspection. However, the current proportion of higher attainers is below average. This is due to inconsistent challenge for the more able, inconsistent quality of marking and a lack of progressive coverage of the curriculum through the key stage. The school also feels that this is due to variations in the characteristics of the cohort. Overall, good teaching and learning and pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and co-operative working lead to good achievement.

99. At the age of 11 there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the effective use of support staff and the provision for them to work in mixed-ability groups when carrying out scientific investigations. As a result they make good progress.
100. By the age of seven, pupils have sound knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of science. For example, they plan and carry out investigations with teachers' help. They use simple equipment; for example, batteries, wires, bulbs, buzzers and motors. However, there is little evidence of pupils' knowledge and understanding of sound getting fainter as it travels from a source. Almost all know that ice can change into water and water into ice and that this is an example of a temporary change. Some higher attainers know that heating causes a permanent change in eggs and in clay. Pupils have a growing knowledge of the characteristics and life-cycle of living things. Pupils have sound skills in scientific enquiry, but recording and presenting evidence, observations and comparisons are less well developed as not enough attention is given to this area due to the time constraints mentioned above. A few have more advanced skills; they are aware of the idea of fair testing in scientific investigations; for example, on seed germination. The proportion of pupils who know why a bulb in a simple circuit does not light up is above average.
101. By the age of 11, pupils have good knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, materials and their properties, and physical process. For example, they have good understanding of food chains and associated vocabulary such as 'producers', 'consumers', 'predators', 'omnivore' and 'carnivore'. They explain animal adaptations for different habitats; for example, those of a camel, a giraffe and a gibbon. They have good understanding of scientific vocabulary related to the solubility of substances: 'soluble', 'insoluble', 'dissolve', 'solution' and 'saturated solution'. They explain that a solution reaches saturation when there is no more space between the molecules of a liquid. Most pupils know how to separate a mixture of salt, sand, rice and water using processes such as sieving, filtering and evaporating. Most pupils know the properties of light and of materials in relation to formation of a shadow. They explain that a shadow becomes larger or smaller depending upon how much light is blocked. If you move a tree, you will be able to change the size of its shadow. The standards in scientific enquiry are broadly average. Pupils' use of scientific vocabulary is inconsistent, for example, 'variables'. They are beginning to repeat observations and measurements to improve accuracy, but their conclusions are not always consistent with their recorded evidence. Most pupils do not independently plan scientific investigations. As a result their knowledge and understanding are not derived sufficiently from scientific enquiry but from learnt facts presented by teachers.
102. The quality of teaching and learning in science is good overall, good in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Teaching and learning are good or very good in five out of eight lessons. Most of it is in Key Stage 2. In a very good lesson, Year 4 pupils planned an experiment to investigate the preferred habitat of woodlice. The teacher's effective review of past work refreshed pupils' memory of various plants and animals they had found in different habitats, and of the subheadings needed when writing up an experiment. Skilful questioning provided some clues; for example, the woodlice were found in dark, damp and shady areas. Very clear explanations of what the task was and the grouping of pupils provided a prompt and purposeful start. There was an appropriate focus on caring for the environment and its animals. The pupils settled quickly in groups. They were clear about what to do. They co-operated very well with each other and showed respect for each other's

ideas. These factors created a very good ethos for productive learning. The teacher kept a close watch on how pupils were progressing and helped where necessary in clarifying their ideas. There was appropriate challenge for the higher attainers. They were expected to plan the investigation on their own, and they did this fairly well. They considered how they could make their experiment fair and made informed predictions. The teaching assistant effectively supported a group of pupils with special educational needs. As a consequence, they made good progress. By the end of the lesson, all groups had finished planning, and some had started to select suitable equipment. However, in most cases pupils were trying to tackle too many variables in one go.

