

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST PETER'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Earl Shilton

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120210

Acting Headteacher: Mrs H. White

Reporting inspector: Mrs O.M.Cooper  
10859

Dates of inspection: 12 March – 15 March 2001

Inspection number: 192568

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Mill Lane  
Earl Shilton  
Leicestershire

Postcode: LE9 7AW

Telephone number: 01455 843840

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Brian Underwood

Date of previous inspection: 10 – 14 March 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10859	Mrs O. Cooper	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9798	Mrs V. Ashworth	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18618	Mrs J. Gibson	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Physical education Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
29263	Mrs F. Clarke	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Music Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This Roman Catholic voluntary aided primary school is located in the large village of Earl Shilton, close to Hinckley and is average in size. Over 80 percent of pupils are from the local parish of St. Peter and Paul, although the school serves a large catchment area as it includes neighbouring parishes. There are 219 pupils on roll, including three of minority ethnic origin; two are Chinese and one is of black African heritage. No pupils have English as an additional language. The proportions of pupils entitled to claim free school meals, or have special educational needs are broadly average. The majority of pupils with special needs have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is average for their age. There has been a significant turnover of staff since the previous inspection and a major building programme is currently underway. Two teachers are on temporary contracts and there is an acting headteacher. The inspection of this school included a detailed inspection of its provision for pupils with special educational needs.

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

The school is providing a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. From broadly average standards on entry, pupils attainment overall rises to above average by the age of eleven as a result of the satisfactory teaching in most years, but with a boost to pupils' performance from good teaching in Years 3 (8 year olds) and 6 (11 year olds). Effective leadership and management of the school are being provided by the acting headteacher and the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

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

- Standards in English and science are above the national average by the age of eleven.
- Standards in information and communication technology are above average for seven and eleven-year olds.
- Teaching in Years 3 and 6 is good and pupils make more rapid progress in their learning.
- The school's partnership with parents is good.
- Curriculum co-ordinators play an active part in influencing standards.

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

- Teaching for pupils up to the age of seven.
- Planning and resources for pupils in the reception class.
- Support for some pupils with special educational needs.
- Tracking the progress of pupils to ensure all are making sufficient progress each year.

*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 March 1997. Satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection given the changes of headteacher and staff. There is the capacity for further improvement. Standards in English have improved and in information and communication technology have remained above the level expected for seven and eleven-year olds. The proportion of satisfactory or better lessons has increased, with most improvement in the proportion of very good or better teaching.

The action taken in response to the key issues in the previous inspection report has been partially successful. Standards in music have risen and are now average for seven and eleven-year olds. In art and design, standards are average for seven-year olds, but not for eleven-year olds. The school has changed its behaviour policy and it is satisfactory, but it does not help a few pupils with severe behavioural difficulties to improve their behaviour. There is little slippage of time during the day and the programmes of study for all National Curriculum subjects are now taught. The provision for cultural development has improved and is now satisfactory.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	D	C	D
Mathematics	C	A	D	E
Science	B	A	C	C

Key	
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

Results among the eleven-year olds have risen in line with the national trend over the last five years. There was a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group in 2000 and an increased level of mobility of pupils, consequently overall standards fell below the national average and below the average for similar schools. In the previous three years standards had been at least in line with the national average and were above in 1999. The girls are doing better in English than girls generally, whilst the boys are not doing as well as boys nationally. This situation reflects the proportion of boys with special educational needs relating to literacy, which is much higher than girls.

The standards for seven-year olds show an improving trend in reading, writing and mathematics since 1997. The 2000 results were above the national average in reading, were in line with the national average in writing and were well above in mathematics. At the end of the reception year pupils' attainment is broadly average in all areas of learning; most pupils are on target to reach the national early learning goals, with a significant number of pupils exceeding them.

The standard of current work among eleven-year old pupils shows above average standards in English and science and average standards in mathematics. The work shows that all pupils achieve well in Year 6 due to the level of challenge in the work set and the teacher's high expectations of them. The standard of current work in English at age seven is consistent with the most recent test results. In mathematics standards are broadly average, a disproportionate amount of time was spent on managing the behaviour of pupils with special educational needs and this hindered the pace of learning for others in lessons seen.

Standards in other subjects are similar to those in most schools except for art and design where they are below average at age eleven. In information and communication technology standards are above average.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The teachers manage to maintain the broadly average attainment on entry up to the age of seven. The increase in standards occurs in the eight to eleven age groups, with the bulk of the improvement in Years 3 and 6.

The statutory targets for English and mathematics were met in 2000. The targets for 2001 are higher, realistic and are likely to be met if current progress continues.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Most pupils come happily to school and want to learn, but a



	few are less enthusiastic.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. In most lessons behaviour is good, but around the school and at playtimes and lunchtimes there are incidents of aggressive behaviour. There have been three temporary exclusions for unacceptable behaviour so far this year.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Pupils work together well in pairs and usually in larger groups. Most pupils are courteous and show care and concern for others.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Current attendance rates show improvement and are broadly average. There is still a high incidence of parents taking pupils on holiday in term time and this affects their child's learning.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The teaching is satisfactory; 91 per cent of lessons are satisfactory or better, with 39 per cent good or better, including 24 per cent that are very good or better. Nine per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory. Virtually all the good lessons are with pupils between seven and eleven years of age. The very good lessons are in Years 3 and 6 and where a visiting teacher works with Year 1 (6 year olds). The overall quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection, the proportion of very good lessons having doubled. The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory, teachers are competent in teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, especially in the eight and eleven age groups. The learning needs of those pupils who are more able are well met in most year groups. The needs of those pupils with special educational needs and some lower attaining pupils are not always met effectively, particularly those with emotional and behavioural difficulties. A disproportionate amount of the teacher's time is spent on managing the behaviour of these pupils and this leads to slower pace in the learning for others. The scheme of work in art lacks the detail required to support teaching and led to unsatisfactory lessons.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and the provision includes all required elements. Most lessons build relevantly on what pupils already know, with good links between learning in different subjects. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well and the links with other local schools are improving the range of opportunities for pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The special needs of pupils with learning difficulties are met for the majority; however, some more specific needs are not identified early enough. The behaviour management strategies are not applied consistently to improve the behaviour of a small number of pupils.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. Pupils gain sound insights into the values and beliefs of others. Community values and the difference between right and wrong are promoted satisfactorily, but there are occasions when the levels of respect among pupils are not high enough. Pupils have sufficient opportunities and experiences to learn about Western and Eastern cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Child protection procedures are appropriately in place and there is a satisfactory regard for health and safety. Arrangements for assessing attainment are good. Detailed analysis of pupils' performance is helping to identify school development priorities. The systems for tracking progress require further work before the school can be sure all pupils are making sufficient progress.

The school's partnership with parents is good. Parents support the work of the school in many ways and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The acting headteacher has already identified areas in need of improvement. She is well supported by the senior members of staff. The curriculum co-ordinators are influencing the development of their subjects through action plans that are updated annually.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The committees enable governors to carry out their responsibilities efficiently. Statutory requirements are met with the exception of minor omissions from their annual report to parents. They are effective in helping to shape the direction of the school but the school development plan is not helpful in this respect.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Arrangements to check the quality of teaching and the pupils' work have been introduced but they lack the rigour to improve teaching further. The assessment co-ordinator analyses pupils' attainment in national tests and this is contributing towards the identification of development priorities.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The governors have introduced appropriate procedures to oversee the budget. The principles of best value are being applied satisfactorily.

There are sufficient teachers and support staff for the number of pupils, but Year 3 and Year 6 classes have well over 30 pupils. The quality of teaching for those pupils does not allow the large numbers to have a detrimental effect on their learning. Accommodation will be adequate when current building work is completed, although there is no outdoor play provision for pupils in the reception class, which is necessary for the Foundation Stage curriculum to be implemented fully. Resources for learning are sufficient in all subjects except for the number of computers available, the quantity and range of library books for five to seven-year olds and resources for design and technology. The resources for pupils in the reception class are inadequate.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The school helps children become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of work children are given to do at home.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• Standards of behaviour.</li> <li>• Information on their child's progress.</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with some of the parents' positive views. Teaching for pupils up to the age of seven is satisfactory and not all pupils are expected to work hard. Parents were concerned about the inconsistency in setting homework but this was not evident during the inspection period. The range of activities outside lessons is similar to that in most schools and is satisfactory. Inspectors share parents' concerns about the behaviour of a small group of pupils, which affects overall standards and judge reports on pupils' progress to be bland and not helpful to parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. On entry to the reception class pupils' attainment is broadly average; their speaking and listening, literacy, numeracy and personal skills are at the levels expected for their age. The pupils achieve satisfactorily and by the time they start Year 1, most are likely to reach, and a significant proportion exceed the national early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development. These standards reflect the lower than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the reception class (11 percent). The pupils receive a sound start to their education because teaching is consistently satisfactory and there is adequate adult support. The learning needs of pupils with speech problems are met effectively through support from external consultants.
2. In 2000, the pupils' results in national tests for seven-year olds were above the national average in reading, in line with the national average in writing and well above in mathematics. The results were the same in comparison with similar schools. All the results have improved since the previous inspection and in the last two years were well above the national average in reading and mathematics, accurately reflecting the ability range of the cohorts. Considering the broadly average standards on entry, pupils achieve appropriate to their ability and starting points. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in science in 2000 showed all pupils attained the expected level and approximately 30 percent exceeded it and overall attainment was above the national average.
3. In the national tests for eleven-year olds in 2000, pupils' results were broadly in line with the national average in English and science, but were below the national average in mathematics. When compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds the results were below the average in English, well below average in mathematics and in line with the average in science. This indicates the school can do better in English and mathematics. However, the examination of national test results at age seven and eleven for the pupils who transferred to secondary school in July 2000, show the large majority made the expected rate of progress in their learning, a few made more progress and pupils' achievement was satisfactory. Eight pupils did not make the expected rate of progress, mostly those with special educational needs. The level of pupil mobility was higher than usual in this year group and this negatively affected the overall results. The same comparison for pupils who transferred to secondary school in 1999 showed a similar pattern, with approximately half the pupils making better than expected progress in mathematics and science, with only two pupils making less than expected progress. The test results indicate some difference in the performance of boys and girls, although this was not evident during the inspection as classes to boost pupils' performance in English and mathematics have closed the gap. The improvement in the school's results has kept pace with the national trend over the last five years. The variations from year to year again reflect the ability range within the cohorts.
4. Inspection evidence from lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' books shows some improvement in standards at age eleven, particularly in English as