103. The prominent feature of another very good lesson was appropriate challenge to all pupils, mostly in mixed-ability groups. Questioning was used effectively to review past work. A very clear explanations of tasks ensured that pupils understood clearly what to do. The pace was good, as was the management of pupils. The lesson was well structured and its organisation was efficient. These factors, combined with very good relationships, contributed to very productive learning. A teaching assistant provided effective support for a group of four pupils with special educational needs. As a result, they made good progress. Although there was no unsatisfactory teaching, some teachers in both key stages do not provide sufficient challenge for more-able pupils, especially in scientific enquiry, and there is insufficient focus on the recording of work in Key Stage 1. The quality of marking is inconsistent. Sometimes incorrect work; for example, a pupil's conclusions, which did not reflect the results in her table, was marked correct. Occasionally, some key concepts such as 'variables' are not made explicit to pupils. This hinders the pupils' development of scientific vocabulary. There is an excessive use of work sheets in some classes. This causes hurried teaching and learning of science at the cost of developing recording skills, which limits attainment in this aspect.
104. The subject manager does not check on teaching or look at pupils' work. This has an adverse effect on pupils' progressive learning. Some work is repeated without increased challenge and some does not sufficiently challenge the more able; for example, in Key Stage 1 the work on the life cycle of animals. The lack of monitoring of teaching has prevented the recognition of existing good practice in science and its sharing to enhance the quality of science teaching and learning throughout the school. The application of information and communication technology skills to pupils' learning is developing appropriately. The application of literacy and numeracy skills to pupils' learning in science is satisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN

105. There was little teaching of art during the inspection. However, evidence was taken from photographs of previously completed work, teachers' planning, work displayed around the school and discussions with staff and pupils. This indicates that standards have been maintained since the last inspection and, for all pupils, attainment is in line with that expected for pupils of this age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school.
106. Younger pupils are able to represent what they see, showing a developing understanding of line, tone, shape and colour. There is an appropriate emphasis on observational drawing and good examples of this are seen in the Year 1 class, where pupils work in pencil to create detailed drawings of historical artefacts. In a

Year 2 class pupils worked with clay to make tiles, decorating them with patterns they had observed in the environment.

107. Older pupils are developing a knowledge and understanding of art and artists. For example, in the Year 3 class pupils paint in the style of Picasso, Cézanne and Vincent Van Gogh, to good effect. Year 4 pupils develop collages on journeys, signs and symbols. They are encouraged to use a range of techniques and media, but find it difficult to explain the criteria for the selection of media or evaluate and modify their work.
108. Pupils' attitudes to their work are good. They listen attentively and work hard, clearly enjoying the tasks they are given. Pupils handle the materials they use with care and share them appropriately. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory.
109. There is a co-ordinator for each key stage for art. Co-ordinators talk regularly to colleagues, carry out regular audits and monitor work on display. The scheme of work has been revised successfully and supplemented with advice from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Resources for art are satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

110. Pupils throughout the school attain the expected standards and in Key Stage 1 much of the work is of a good standard. By the end of Year 2, pupils have worked with fabric, paper, card, and food ingredients to make vehicles, fabric mats, photograph frames, fruit salad and moving pictures. They use tools, such as scissors, with increasing skill, and have experimented with a range of joining methods, such as glue and butterfly clips. Year 1 pupils enjoy making moving pictures and demonstrate the ability to make slides and levers. By Year 6, pupils are making wooden boxes which require careful measuring and skilful use of woodwork tools. All pupils evaluate their work. Even the youngest complete evaluation sheets, making simple comments like "It looked nice" and "It was tasty" (fruit salad). Pupils take great care with their work, and Year 6 pupils showed off their boxes with pride and selected paint and decoration carefully.
111. Pupils of all ages concentrate well and co-operate with each other, sharing resources and supporting others with positive comments. As only two lessons were seen during the inspection it is not possible to make a reliable judgement on teaching. However, an examination of teachers' planning and an analysis of pupils' work indicate that a good range of appropriate activities are taught and that pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school.
112. The well-planned scheme of work ensures good coverage of the curriculum and enables pupils to build on their skills as they progress through the school. There is a satisfactory range of resources and tools and a useful food-activities area. Appropriate attention is given to issues of health and safety. The two co-ordinators have a clear view of the requirements of their subject and of the way in which it should develop. They monitor the planning and pupils' work and have identified clear points for development based on their findings. Overall the subject is well managed.

GEOGRAPHY

113. No geography lessons were being taught during the inspection week and judgements are based on an examination of teachers' planning, an analysis of pupils' work and discussions with pupils and the co-ordinator. It is not possible to make a judgement on teaching.
114. By the age of 11, pupils have a satisfactory level of knowledge and skills in geography. They talk about their work willingly, and accurately describe the process of erosion on a river. They can discuss how different climates affect the way people live and have a clear idea of how the features of different areas affect employment, transport, leisure, clothing and overall life-style. They are also able to explain how to use a scale and co-ordinates for map reading. Seven year old pupils have been taught about Tanzania and life at the seaside, and have enjoyed the travels of Ted, who has visited many locations around the world with different children and staff. However, the range and quality of recorded work in geography are unsatisfactory and vary considerably from class to class. They do not reflect pupils' level of learning, nor offer sufficient opportunity to use literacy skills, in particular the skill of extensive writing. This is mainly due to the way in which geography is planned separately and not linked to other areas of the curriculum.
115. The scheme of work provides basic coverage of the curriculum, but the time allocation is barely adequate to provide sufficient breadth or depth of learning and this results in few pupils attaining higher than average standards. There is currently no whole-school system for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress in geography. Resources for learning are adequate. The co-ordinator has not yet developed his role to include monitoring and as a result does not have a clear view of the development needs of the subject. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory.

HISTORY

116. Standards in history are average at both key stages. This judgement, which is the same as that of the previous inspection, takes into account the lessons observed, an analysis of pupils' work and displays, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussion with teachers and pupils. Pupils make sound progress as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well relative to their previous attainment.
117. As no lessons were seen at Key Stage 1 no judgements can be made on the overall quality of teaching and learning. Although the lessons seen in Key Stage 2 were mainly good, a scrutiny of previous work indicates generally satisfactory teaching and learning. The analysis of work shows only a limited amount of written work, particularly in Years 5 and 6, to encourage extended or imaginative writing.
118. Previous work on the seaside and seaside holidays in the past shows that pupils in Year 2 have a sound understanding of aspects of the past. As 'time detectives' they have used photographs, pictures, television programmes, objects, artefacts and computer software to find out about the past. Year 1 pupils have studied homes long ago and have found out about the past from a good range of old objects. In a Year 3 lesson, good teaching leads to pupils being highly motivated and interested in the Vikings. One boy is extremely knowledgeable and has done a lot of research at home. In the Year 5 classes pupils are carrying out research from the Internet for individual studies of people in the past. In Year 6 there was little work in books, but discussions with pupils show that they are reaching expected standards for this age

group. Pupils were able to talk about the work covered and described a range of sources of evidence used. They discussed the difference between opinion and fact and explained the changes across the period being studied.

119. The previous inspection reported that pupils were given no time for independent study. There is some evidence that this has been improved by using the Internet and CD-ROMs to research individual topics, but little evidence of library use. Pupils are sufficiently aware of historical language and have sound skills as young researchers.
120. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines have been adapted as schemes of work to fit into the school's curricular plan. The co-ordinator is a subject specialist, but her role in classroom monitoring, scrutinising teachers' planning, and work sampling is not well developed which makes it difficult to assess the progress of pupils over time. Literacy skills are not sufficiently developed, particularly for extended writing for older and more-able pupils. Numeracy skills are evident in time lines but not developed sufficiently to support pupils' mathematical development. Information and communication technology supports teaching and learning in history well. Displays are stimulating focal points; for example, on World War II, homes in the past and the Vikings. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through their understanding of the legacy of ancient civilisations for modern society, discussions about the morality of actions carried out in the past and the encouragement of group and pair work in researching information. The curriculum is enriched by visits to places like the World War II experience and places of local interest, which effectively bring history to life for pupils. The previous inspection reported "The use of one book for many subjects makes it difficult for progress to be tracked". The school has not addressed this issue. The same problem continues and it is confusing for pupils to distinguish what is historical fact from, for example, some stories in religious education and the limitations on time make it difficult to ensure sufficient breadth in the curriculum.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

121. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Most pupils are achieving satisfactorily and some are achieving well as a result of the high priority given to this subject.
122. At Key Stage 1 pupils are introduced to a suitable range of activities and supported as they learn to use the computers. This has to be on a strictly regulated basis due to the shortage of modern computers. Pupils are taught keyboard skills early, which helps them become familiar with the positions of keys and makes them more confident typists when using the word processor. They use programmes such as 'Paint' and 'Colour Magic' to produce simple drawings and emulate artists, such as the geometric work of Mondrian. Pupils learn how to control events using information technology through the use of programmable toys. For example they learn how to make a floor robot go forward, turn and follow a set route.
123. At Key Stage 2, pupils build upon the skills learnt and improve their knowledge and understanding of computers. They develop their word-processing skills using 'Word Art' to enhance some of their presentations. Pupils interrogate CD-ROMs and the Internet for information and use simple data programs to present the results of surveys. Most have had some experience of email, although the fact that suitable