the school has received intensive support and training from the Local Education Authority advisors. Classes are being held after school to boost the performance of certain pupils in English and mathematics and are helping to drive up standards.

5. By the age of seven, inspection evidence indicates standards are above average in reading and are average in writing and speaking and listening. The National Literacy Strategy is now implemented fully after a difficult start due to prolonged staff absence and a delay in training staff. The teachers are competent in teaching the basic skills in reading and writing and pupils begin to read from graded reading books. Most make good progress in attempting to read unfamiliar words by breaking them into smaller parts or using their knowledge of letter sounds. The progress for pupils with behavioural difficulties is slower as they lack concentration and enthusiasm for learning and the strategies outlined in the individual education plans are not always followed. This leads to some underachievement for these pupils. By the age of seven, pupils read fluently, using some expression. They read both fiction and non-fiction books and understand the use of indexes and contents pages. They write short stories understanding simple story structure, spelling most frequently used words correctly and with an increasing understanding of sentence structure and the use of punctuation. There are many opportunities for speaking and listening during literacy lessons and question and answer sessions in other lessons and pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their skills. However, for some with special educational needs they have difficulty in sitting and listening, often interrupting their teachers or other pupils. They are unwilling to wait for their turn to speak.
6. In mathematics, inspection evidence shows standards are average for seven-year olds. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their mental recall of number facts and in their abilities to use different strategies to solve problems. They acquire a sound understanding of two and three-dimensional shapes and can identify them and give some of their properties. Standards in science are broadly average. Most pupils are attaining the level expected for their age, but few are exceeding it. Investigative skills are developed well from an early stage and pupils acquire sound knowledge of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes.
7. By the age of eleven, inspection evidence indicates standards in speaking and listening are average; in reading and writing they are above average. The intensive training undertaken by teachers is beginning to show in the rising standards. Most pupils speak with clarity, but some lack confidence. For example in the Lentern Service in the hall, Year 6 pupils required a microphone even though the hall is not large. They have a good range of vocabulary and use subject specific vocabulary well in lessons, but sometimes struggle to explain their opinions precisely, for example their conclusions from science investigations. Most pupils read fiction and non-fiction books confidently, using their skills well to research information from CD-Rom and the Internet. They discuss the books they have read, giving reasons for their choice. Their writing covers a good range, for instance, letters stories, narratives and poems. They use punctuation accurately and spell most words correctly. Their handwriting is neat and well formed. Pupils use their literacy skills well to support their learning in many other subjects such as in writing up science experiments and writing about life in different periods in history.

8. Standards in mathematics for eleven-year olds are average, although with the classes being held to boost pupils performance they may rise above this level by the end of the year. Pupils have a secure understanding of the four rules of number and can apply their knowledge to solving problems. Pupils use their mathematical skills well to support learning in other subjects such as science when measuring amounts of water to dissolve substances and presenting their findings in line graphs and bar charts. In science standards are similar to the most recent test results, but with a larger proportion of pupils likely to achieve the higher level. When pupils' experimental and investigative skills are taken into account then standards are above average.
9. In information and communication technology standards are above average for seven and eleven-year olds and have been sustained since the previous inspection. The subject is linked effectively to learning in all subjects and, in many lessons, before school and at break times, pupils use computers to support their learning, for example in finding information about body organs in science or about capital cities in geography. Pupils are confident in using computers for different purposes. The standards have been maintained with the staff turnover due to the drive of the curriculum co-ordinator and her willingness to train classroom support assistants.
10. Standards in design and technology, art and design, history, geography and music are average for seven and eleven-year olds, with the exception of art and design which falls below average for eleven-year olds as pupils' knowledge and skills are not at the expected level. No judgement could be made on standards in physical education as too few lessons were observed. Religious education was inspected under a denominational inspection and is reported separately.
11. The standards achieved by pupils with special educational needs vary according to how well the individual learning needs are met. For those who have difficulty in learning to read and write, most make satisfactory progress in building on their prior attainment through the additional support they receive and achieve appropriate standards. Further progress would be made if the classroom support assistants were given guidance in recording what pupils have learned, rather than how they have behaved, so the next stage in pupils' learning can be determined. For pupils in the care of the Local Authority and who have emotional and behavioural difficulties their records show little progress being made and the individual education plans are not always followed, resulting in some underachievement. The steps taken to support these pupils are ineffective and lead to some disruption for others, which slows their pace of learning. The pupils make good use of computers, but often this is to prevent them disrupting others rather than to support the next stage in their development. There is little evidence of pupils making sufficient progress to be taken off the special educational needs register, despite the early identification of problems.
12. The school met its targets in English and mathematics in 2000. The targets for 2001 are higher, sufficiently challenging and should be achieved with the classes to boost pupils' performance and the very good quality of teaching in Year 6.

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

13. Throughout the school pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory but vary

between classes. Behaviour in lessons is often good, particularly where lessons are interesting and challenging, although when playtimes and lunchtimes are included, behaviour is satisfactory. Pupils know what is expected of them and generally respond to the encouragement and praise given to them. Attendance is satisfactory.

14. In the majority of lessons observed, pupils showed an interest in their work, but there was less interest and concentration for five to seven-year olds. However in Years 3 and 6 the pupils demonstrated good attitudes to learning.
15. Behaviour is satisfactory overall. In Years 3 and 6 behaviour in lessons is often very good and in Year 5 it is good. In some lessons behaviour is unsatisfactory and this is often attributable to the management of those with special educational needs, particularly pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupils are friendly, polite, and helpful to visitors. There have been three fixed term exclusions this academic year, all relating to the same pupil. No evidence of bullying was seen during the course of the inspection, but there was some evidence of aggressive behaviour both in the playground and classroom. When young pupils with behavioural difficulties were observed in the playground where they were supported by Year 6 pupils they played happily, following the suggestions made by their 'buddy' and behaving satisfactorily.
16. Pupils are able to work collaboratively and lessons in personal development are teaching an understanding of other people's feelings and a respect for the beliefs of others. The observed work with Year 3 pupils showed an understanding of how positive good thoughts about another person are more important than negative ones and how confidence and self-esteem can be encouraged.
17. Pupils respond willingly to opportunities to use initiative and take responsibility. The prefect system at Year 6 is seen as a privilege, where those chosen by their peers are proud to wear the badge. They are able to assist staff with routine tasks and care for the younger pupils. Most of the pupils have an opportunity to become a prefect as the appointments last a term and not the whole year. Three or four pupils have organised a lunchtime games club for the reception class. This is held in the library where the children are kept busy and entertained before afternoon lessons. The pupils are careful to make sure that all children get a turn throughout the week if they so desire. The School Council was set up earlier in the year and meets weekly with the community police officer. They hold formal meetings and decide what issues they should promote. Health and safety has just been discussed and the incidence of graffiti in the toilets is now under consideration. Four or five older pupils have joined together to form a small modern vocal dance group.
18. Attendance has improved since last year and is now at 95.05 percent for this academic year to date. Unauthorised absence has risen to 0.04 per cent. Authorised absence at 4.91percent is lower than the last reported figure. However many parents still continue to take their children out of school during term time for family holidays. This disturbs the teaching and learning process and affects pupils' achievement. Several pupils arrived late for morning school during the inspection, which also reduces the amount of time spent in the classroom.

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

19. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 91 per cent of lessons, including 15 percent that are good, 13 per cent that are very good and 11 per cent that are excellent. The remaining 9 per cent are unsatisfactory. Teaching overall has improved since the previous inspection, especially the proportion of very good and excellent teaching. There has been a significant turnover of staff and some of the weaknesses found then are still evident as the procedures for monitoring and developing teaching lack rigour. The teaching meets the learning needs of pupils satisfactorily up to the age of seven, enables pupils to make more rapid progress in their learning in Year 3, slows again in Year 4, improves slightly in Year 5 and increases rapidly again in Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning in most lessons, except for those with behavioural difficulties.
20. The teaching for pupils in the Foundation Stage is consistently satisfactory, with good support for teaching provided by the classroom assistant. For five to seven-year olds teaching is satisfactory, only rising to good when other teachers are present in support. There are examples of unsatisfactory lessons in music in Year 1 and in art and design in Year 2 where expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are not high enough and, where teachers have difficulty with the management of pupils who display challenging behaviour. The strategies for supporting these pupils are ineffective in establishing a calm environment for learning in all lessons. The teaching for seven to eleven-year olds improves and is good overall, although it is better in Years 3 and 6 where it is often very good or better. The parents commented on problems in behaviour among Year 5 pupils, but inspection evidence shows the difficulties have been successfully overcome and no problems noted. There is still a clear link between the pace of lessons, an issue in the previous report, and the pupils' behaviour.
21. The key features of the very good lessons in Years 3 and 6 are the good relationships between the pupils and their teacher and the pace and challenge of the lessons. The pupils respond by working hard to succeed, knowing they will receive support where necessary. The teachers are very aware of the learning needs of those with special educational needs, involve them fully in discussions and praise the efforts they make. For example in mathematics in Year 3, pupils with special educational needs were fully involved in the introductory mental session and were given a little longer to answer questions.
22. The teachers throughout the school are competent in teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, particularly reading, enabling most pupils to learn at a good rate in English and at a satisfactory rate in mathematics. Teachers' planning often includes opportunities to use information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in many other subjects and to develop their skills. Most teachers are secure in their knowledge and confident in teaching skills in information and communication technology. For example in Year 6, pupils were learning how to enter information into spreadsheets and to hide a formula in a cell so that the areas of shapes could be calculated. Pupils' questions were answered clearly and confidently.
23. All the unsatisfactory teaching is in the foundation subjects of art and design, music and design and technology. The reason for the unsatisfactory teaching in art and design is the lack of detail in the scheme of work to support teachers who do not have good subject knowledge. Consequently teachers plan tasks offering little challenge, for example the scrunching and gluing of tissue paper in Year 5. In



design and technology unsatisfactory teaching was due to low teacher expectations. The task to design and make moving monsters in Year 4 was nearing completion and some pupils were not actively involved, merely observing others at work as limited resources were available. In music in Year 1, there was unsatisfactory use of time and the lesson was late in starting. The pace of the lesson was too slow and pupils waited too long before being involved in musical activities.

24. Weekly lesson planning varies in quality. Where lesson plans lack the detail to support teaching, lessons are mostly satisfactory. The very good lessons result from detailed lesson planning that highlights tasks for pupils who learn at different rates, including the support to be provided for those with special educational needs. The class room support assistants are not involved in the weekly planning which would help them to understand why tasks have been planned to meet the needs of these pupils and what is expected of them. The classroom support assistants all record their comments in one file, which is kept in the staffroom and not seen by teachers. The comments written often refer to behaviour and not learning as the classroom assistants have not been trained in what to write to help teachers in planning the next stage in pupils' learning. Occasionally pupils with special needs are withdrawn from lessons when the content is too difficult. The support given, for example in Year 5, was good and the pupil co-operated although the disaffection with reading was clearly evident. The special educational needs co-ordinator has little opportunity to influence planning or teaching for these pupils. The support given by classroom assistants varies. When using the additional literacy strategy with small withdrawal groups, teaching is good. When in the classroom, some are clear as to their roles and support pupils' learning well, for example in Year 3, where the classroom assistant understands the nature of the pupils' problems. In classes with younger pupils the classroom assistants often try to keep pupils on task but are not always successful.
25. The strengths in teaching are in sharing the purposes of lessons with pupils at the beginning. This gives a focus to the teaching and in most lessons teachers return to the learning aims towards the end of lessons to assess what pupils have learned so they know when to move on to the next stage or to reinforce the new learning. The assessment of pupils' attainment is not happening in the reception class and so there is no information to help plan activities to meet the needs of pupils of differing prior attainment. In Year 6, the frequent assessment of pupils' attainment through questioning, marking and through pupils completing task sheets giving their judgement on their learning shows good arrangements that enable the teacher to meet the learning needs of individual pupils very successfully.
26. The use of homework is a strength of the teaching for seven to eleven-year olds. It is set frequently in different subjects and pupils are given clear information as to when to return it to school. Some lower attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs who need this extra practice often do not complete their homework, particularly tasks involving the development of basic skills in spelling and writing and this hinders their progress.

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

27. The curriculum for the reception class is unsatisfactory. Planning in its present

form does not ensure that all areas of learning receive appropriate coverage with priority given to the development of communication, language and literacy. A lack of large outdoor equipment prevents some aspects of the curriculum for physical development being implemented.

28. Overall, the quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils aged between five and eleven years support their progress and personal development satisfactorily. Within this broad picture, there are some differences in the quality of experiences offered to different groups of pupils. For seven to eleven-year olds the time for learning each week is below the recommended minimum by thirty-five minutes; this equates to one lesson per week. The curriculum has several areas of strength but some areas where learning opportunities are more limited. All subjects are covered but with varying amounts of time and emphasis. The English curriculum is well established, with strengths in writing and reading by the age of eleven. Their fluent reading helps pupils not only to read for their own enjoyment but also to become independent learners. The teaching of mathematics has been improved through the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, which is having a positive effect on pupils' attainment. In science, there is good emphasis on enquiry and investigations. There are good opportunities for pupils to experience the full information and communication technology curriculum. Guidance for all other subjects is in place or under review. In art and design however, there is insufficient guidance to help teachers plan appropriately challenging activities at the right levels. The work planned for pupils with special educational needs does not always meet their learning needs.
29. Learning opportunities and full access to the curriculum are restricted at times for some lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. The Additional Literacy Strategy is not always successful in increasing the skills of lower attaining pupils by giving them a greater degree of confidence and greater capacity to contribute in lessons. This is partly due to the fact that classroom support assistants are not fully involved in planning and recording progress. Also, where pupils with special educational needs are included in these withdrawal groups, their individual education plans are not used to plan appropriate tasks. Learning objectives in some individual education plans are not specific enough to ensure the planning of a focused learning programme. On occasions, these plans are not referred to in lessons. The school's positive behaviour strategies are not always effective for a small minority of pupils and procedures are not consistent or clear. All these groups of pupils do not make progress at the same rate as others. However, pupils involved in the small schools project, aimed at increasing co-operation, confidence and self-esteem, have made good progress in their small learning group by beginning to co-operate with each other and develop confidence in speaking. The provision for pupils who are gifted is satisfactory. Occasionally difficulties arise with the school's timetabling arrangements and pupils are withdrawn from lessons to take part in other activities, for example peripatetic music lessons. In these instances, pupils do not always receive their full curriculum entitlement where learning experiences are difficult to replicate.
30. The school's curriculum is extended satisfactorily through a range of extra-curricular activities. Sporting, musical, dance and environmental activities are held before and after school, during lunchtimes and attract a good number of pupils. The school also enters a number of sporting, inter-school competitions with some success. Learning opportunities are extended also for Year 4 and 6 pupils on residential visits.

31. Satisfactory provision for pupils' personal and social development is made through the 'Here I Am' programme. Sex education is provided through the science curriculum and aspects of health education, such as drug awareness, the effects of smoking and alcohol and personal hygiene, through the involvement of the school nurse.
32. The wider community supports the school well through the guidance provided by the Catholic Church, with the local priest taking an active part in the spiritual life of the school. The community policeman is involved in the School Council and the Small School Support project involves a visiting teacher. Links with the local community college and their students has involved sport and information and communication technology days for Year 6 pupils. Liaison with a local playgroup helps pupils to move smoothly into full-time education. There are good links with the local secondary school that gives the older pupils a greater knowledge and understanding of their education after transfer.
33. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils are helped to develop spiritual awareness in various areas of the curriculum particularly in religious education and through assemblies. Christian values are strongly promoted through stories about the life of Jesus. Teachers present acts of collective worship which offer opportunities for stillness and reflection and enable pupils to consider a wide range of themes. Prayers are said regularly throughout the day and most pupils join in these with a sense of reverence. In some classes pupils compose their own prayers. During the inspection, the pupils were given the opportunity to consider the meaning of Lent as a preparation for the Feast of the Resurrection. Instances of awe and wonder, for example when pupils expressed surprise and delight when the inside of a flower bulb is revealed to them, are handled appropriately.
34. The provision for pupils' moral development is satisfactory. Adults in the school provide models of sensitive and caring behaviour which are readily followed by most pupils. Each month there is an assembly to celebrate good behaviour and achievements. This successfully promotes values such as caring and trying hard. Opportunities to consider the needs of people less fortunate than themselves are provided and pupils contribute generously, for instance to Cafod and to Save the Children. Year 6 pupils working with the Youth for Christ group write, "they helped us to understand how difficult it is for people in the third world countries to live". The School Council organised by the local community policeman enables seven to eleven-year old pupils to debate moral issues such as vandalism.
35. The provision for pupils' social development is satisfactory. Groups of Year 6 pupils take it in turn to act as prefects throughout the school year. This provides good social development for those who are selected as they assume responsibilities in various areas such as preparing the hall for assemblies and giving out the school registers. However the school's system of selection for this important role does not ensure that all Year 6 pupils will be selected to take part. Visits into the local and wider community, including residential visits for pupils in Years 4 and 6, provide opportunities for pupils to live and work together in a different context. In lessons, group and paired work is well organised in most subjects to promote collaborative and co-operative skills. Some initiatives such as the 'Games Club' set up each day by Year 6 pupils for reception class children

and the support and friendship given by Year 6 pupils to two pupils with special educational needs very effectively support social development. The 'Special People' project, where pupils identify good things about their peers, opportunities at weekly assemblies and other occasions to share details of their out of school achievements and demonstrate their musical and other talents promote good interaction between pupils and boosts the confidence of the individual. Citizenship is developed when pupils donate harvest gifts to the elderly and money raised from Christmas productions is given to the homeless in Hinckley. Some pupils independently organise competitions that raise money, which is given to a charity of their choice. One pupil raised money and asked for it to go to Great Ormond Street Hospital where she had recently undergone medical treatment.