computers for this have only been available recently means that older pupils have not had an opportunity to develop this skill and their attainment is similar to that of pupils in Years 3 and 4. The recently installed bank of computers in a central area facilitates this but also creates some timetabling problems, as there are only enough computers for half a class to work on at a time. When shared between the eight classes they do not give enough access to modern computers and limit further development. However, the school has wisely addressed this problem. A further bank of computers is already on order and due to be installed shortly after this inspection in order to provide greater access. This is to be placed in Key Stage 2 and so will still leave Key Stage 1 with insufficient access to modern computers. The school also has a bank of older machines that are not connected to the Internet and do not have the same capabilities as the more recent machines. Although they do not help pupils develop all of the necessary Internet skills they are useful for some tasks, including word processing.

124. At both key stages much of the work done on computers is independent of work done in other subjects, and computers are not used sufficiently as a tool to support learning in other subjects. There are some exceptions to this. In Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils make good use of computers to produce work on their history topic 'The Vikings'. This was noted in the previous report of 1997. However, overall too little use is made of information technology to support learning in other subjects and this has not moved on sufficiently since the time of the last report. This slows learning in those subjects and creates some timetabling issues as teachers try to find time to teach information technology separately from other subjects. A key element in this is the fact that teachers are only just beginning the training under the National Opportunities Fund (NOF) and this has not had enough time to impact upon attainment and progress. The co-ordinators are aware of this and with the planned increase in resources the school is now well placed to build upon the good base already in place and extend information technology into a tool to support learning across the curriculum.
125. The co-ordinators are managing this subject well. Developments are planned ahead, a good scheme of work has been developed that includes assessment procedures and professional development is planned based on audits of need. Some portfolios of work are being developed to provide exemplars of what pupils should achieve at each level, and records of pupils' work are under development.

MUSIC

126. Only one lesson was observed at Key Stage 1, so it is inappropriate to make a judgement on overall attainment. At the end of Key Stage 2 evidence indicates that, overall, attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. This reflects the findings of the previous report.
127. Pupils enter Year 1 with an appropriate experience of singing rhymes and songs from memory and exploring the sounds of non-tuned instruments. Year 2 memorise and sing songs with good pitch and articulation. They recognise and repeat a regular beat. They listen closely to a tune new to them, recognise the general pattern of rising and falling pitch and are quickly ready to join in. Pupils are happy to rehearse to improve their performance. They use non-tuned instruments to provide a rhythmical accompaniment.

128. Pupils in Year 3 show a good sense of rhythm when singing a blues-style song. They sustain good pitch and use expression appropriately. Pupils use their voices to create a particular effect and improvise a simple repeating pattern when using tuned instruments. They eagerly experiment, combining the two. They become aware of how music reflects mood when, for instance, listening to orchestral music. Most pupils in Year 6 listen attentively to a recorded performance and can identify the main features of the particular genre. They know about and note the effect of dynamics, melody, tempo, duration and particularly the ostinato within a 'Rap'. They recognise relationships between sounds and intention. In groups they responsibly organise themselves to prepare their own performance. They use time well to practise, appraise and make improvement.
129. Most pupils enjoy music. They listen well and are appreciative of the contributions made by their peers. This was well illustrated in both Year 2 and Year 6 when pupils were happy to perform to the whole class. The behaviour in each lesson observed was at least satisfactory and in most cases it was good.
130. The provision of peripatetic music teaching of violin, flute, clarinet and keyboard, and extra-curricular recorder groups, enhance the knowledge and expertise of the pupils in those groups. This expertise forms the basis of the school orchestra, which enriches the life of the school. The musical productions of the school offer an opportunity for all pupils and staff to be involved and this promotes the musical, social and cultural development of pupils across the school.
131. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on teaching at Key Stage 1, but in the lesson that was observed it was judged to be satisfactory. At Key Stage 2 teaching is satisfactory overall. In the limited number of lessons observed the quality varied between unsatisfactory and very good. The very good teaching is characterised by good knowledge of the subject, the setting of clear learning objectives and personal enthusiasm that is infectious so that pupils want to be involved in the learning. Good use is made of opportunities for direct teaching of subject knowledge and techniques. Questioning is used well to encourage pupils to share ideas and to assess understanding so that learning can be moved forward. Weaknesses occur when teachers' knowledge of the subject is insecure and learning objectives are not based on what pupils already know and can do. Where pupils have insufficient opportunity to practise in order to improve their performance and where expectations are insufficiently high their attainment is limited. When time is not effectively planned the pace of lessons fall and pupils become distracted.
132. The subject is managed satisfactorily. A scheme of work and a satisfactory range of resources support teachers' planning. However, the co-ordinator has insufficient opportunity to monitor teaching and learning and this limits the information she has on which to evaluate the quality of the provision for this subject and to plan for improvement.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