36. The school has remedied the key issue in the previous inspection report by giving greater emphasis to the contribution made by music and literature from their own and other world cultures to pupils' cultural development. Provision for cultural development is now satisfactory. It is promoted effectively through the curriculum, which includes an interesting range of educational visits linked to pupils' work. Through music pupils have many opportunities to become involved in out of school performances such as the Leicestershire Arts Summer Festival and the Churches Together "Millennium Heroes". Visits to the school by musicians to perform and to work with the pupils also enhance their experience. The literacy hour is successfully introducing pupils to a wide range of writing, not only from the British authors, but also from overseas; for example, the lively language and rhythms of Caribbean and Indian poetry. As well as their own cultural heritage, pupils begin to understand that of others when they learn about major world faiths in religious education and become aware of cultural and religious festivals like Diwali and the Chinese New Year and of their importance to different groups of people.

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

37. Overall the school provides a satisfactory level of care for its pupils. Teachers and support staff are accessible and most are responsive to pupils' needs. Information collected through the assessment of pupils' work is put to good use in some subjects.
38. There is a detailed health and safety policy in use that clearly shows how the governors expect these matters to be dealt with. There are regular health and safety checks and risk assessments. First aid equipment is available and eight trained personnel are on the staff. The medical room is well positioned next to the staff room and is appropriately equipped. The school is aware that the recording and monitoring of health and safety issues need to be improved.
39. There are satisfactory procedures in place for child protection and the acting head teacher is the designated officer. The staff are kept informed of local authority requirements and procedures. The acting head teacher is now due for updated training.
40. The school's educational and personal support for pupils in raising their attainment is satisfactory. Procedures for monitoring academic performance and personal development are good. Individual files are maintained on each pupil giving details of academic development. Academic performance is rewarded with stickers, certificates and prizes that are recorded. These pupil profiles are still being developed. Assessments are now carried out annually in May instead of

twice yearly. Information is presently being transferred to an electronic recording system of assessment management that will collate information and project targets on an individual basis in all areas, this needs to continue at pace to enable the school to check all pupils are making sufficient progress each year. Work is marked consistently and good use is made of assessment particularly in information and communication technology, science and mathematics where this information is used to guide curricular planning.

41. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are unsatisfactory. The recording of unauthorised attendance may not be entirely accurate and the school is aware of this. It is important that parents advise school on the first day of their child's absence, as the present system does not allow sufficient monitoring of whole school attendance. The school's procedures for the authorising of absence lack rigour.
42. The school has adopted a positive approach to behaviour. Good behaviour is rewarded with stickers that are collected on success cards. These lead to the presentation of certificates or a prize. Poor behaviour is recorded with the barring of the sticker. Depending on the gravity of the behaviour pupils are reported to the head teacher and "time out" may follow. Some of the parents found the procedures inconsistent and felt that a more strict approach should be adopted. During the inspection it was found that behaviour management in some classes was unsatisfactory, particularly when dealing with those with special needs. The anti bullying policy is clear in its requirements and promotes a sensitive approach. Parents of both the victim and the bully are informed once a problem has been identified. The procedures are working satisfactorily throughout the school and the electronic recording of incidents is now being considered for all aspects of behaviour that will improve the opportunities for monitoring.
43. Classroom support assistants are involved in monitoring the progress of some pupils with special educational needs relating to literacy. Whilst these pupils are assessed more frequently than other pupils, the quality of the assessments does little to inform teachers what they need to reinforce or when pupils are ready to move to the next stages of learning. The targets set in some of the individual education plans are too broad and so pupils' progress is not easy to measure. The education plans are reviewed termly, but are not always used effectively in planning and classroom support assistants do not see them so cannot plan to meet the needs of individual pupils. This was evident for a Year 4 pupil who needed to concentrate on correct letter formation. When working with a classroom assistant incorrect letter formation went without comment.

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

44. Parents have a good opinion of the school and are satisfied with the standards of work and the level of care shown to the pupils. At the parents' meeting one or two concerns were expressed about behaviour and whether the children were always sufficiently motivated and encouraged to work hard. However they felt the school was moving forward and that there had been a gradual overall improvement.
45. The school has forged good links with parents and considers this relationship to be important. Parents feel free to come into school at any time and many do so. Instruction and advice is given on hearing readers and supervising swimming for

those who are able to give a regular commitment. The Parent Teacher Association raises substantial sums of money to provide additional school equipment and membership has increased following a plea for more help. Parents recently came to run the office on a voluntary basis when the secretary was unable to work. The school was very grateful for this help. Parents' work at the swimming baths is particularly valuable and their commitment makes the lessons possible. Book fairs, manned by parents are held two or three times a year. Parents come into school to give advice or share experiences, sometimes enriching curricular experiences. A parent doctor has given health advice and another let the pupils enjoy some interesting objects of historical interest. A mother came to advise parents on the subject of head lice following her own experiences with her child. There are no home visits before a child enters school but there is contact with playgroups. Parents visit the school to make a choice and children due for admission visit before term starts. The home school agreement is to be updated following an evaluation of feedback from parents. The last one was not considered to be successful when introduced two years ago. The link books provide a regular means of feedback between parents and school and are well used and valued.

46. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. The annual reports lack sufficient detail and information on progress although there is an opportunity to discuss all aspects including targets at the following parents' meeting. Parents are kept well informed by letter of all that is happening in the school. Individual classes also send letters to keep parents advised of their activities with some teachers giving good information on the work to be covered. The governors' annual report gives information on what the school has achieved with contributions from staff members. However it does not fully comply with statutory requirements and school is aware of this. The school prospectus is a full document containing important information for prospective parents. However attendance rates should be included.
47. The school does not work in close partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs. The special educational needs register shows that few parents have been actively involved in discussions. There is little involvement of parents in the review process, most reviews only recording the staff present. The special needs policy is not helpful to parents in informing them of the school's arrangements and who to approach if they feel their child has a problem, although it states the school works in close partnership with parents.

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

48. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school has had three headteachers since the previous inspection and this has slowed the rate of progress. The headteacher is currently seconded to help another school and one of the senior managers is acting headteacher. There has also been some turnover of staff and so the process of building a strong, cohesive staff team is being reinforced in accordance with the 'Investors in People' status. The acting headteacher is providing clear educational direction to the work of the school as far as she is able. She has identified some areas in which the school needs to develop and improve.
49. The roles of curriculum co-ordinators are well developed; they are influencing the development of most subjects and are giving good support to the acting headteacher. All co-ordinators have time to monitor the planning, teaching and

learning in their subjects and have appropriate action plans for improvement. The special educational needs co-ordinator does not have time each week to check that the pupils' individual needs are being met and in some cases the individual education plans are not being followed closely enough. The current co-ordinator, who is a temporary member of staff, has worked hard to improve and update the records for these pupils and was given time to do this. The school's policy on special educational needs does not name the co-ordinator or explain his role clearly. The policy states that the school identifies pupils' problems early and takes action, but this is not always the case according to the parents of some pupils concerned.

50. The governing body is effective in fulfilling its responsibilities and in shaping the direction of the school. It was instrumental in devising the current pupil assessment records, as they wanted to be able to track the progress of pupils from information that they could understand and follow. They fulfil all their statutory obligations with the exception of minor omissions from their last annual report to parents. Different governors are frequently in school to monitor their policies and aims in practice and to check on the work of the school. They have a good committee structure for carrying out their responsibilities in an efficient manner.
51. The school's procedures for monitoring its performance are satisfactory. The policy for monitoring teaching and learning is based on self-evaluation and reflection. Whilst this approach enabled the school to move towards monitoring teaching, it lacks the rigour required to develop and improve teaching further. There is insufficient rigour in monitoring arrangements and no targets set to improve the quality of teaching and raise the proportion of good and very good lessons in the reception class and Years 1 and 2. The analysis of pupils' performance in national tests is identifying where improvement can be made and action taken to improve pupils' writing skills is evident in current standards. The school is currently in the process of putting information onto a computer program that will enable teachers to track all pupils from year to year to check sufficient progress is being made. The information from assessment of pupils soon after entry to the reception class is not being used effectively to plan tasks matched to the needs of individual pupils.
52. The school's strategic plan 2000-2003 is not a helpful document for the longer-term development of the school. There is no action to be taken beyond autumn 2001, except for the national 'Healthy School' standard that is a Local Education Authority two-year programme. The yearly school development plans are mostly action plans for each subject, not whole school development issues with clear outcomes by which the governors can measure the school's performance. Given the number of computers in the school is below that found in most schools of this type nationally, there is insufficient emphasis in the strategic plan on ways to increase the number of computers over the longer term if standards in information and communication technology are to be maintained. The plan does include necessary improvements in provision for pupils with special educational needs such as the training of classroom assistants, meeting the needs of pupils on the higher stages of the Code of Practice and informing parents about the different stages of special educational needs provision. The acting headteacher has already identified the need to improve planning for school development and has started to work on it. Similarly the information contained in the headteacher's termly reports to governors lacks detail to help governors in monitoring the work of the school.

53. The school is using some of its funding for staff development efficiently to work in collaboration with other small schools, to share expertise and develop aspects of each school's work. This is a good project, which is bringing puppetry as a means of developing pupils' self-esteem and ability to co-operate with others into the school. A definite improvement in the behaviour of a small number of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties is evident from this work. Two classroom support assistants are being trained to carry out this work for themselves. In return a teacher with expertise in information and communication technology will visit another school to train their staff.
54. The school is making good use of new technology to aid the day-to-day running of the school. A computerised system for attendance registers is operating well. The financial management and administration are satisfactory, with a bursar checking expenditure regularly. The governors also monitor expenditure each term and play an active part in setting the budget each year. The published copy of the latest auditors' report was not available, although the notes on the visit were examined and remedial action has been taken where necessary.
55. There are sufficient teachers and support staff for the number of pupils on roll, but because of the numbers in year groups two classes have well over thirty pupils, which is undesirable, although not detrimental due to the quality of teaching. Accommodation is adequate, with major building work currently being undertaken that will add a new classroom and improve the accommodation for the Year 1 pupils who are currently cramped in a mobile classroom, normally used as a music studio. There is no outdoor play area for children in the reception class and they share the playground with pupils up to the age of seven and this is unsatisfactory. Consequently the children have insufficient opportunities for outdoor play using wheeled toys and other large climbing equipment. The resources for learning are adequate in most subjects, the exceptions being in the number of computers, the resources for design and technology, the range of books in the library for pupils up to the age of seven and resources in general for the children in the reception class .

56. **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

In order to raise standards and improve the provision for all pupils with special educational needs the acting headteacher and staff supported by the governors should:

- (1) Improve the quality of teaching for pupils up to the age of seven by:
  - increasing the rigour in monitoring lessons, setting targets for improvement and checking the progress towards meeting the targets. Discussed in paragraph 51.
  
- (2) Improve the planning and resources in the reception class by:
  - devising and implementing an appropriate system of planning which is closely linked to the Foundation Stage curriculum;
  - implementing on-going assessment procedures;
  - improve and increase the range of resources to include wheeled toys for outdoor play and more attractive resources for other areas of learning. Discussed in paragraphs 55, 59, 64.

This issue has been identified by the school.



- (3) Improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs by:
- agreeing strategies for supporting pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and applying them consistently;
  - planning tasks to meet pupils' learning needs as given in their individual education plans;
  - involving classroom support assistants in the planning for pupils with whom they work each week;
  - involving parents at all stages of the process and pupils where appropriate;
- Discussed in paragraphs 42, 43, 47, 52.  
This issue has been identified by the school.
- (4) Develop further the procedures for collating the assessment data available for individual pupils so that:
- the progress of all pupils can be tracked from year to year and pupils making insufficient progress can be identified and targeted for support to help them catch up.
- Discussed in paragraphs 40, 51.  
This issue has been identified by the school.

In addition to the key issues, the governors should consider including the following minor issues in the action plan:

1. Raising standards in art and design by improving the scheme of work to provide more support for teaching.  
Discussed in paragraphs 87 – 89.
2. Increasing the number of up-to-date computers available as soon as funding allows.  
Discussed in paragraph 55, 106, 111.
3. Improving the school development plan and the headteacher's termly reports to governors by providing more information on whole school issues and targets and the progress towards achieving them.  
Discussed in paragraph 50.
4. Ensuring all required information is contained in the governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus.  
Discussed in paragraphs 46, 50.
5. Improving the information in pupils' end of year reports to parents.  
Discussed in paragraph 46.
6. Improve the arrangements for recording and monitoring health and safety issues. Discussed in paragraph 38.
7. Improving procedures for monitoring and improving attendance.  
Discussed in paragraph 41.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	54
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
11	13	15	52	9	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	219
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	26

FTE means full-time equivalent.

<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	47

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

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

### Attendance

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%	<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	7.4	School data	0.0
National comparative data	5.2	National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	17	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	12	15
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	31	29	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (90)	91 (87)	100 (97)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	15
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	31	32	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (87)	100 (93)	100 (93)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	20	12	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	19
	Girls	12	8	12
	Total	23	21	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (68)	66 (82)	97 (93)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	14	17
	Girls	12	10	12
	Total	21	24	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (75)	75 (86)	91 (93)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	180
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.4:1
Average class size	29

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

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	129

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***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	1
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.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	352,762
Total expenditure	365,736
Expenditure per pupil	1856
Balance brought forward from previous year	16,177
Balance carried forward to next year	3,203

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	160
Number of questionnaires returned	56

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	38	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	41	45	4	4	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	57	9	2	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	50	14	7	2
The teaching is good.	43	48	4	4	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	45	16	5	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	27	5	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	43	0	2	5
The school works closely with parents.	32	50	11	2	5
The school is well led and managed.	43	45	7	2	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	50	4	2	9
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	36	20	0	13

### Other issues raised by parents

Class sizes – parents are concerned that the number of pupils in one class is 37 and they feel this is affecting the progress of their children.

## **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**

57. Children begin full-time education at the beginning of the autumn or spring term depending on whether their birthday falls before or after the 28<sup>th</sup> February. There is a good induction process that successfully establishes a positive relationship with parents. During the inspection there were 26 children in the reception class, eleven of whom started school in January. During the last half term the class was taught by a student teacher on three days each week, while the class teacher was engaged in other management activities within the school. The quality of teaching is consistently satisfactory in all areas of learning. Adults establish good caring relationships with the children and provide them with a secure environment. The classroom support assistant knows the children very well and together with a regular voluntary helper makes a positive contribution to children's learning and progress. At the time of the previous inspection the provision for children under five was good. The major building programme and changes of staff have adversely affected the provision for children up to the age of five. The school is aware of the need to improve the provision as soon as possible to enable the children to achieve their full potential.
58. Children's attainment on entry is broadly in line with that expected for their age. Assessment of the older children soon after admission confirmed this. Throughout their time in the reception class the children achieve satisfactorily. Work is provided in all the nationally agreed areas of learning and the varied range of experiences provides sound preparation for the next stage of learning. The work seen indicates that by the time the children reach the end of the year in the reception class, standards are average as most of them are likely to reach the early learning goals expected nationally in all areas of development, with a significant number exceeding them.
59. Planning is based on a format that is more suitable for teaching the National Curriculum than the Foundation Stage Curriculum, and in its present form it is unsatisfactory. There is insufficient emphasis on what is to be learned and not enough detail about the activities that will be provided to promote and enhance learning opportunities in each area of the Foundation Stage. A consequence of this is that opportunities for learning, at times, are limited. For example, in a whole class session the children were helped to develop concepts about capacity but there is no provision in the classroom for them to engage in further activities designed to extend and reinforce their understanding of capacity. There are no areas set up each day for children to practise and develop their writing and mathematical skills at their own pace. When children are working in focussed groups where activities have been specifically planned to promote learning objectives they are well supported and make good progress. There is insufficient planning for each area of learning to provide consistency in the experiences and opportunities offered to the children. Procedures for assessment are unsatisfactory. Some new procedures are about to be implemented which have the potential to be useful for assessing children's numeracy and literacy skills but there are no other assessments to give a clear indication of each child's progress towards the learning goals and to inform weekly planning of activities.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

60. By the time they leave the reception class, the children have reached the early learning goals in this area of development. There are satisfactory relationships between adults and children and between the children, who share resources amicably when engaged in activities such as using the sand tray and working with construction equipment. Children are developing independence and understand how to conduct themselves outside their own classroom, for example, when they join pupils from the school for assemblies or have their lunch in the hall. Higher attaining children concentrate and stay on tasks for an appropriate time. Teaching is satisfactory. There are opportunities for children to develop responsibility and independence, for instance getting ready for a physical education lesson or returning the register to the school office. There are planned opportunities for children to develop sensitivity and awareness of other people such as when they describe good things about other children in their project on special people. Children's behaviour is usually managed effectively but sometimes the teacher does not make it clear to them exactly what is appropriate behaviour in a particular situation and this slows the pace of learning for the whole class. Routines, for example when children come into the classroom in the morning with their parents, are not firmly established and this lack of routines is not helpful in establishing a calm atmosphere. There is appropriate emphasis on health and hygiene such as washing hands before lunch and before engaging in a sandwich-making activity.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

61. The children's development in communication, language and literacy is satisfactory and most are likely to reach the early learning goals in this area by the end of the year in the reception class. The children enjoy and listen attentively to stories. They know that print has meaning and about a third of the children are beginning to read simple sentences in early reading books. Many recognise important words. The children enjoy discussing the pictures in simple information books, for example when discussing the pictures of animals and describing them. A few higher attainers identify letter sounds and use them to build unfamiliar words when, for example, they annotate their observational drawings of plants and flowers. Most children hold their pencil correctly and letter formation is good. Teaching is satisfactory. Many opportunities are planned which include children speaking and listening to an adult and to each other. When staff talk to and listen to children while they are engaged in various learning experiences, encouraging them to talk about what they are doing, the children make good progress in developing their language skills. When listening to a parent talking about her baby, the children asked questions to check their thoughts and understanding and listened with interest to the response. They are able to follow instructions given by an adult. When children acted out the story of Jack and the Beanstalk questions were well used to enable them to widen their vocabulary and to articulate their interpretation of what was happening. Some discussed at length what the giant might do next. Children who have special educational needs relating to communication problems receive good support from adults and external agencies and make satisfactory progress towards their targets. There are insufficient opportunities for children to engage in writing activities apart from those directed by the teacher and very few children were observed looking at books other than their reading books.