133. Standards in Key Stage 1 are average for dance and games, and pupils make satisfactory progress. In Key Stage 2, standards are average for games, but school records show that standards in swimming are low, as only about half the pupils attain the national expectation by the age of 11. There are no differences in the standards achieved by boys and girls. These judgements show that standards have

been maintained since the previous inspection. No judgement was made previously on swimming.

134. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good across the school. This shows an improvement since the previous inspection, when it was satisfactory. In the two lessons seen in a Year 2 class pupils practised and improved their games skills, and in dance skilful teaching ensured that pupils expressed mood and feelings as they acted out part of the Pied Piper Story. In both Year 1 classes a quiet management style resulted in good teaching where pupils listened well and followed instructions carefully. With great concentration pupils mastered the country dance steps for the eight-step polka. In the combined games lessons for Years 5 and 6, five different activities were well taught and pupils made good progress in developing the skills of throwing, catching and striking. All pupils were active in pairs, trios and fours for cricket, rounders, tennis and badminton. Another group timed their running over a range of distances.
135. In a Year 6 class teaching and learning were excellent. The teacher provided high quality motivation through music and video, and the very well-planned lesson ensured that all boys and girls were fully engaged. They sustained energetic activity and made very good progress in increasing co-ordination skills and learning a variety of skipping steps. Because of the high quality teaching, learning and pupils' attitudes, pupils achieved above average standards. Swimming was not taught during the period of the inspection. However, discussion with teachers and an analysis of the school's planning show that this is well organised. It is, however, taught only to pupils up to Year 4 and only about half of the pupils can swim at least 25 metres safely and confidently before they leave the school. The limitations on use of the swimming pool make it difficult for the school to improve upon this.
136. The co-ordinator has produced a good policy and scheme of work that ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are systematically covered. Pupils' attitudes are consistently good or better, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school provides a sound range of extra-curricular activities for sport that enhance pupils development. There are clubs for football, netball and cross-country. In addition to these the school has teams for athletics. The cross-country team is doing well at the moment. The school has a good field, a good hard-surfaced area and two halls, which support learning well. Resources are good. Adventurous activities take place in the school grounds and on the residential visit. The subject contributes well to pupils' personal development. It gives opportunities for pupils to develop team spirit and compete fairly within the understood rules of the games. It contributes well to numeracy in terms of measuring time and distance. It supports literacy well as pupils listen well to instructions and follow them carefully. It fulfils the National Curriculum requirements.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

137. Standards attained are unsatisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 and poor at the end of Key Stage 2. Very little religious education is taught as a discrete subject. It was only possible to observe two lessons in Key Stage 1. An examination of pupils' books showed very little evidence of religious education apart from a small amount in Year 4. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 revealed that pupils' knowledge and understanding are well below the standards required in the locally agreed syllabus

for religious education by this age. Pupils have little or no knowledge about different religions or about the fact that religions give rules for living.

138. The co-ordinator has recently adapted the locally agreed syllabus to provide a detailed scheme of work for the school, but its implementation has not been monitored. In addition teachers have been inappropriately advised that religious education can be taught through assemblies and have not given enough time to the subject in classrooms. The curriculum balance does not allow enough time for religious education, which does not have an appropriate emphasis in the life of the school. This restricts attainment in this subject. The start made by the co-ordinator to address this is promising, but without a major change in the way in which this subject is taught standards will remain well below expectations. It is not possible to provide a worthwhile experience matched to the needs of all pupils without sufficient planned time in the curriculum to enable the subject to be taught in a systematic and rigorous manner.