### **Mathematical development.**

62. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children are likely to reach the early

learning goals and achievement is satisfactory. They are learning mathematical language and understanding of what is meant by, for instance, 'full' and 'empty' and 'big' and 'small'. All children can count to 10 and the more able competently count to 40 and beyond. Nearly all recognise numerals to 10 and match these to the correct number of objects. Teaching is satisfactory. In a lesson on weight, pupils describe objects as being 'light or heavy', 'lighter or heavier' and 'lightest or heaviest' with increasing accuracy because they are all working with an adult in small groups and are asked challenging questions. Higher attainers predict what will happen when objects are weighed using a balance and can order objects from heaviest to lightest. They reinforce their understanding of mathematical vocabulary such as 'big', 'wide', 'small' and 'tiny' during a physical education lesson. They develop number skills when they are involved in games and making jigsaws and when 'buying and selling' flowers and plants in the 'garden centre' but there are not enough opportunities for them to engage in mathematical activities apart from when they are being taught directly. The lack of resources for working with water means that children's learning about capacity is restricted.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

63. There are many planned opportunities to increase children's knowledge and understanding of the world and most children are on course to reach the early learning goals by the end of their time in the reception class and this represents satisfactory achievement. The computer is used regularly and most children have good control of the mouse as they work on a variety of programs. They are making good progress in their ability to follow instructions and give commands to the computer. Their familiarity with technology is also enhanced and extended when they listen to a taped story through headphones. The children know that plants and flowers grow from bulbs and seeds and identify leaves, flowers and stems. From their study of water they know that some objects sink while others float and are learning to distinguish between them. Teaching in this area is at least satisfactory. Children go into the school grounds to look at plants and on their return enjoy potting geraniums and planting lobelia seeds. One group examines growing cress seeds through a magnifying glass. Photographs show children miming what water is used for. One mimes washing hands, another drinking and another rowing a boat. Their faces express their enjoyment. The children gained much first-hand learning experience from the visit of a mother and her baby, including a simple awareness of the link between past and present as they were led to think about their own babyhood and successive stages of their lives up to the present. This tied in well with earlier activities on family events and personal time lines. Geographical concepts were usefully introduced when the children walked round the school locality, talking about where they lived and making a simple plan of their classroom. Vigorous physical activity provided an opportunity to talk about beating hearts and bodies becoming warmer after exercise.

### **Physical development**

64. Most children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in this area of development but aspects of the provision are unsatisfactory. There is no large outdoor equipment or wheeled toys to promote confidence and self-esteem when used successfully. The children do not have regular access throughout each day to an outdoor area. They are restricted to using the outdoor area at the same time as older pupils in the school for playtimes and lunchtimes. Manipulative skills are developed well when children use scissors and engage in activities such as



sandwich-making where they use knives to spread the jam and cutters to shape the sandwiches. The children enjoy their lessons in the school hall and are developing awareness of space and of others as they run, skip, change directions and jump forwards, backwards and sideways. Teaching is satisfactory. In the lesson in the hall, the children were appropriately reminded of the importance of safety during the lesson. They were helped to learn by the teacher's clear demonstration of particular movements. The children make good progress in developing ball skills such as throwing, bouncing and catching. The use of a whistle however introduces an unpleasant sound that is not conducive to maintaining a calm atmosphere. A lively role play activity enabled the children to make a physical response to the story of Jack and the Beanstalk and encouraged and inspired actions such as crouching, pushing and pulling.

### **Creative development**

65. The children make satisfactory progress in developing their creative skills and most are likely to reach the early learning goals in this area of development. Children know a variety of songs and enjoy producing sounds on a selection of musical instruments. Teaching is satisfactory. Children have opportunities to practise skills such as painting, cutting and drawing as they make models and pictures. Some activities are provided for the children to experience opportunities to develop their imagination. The 'garden centre' provides limited opportunities for role-play. They enjoy playing with constructional and other equipment such as farms, railways and garages and sustain this kind of work for appropriate periods of time. A lively telling of the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' on tape produced imaginative responses as they simulated the Giant's and Jack's actions. Apart from these examples no other such stimulating provision, enabling children to have fun and explore different situations and characters, were observed during the inspection.

### **ENGLISH**

66. The school's 2000 results of national tests for seven-year olds in comparison with all schools and with similar schools were above average in reading and were average in writing. Standards of work at age seven have improved since the previous inspection. Current standards of work are average for seven-year olds. This does not indicate a decline in standards but reflects the larger than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. The school's 2000 results in national tests for eleven-year olds showed standards were in line with the national average, but were below the average for similar schools. Standards at age eleven have improved since the previous inspection and inspection evidence shows further improvement. Standards are currently above average for eleven-year olds.
67. Pupils are developing speaking and listening skills satisfactorily and standards are average for seven and eleven-year olds. A small group of less confident Year 1 pupils, mostly with special educational needs, were highly motivated and made very good progress by speaking more confidently and clearly in role through puppets, due to excellent teaching. In another lesson, the teacher's use of interesting resources and varied use of voice helped Year 1 pupils improve their concentration when learning words. Year 2, higher attaining pupils spoke clearly and confidently, for example when explaining speech bubbles and discussing characters in their reading books. Pupils were interested and listened carefully when their teacher asked them to identify and spell the letter sounds in different

words on their white boards. A significant minority of pupils in the five to seven age group lack confidence in speaking and do not always pay attention to their teachers. In some lessons, the behaviour management strategies are not effective in securing their attention. This restricts opportunities for speaking and listening, particularly during lesson introductions, and affects the overall standard of behaviour.

68. In a Year 3 lesson, the excellent combination of specific vocabulary such as performance, expression, tone and volume, explanations, skilful questioning and humorous discussion enabled pupils to perform a Caribbean poem with obvious enjoyment and skill. Pupils with special educational needs made good progress by learning the lines and participating fully. In their evaluation, pupils were eager to suggest suitable actions and gestures to improve their performance. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 are very confident in expressing their opinions in class, but are less confident when performing scripted drama to a larger audience. Average attaining pupils are confident speakers in class, but not in front of the school. In a Year 6 lesson on metaphors, the teacher's excellent knowledge and enthusiasm was infectious and enabled a lively and open discussion on the visual images and rhythm in the poem 'The Highwayman'. Although all lessons include elements of questioning, there are insufficient, planned opportunities to develop the range of speaking and listening skills in some classes.
69. Standards in reading are above average for seven and eleven-year olds. Reading skills are generally taught well and pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. This assists their learning in other subjects. The careful teaching of letter sounds helps the great majority of pupils to attempt unfamiliar words by Year 2, such as 'Boudicca' and 'daughters'. Higher attaining pupils read fluently and with expression. Year 3 pupils read aloud a poem clearly and expressively. Pupils have many opportunities to read and parents' support is harnessed well, for example through 'link books' for the younger pupils and targeted reading in Year 6. From Year 1, intonation and expression is modelled well by teachers. Pupils are helped to understand the use of speech marks, italics and punctuation in order to make sense of what they read. Good links are made with writing skills. By Year 6, most pupils are confident, fluent and expressive readers. They make good use of their reading skills to support work in other subjects such as history, geography and science by researching information using CD-Roms and non-fiction books.
70. Additional literacy support is not always effective for some Year 3 and 4 pupils, as individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are not used when planning work. Consequently, tasks do not always match pupils' learning needs. Classroom assistants are supportive but not sufficiently involved in the planning and recording of individual pupil's progress. The special needs support teacher helps individual pupils to develop their reading skills and confidence by planning carefully matched tasks that take account of the learning objectives in individual education plans. The support provided once a week is insufficient to move on learning at a good pace however. On occasions, the reading material used in lessons is too difficult for both lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, which severely restricts their learning and progress. Less confident readers and spellers in Year 6 receive specific, targeted support due to the identification of their learning needs by their teacher.
71. Standards in writing are average for seven-year olds and above average for eleven-year olds. Writing skills develop satisfactorily in the infant classes. The

use of individual whiteboards in Year 1 promotes independent writing skills well, especially in story writing. In Year 2, the higher attaining pupils are developing their vocabulary to write interesting stories. Punctuation and spelling is mostly good and includes the use of inverted commas. In lessons, the pace of work is sometimes too slow for this group of pupils. Average and lower attaining pupils have less well-developed punctuation and spelling skills but are developing their ideas in simple sentences. Pupils use the computer to present their work attractively for display in the school. There is good continuity of learning in Year 3 but too few opportunities for independent writing in Years 4 and 5. The use of textbook exercises creates little enthusiasm and makes lessons uninspiring. The writing of the eleven year-olds is of a good standard, with the higher attaining pupils' writing well organised, interesting and accurate. Pupils' work includes a good range of writing for different purposes, such as the very attractively presented and amusing information leaflets about head lice and a multi-media presentation in the form of a class book written for Year 1 pupils. The teacher has appropriately high expectations of learning for all pupils. In one lesson, the pupils' level of engagement in their tasks created real excitement, due to the particularly interesting and well-focused teaching that included all the elements of English, including support to produce writing of good quality. Pupils worked in pairs and, by the end of the lesson, created pieces of imaginative writing using metaphors, rhythms and interesting vocabulary. Boys and girls were equally enthusiastic and motivated. Progress in this year is particularly good. Pupils' writing skills are also developed well through many other subjects, for example when writing up their conclusions from investigations in science, writing about other countries in geography and about the Aztecs in history.

72. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in all lessons. Fifty percent of lessons are good or better including examples of excellent teaching in Years 1, 3 and 6. The excellent lesson on metaphors in Year 6, built on pupils' prior learning very effectively by focusing on how the poet used language to communicate. The teacher discussed new and unusual vocabulary in an interesting way that developed pupils' ideas and thoughts. The learning needs of the pupils are well known and different groups are given support to overcome their difficulties. In Year 1 the excellent teaching was with pupils, mostly those with special educational needs, who have difficulties in communicating with others. Through the use of puppets and a puppet theatre, the pupils began speaking with clarity and increased confidence as the tasks are exciting and the relationship with the teacher is very good. Where lessons are satisfactory, this is often owing to a small proportion of time being spent on behaviour management, which interrupts the flow of lessons. Marking is consistent and of a generally good standard throughout the school. Helpful written feedback is given in relation to lesson objectives. Individual targets identify areas for improvement. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy satisfactorily and is involved in the Local Authority's Intensive Literacy Support initiative. This is successful in providing an impetus to the development of pupils' writing skills and is reflected in the good range of writing displayed around the school. The newly appointed co-ordinators are enthusiastic and are involved, along with class teachers, in monitoring the success of the initiative. The Small School's initiative, involving a teacher from another school, is particularly successful in its aim to promote co-operation and language skills of the younger pupils through puppetry. The school library has recently been supplemented with a variety of non-fiction books, but there are insufficient non-fiction books at an appropriate reading level for the younger pupils. The curriculum co-ordinator has talked to the older boys and researched library journals for information on popular fiction and non-fiction books

as part of the action taken to remedy the under-performance of boys. Increased emphasis on non-fiction writing is evident in the displays around the school and this is helping to motivate boys and raise standards.

## **MATHEMATICS**

73. Standards at the age of seven in national tests in 2000 were well above the national average and the average for similar schools. Standards have improved from being broadly average in 1997 to well above average in subsequent years gradually rising over the last three years broadly in line with the national trend. Inspection evidence shows that current standards among seven-year olds, which includes some pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, are in line with the national average.
74. The school's 2000 national test results for 11 year olds show that standards were below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. Analysis of the trend over time shows that the improvement in results to average in 1998 and to well above average in 1999 was not sustained in 2000. Current inspection evidence shows that standards are average. The school is providing extra support for some pupils through 'booster' classes after school. These classes are helping to improve standards still further. Over the last three years boys' performance has been better than that of girls and to a greater extent than that found nationally, however, the most recent results on their own do not show this discrepancy.
75. By the age of seven most pupils have sound mental calculation skills for their age and confidently count, add, subtract, halve and double to at least 10. A small minority rely on the help of learning support staff to perform these operations. Analysis of work shows that most pupils name and know the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. They add together the values of different coins and tackle money problems such as working out the change required after a purchase. Higher attaining pupils understand the place value of each digit in a number and apply their understanding of the process of 'adding on' to a 'real life' problem as they swiftly calculate the number of days between two given dates in consecutive months.
76. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are developing strategies for solving problems. For instance higher attaining pupils give clear reasons for identifying either multiplication or division as a method for solving individual problems. Most pupils understand the value of a digit in numbers to 1000, use the four number operations competently and recognise the place value of numbers when a decimal point is introduced. The majority of pupils have investigated the relationship between the area and perimeter of rectangles and higher attaining pupils calculate the area of compound shapes. A significant minority of higher attaining pupils in Year 6 have clear understanding of how to invert the formula for the area of a rectangle, reflecting standards of attainment above those expected.
77. The quality of teaching is satisfactory for five to seven-year olds and is good overall for seven to eleven-year olds. Eighty-three percent of lessons for seven to eleven-year olds are good, including 33 percent that are very good or better. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. In lessons that are very good or better, the introductory mental session moves at a good pace, whilst allowing pupils sufficient time to think and work out their answers. For example in Year 3 pupils were adding two digit numbers together. The teacher used mathematical

vocabulary accurately throughout and encouraged pupils to follow her example. In an excellent lesson in Year 6 pupils' existing knowledge of the formula for calculating area was effectively harnessed to develop their concept of inverse operations. A range of methods was used, which included getting some pupils to hypothesise a problem for others to solve, getting pupils to record their calculations and focusing throughout on the different strategies that pupils could use to solve the problems. Pupils became absorbed in the lesson and achieved well. Lesson plans in Year 3 and Year 6 are detailed and show how pupils of differing prior attainment are to be catered for. In lessons that are less successful, where behaviour is not well managed or where tasks lack appropriate challenge pupils become restless and lose their concentration, which has an adverse effect on their learning. Occasionally the introductory session is unsatisfactory; for example in a Year 1 lesson the teachers did not ensure that all pupils were attentive for the whole of the time or that they understood what they were being asked to do. This hindered their learning. In a Year 4 lesson part of the mental work was unchallenging for many of the pupils who, by persisting in calling out the answers without thought, failed to extend their own learning and prevented other lower attaining pupils from making sufficient progress. Good use is made of the framework provided by the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons that are good or better begin with a lively session of oral work which effectively develops pupils' mental recall skills and promotes their use of different strategies to answer questions. In a Year 3 lesson for example the teacher established what she wanted the pupils to learn and shared this with them. Clear explanations and demonstrations of the processes involved and good use of challenging questions enabled pupils of all abilities to consolidate their understanding and work with speed and accuracy. In most lessons the whole class session is used well to promote and extend pupils' learning. Pupils of all levels of attainment in Year 5 made good progress in their understanding of reflective symmetry because each group had work targeted to their level of understanding and because an adult supported each group. Pupils receive good verbal and written feedback on their work and there are regular assessments of pupils' attainment and progress.

78. Pupils are given suitable opportunities to reinforce their numeracy skills in other subjects. For example in science they record information from investigations in graphical format, in information and communication technology they use spreadsheets and in history they record events on time lines.
79. The subject is managed very well by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who only joined the school recently. She is very knowledgeable about most aspects of the teaching of mathematics and the National Numeracy Strategy. She has audited resources in the school and identified current needs, provides support and advice as necessary and effective systems are in use to monitor the quality of planning, teaching and learning.

## **SCIENCE**

80. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment at age seven in 2000 showed above average standards; all pupils attained the level expected for their age in all aspects of the subject and 30 percent exceeded this level. Inspection evidence indicates current standards amongst seven-year olds are broadly average. This does not represent a decline in standards but is owing to a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than usual, especially emotional and behavioural difficulties. These pupils find it hard to sustain their concentration. The school's strategies for supporting such pupils are not effective and, at times,

the teacher has to spend a disproportionate amount of time on behaviour management and this hinders the pace of learning for others.

81. At the age of eleven, standards have been maintained above or well above the national average each year since the last inspection with the exception of the 2000 results, which dipped to broadly in line with the national average and the average for similar schools. Inspection evidence shows standards among eleven-year olds are very similar to the most recent test results, although an increased proportion are likely to exceed the expected level for eleven-year olds. However, pupils' experimental and investigative skills are well developed throughout all year groups and this aspect is not assessed through national tests, therefore overall standards are judged to be above average by the age of eleven. The test results in recent years show boys do better than girls but lesson observations showed this to have been remedied. Teachers focus on girls who are under performing, often directing questions to them to check their level of understanding and encourage them to achieve their potential.
82. The scrutiny of pupils' workbooks and discussions with pupils show good coverage of the National Curriculum programme of study and clear progression in the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills from year to year. The pace of learning is satisfactory for five to seven-year olds and is more rapid and is good for seven to eleven- year olds. However, progress slows a little in Year 5 (10 year olds) as there is heavy reliance on the use of worksheets for pupils to record their findings from investigations. Consequently the rate of progress in explaining their conclusions accurately and precisely loses momentum. In Year 6, the pace of learning is more rapid and is very good as a result of the consistent very good quality of teaching that challenges pupils to draw on their previous learning and apply it to new situations.
83. Pupils make good progress in developing their investigative skills from an early stage and in Year 1 carry out experiments to determine the conditions necessary for growth of plants. They begin to develop their observational skills through looking at the changes to their bean seeds. Pupils are required to use their observational skills to work out why a table tennis ball suspended on string moves when touched by a vibrating tuning fork. They test out their hypothesis further using balloons, then a tray of water. They understand that the vibrations from the tuning fork cause the movement in other objects and water. By the age of seven, pupils are beginning to distinguish between living and non-living things, can name some sources of light and understand the dangers of electricity. Pupils know how to make a simple electrical circuit. They know that you can see through some materials but not others and that some are better for specific purposes than others. The pace of learning is better in Year 1 than in Year 2 where there was no evidence of work on life processes and living things or materials and their properties in their books so far this year.
84. By the age of eleven, pupils have a good understanding of all aspects of the subject. They are confident in setting up a fair test and changing variables. They make predictions, for example many thought cotton wool or bubble wrap would be the best material for muffling sound but found out it was tissue paper. Whilst there was less evidence in pupils' books of work on life processes and living things, pupils talked with understanding about the heart and how it pumps blood around the body, also about flower parts such as 'stigma', 'style' and 'ovary' and their function in the life cycle. They know how to separate different mixtures by

sieving or evaporation. They understand that balanced forces acting upon an object can make it float, for example they changed the shape of a boat made from modelling material until the upthrust and gravity were acting equally. They draw circuit diagrams accurately and understand how to make bulbs shine brighter or dimmer. Pupils are currently investigating the manner in which pitch and loudness of some vibrating objects can be changed. By applying their prior knowledge they predicted with confidence that tightening strings or skin, or reducing the amount of air in a bottle would make the pitch higher. They are beginning to draw conclusions about the size and speed of vibrations and their effect on pitch and loudness but found this really challenging. Pupils enjoy the practical approach to teaching the subject and in most lessons their response to the activities helps their rate of learning. When explaining their reasons they use correct vocabulary, for example adding a substance to water to make a saturated solution. They use computers to present their findings and to find information for example about body organs.

85. The quality of teaching is satisfactory for five to seven-year olds and is good for seven to eleven-year olds. The lessons seen in Years 4 and 6 were very good. The teachers were secure in their subject knowledge and there was a high level of challenge throughout. For example in Year 4, three different activities were prepared to develop pupils' investigative and observational skills, two of which required them to use their prior knowledge of vertebrates and invertebrates. Pupils investigated the effect of exercise on pulse rates, decided how to classify a group of animals and observed different minibeasts. By the end of the lesson the pupils could describe confidently how they had classified animals into those with exoskeletons, endoskeletons or no skeleton, and from their observations of minibeasts could say which group they would fit into. The strength in the teaching is in the practical approach and the recall of previous learning before taking it on to the next stage. The marking of work in Year 6 pupils' books is of a particularly high standard. It is very clear what pupils do or do not understand with evidence of further teaching to overcome difficulties. The inadequate level of resources, by way of torches, prevented what started as a very good lesson in Year 3 continuing, as pupils had to share and the very good pace slowed for a period of time.
86. The subject continues to be well led and managed and, is now working to recent national guidelines without losing the current progression in pupils' learning. Resources are barely adequate in some aspects, the school having to rely on pupils bringing in torches from home. Further resources are necessary to improve standards further. Good use is made of computers to present and find information, for example in Year 4, pupils were researching information on the heart.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

87. Standards in art and design are broadly average for seven-year olds, but are below expected levels by the age of eleven. Overall standards have not improved significantly since the last inspection, partly due to the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and a consequent reduction in the time allocated to the subject. By the age of seven, pupils have a reasonable range of experiences. They use charcoal to explore different lines and shapes before drawing portraits, some of which show careful representation of shape, pattern, line and tone. Other experiences, such as dribbling paint, are not sufficiently challenging. Year 1 pupils make carefully observed pencil drawings of

local houses and lively, expressive drawings of people who help at the school.

88. By the age of eleven, pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding have not advanced sufficiently and standards are not high enough. Most pupils are enthusiastic about the subject but their potential is not being achieved because of the limited opportunities and low level of challenge provided in lessons. Work is focused on techniques and lacks depth, real purpose or context. By Year 6, there is little progression in, for example, printmaking and collage work and their knowledge of the work of famous artists lacks depth. Pupils demonstrated little understanding and knowledge of artistic styles and traditions. Some techniques are inappropriate for the age group, such as scrunching and gluing tissue paper to produce a mosaic effect in Year 5. Pupils use computers to create pictures and patterns, for example when designing wallpaper patterns. The opportunities and experiences provide limited opportunities for pupils' cultural development.
89. The scrutiny of pupils' work on display indicates teaching is satisfactory for pupils up to the age of seven, but is unsatisfactory for older pupils. The weaknesses in teaching in the lessons seen were mostly owing to insecure subject knowledge and lack of challenge in the tasks set. For example, in Year 6, the introduction to the work of Brueghel involved no discussion of the mood created by the pictures and no use of art terminology. The co-ordinator has worked hard to produce new guidance for the subject since the last inspection. Unfortunately, it is limited in its scope and lacks detailed guidance on how art is to be taught and learned in appropriately challenging and meaningful contexts.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

90. Standards are broadly average for seven-year olds. Progress between the age of seven and eleven is variable but by Year 6, standards are average. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Only two lessons were seen in design and technology but a range of previous work was displayed throughout the school. Pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning.
91. By the age of seven, pupils use their ideas to create colourful designs to represent their own versions of Joseph's coat of many colours. There are good opportunities for pupils to use a graphics program to generate ideas for decoration on the computer. Pupils create different shapes and colours, and good links are made with information and communication technology. A paper pattern is used appropriately to cut out coat shapes in felt but all are identical in size and colour. No opportunities are provided for pupils to work on different scales or select their own fabric backgrounds so they can think about and plan their work.
92. By the age of eleven, pupils investigate and evaluate a range of shelters for particular purposes, including the teacher's tent. They use the information gained to design and make their own shelters for an egg, to protect it from water and movements. Simple tests conducted with, for example, hairdryers and weights, enabled them to evaluate their work effectively. Pupils' written evaluations identify areas of weakness and the need to make improvements; for example to stability and water resistance through comments such as 'make more friction on the base of the shelter' and 'secure with more bubble wrap'. Their work shows individuality because of the good range of materials provided by the teacher and



differences in design. All work is carefully finished.

93. The teaching is satisfactory overall. In Year 3, pupils taste and evaluate a variety of sandwiches with different fillings before recording their opinions on taste, appearance, smell and texture. Behaviour is good and pupils are interested and fully involved. They use descriptions such as 'soft', 'smooth' and 'squashy' when recording. The activity is well organised with appropriate teaching emphasis on health and safety during food preparation. Photograph frames made earlier lack a good quality of finish and decorative methods are very limited. Achievement in Years 4 and 5 is unsatisfactory. This is largely due to teachers' lack of subject knowledge and results in low expectations of pupils. Some finished products are identical and pupils' work shows limited ideas. In the lesson seen in Year 4, a significant number of pupils lacked interest and were not involved in the tasks. A significant number did not understand the pneumatic system. A few showed a lack of respect for materials and their behaviour was unsatisfactory, these were pupils with special educational needs relating to behavioural difficulties.
94. The co-ordinator has good knowledge of the subject and a clear view of the improvements needing to be made. Standards are monitored satisfactorily by analysing teachers' planning and gathering work samples or photographs. Resources are inadequate in range and quantity.

## GEOGRAPHY

95. It was only possible to observe one lesson. However analysis of pupils' work in books and on display and talking to pupils show that standards are in line with those expected for seven and eleven-year olds and pupils, including those with special needs, make satisfactory progress in their learning and achieve satisfactorily. No judgement on standards was made in the previous inspection.
96. Pupils in Year 1 can identify significant features in the local area such as their houses and their school. Their recordings include simple graphs in response to questions about where they live and their means of transport to school. Year 2 pupils name the countries that make up the United Kingdom and identify points on a compass. They acquire a sound knowledge of other countries from following, with interest, the travels of 'Barnaby Bear' around the United Kingdom and Europe. When they receive his postcards they identify his destination on a map and discuss the weather conditions he is experiencing, the clothes he might wear and the type of activities in which he might engage. Pupils have also studied Katie Morag's island home and can compare it with Earl Shilton.
97. Year 6 pupils have sound understanding of the effect of people on the environment. They have a satisfactory knowledge of countries, continents and oceans. They use four figure grid references to locate features on maps and plans. They described work they had done on comparing St Lucia to the British Isles. Analysis of this work shows a very comprehensive coverage and sound understanding. Pupils have collected evidence and have recorded differences in, for example, the climate, the landscape and the natural hazards between the two localities. They write with understanding about the differences of growing up in Castles and growing up in Earl Shilton and about what they would like or dislike about living in St Lucia. The work they have done makes a good contribution to literacy and to social and cultural development.
98. Teaching in the lesson observed was very good. Year 3 pupils made very good progress in their understanding of the effects of weather on human activity when they selected items of clothing suitable for the weather conditions for their designated destinations in different parts of the world. The teacher conveyed to the class her own sense of fun and all became involved in an enjoyable learning activity in a friendly and happy atmosphere. Pupils remained interested throughout because of the teachers' command of the subject, the lively pace and very good organisation and management. Another enjoyable practical activity followed on where pupils improved their mapping skills as they plotted a route around the school grounds for a planned games activity thus providing relevant learning in a stimulating context.
99. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has had opportunities to work with different year groups, has monitored teaching and pupils' work and has given useful feedback to colleagues as to how they can improve teaching and learning.

## HISTORY

100. Only two lessons were observed but analysis of pupils' work in books and displays and discussion with pupils shows that standards are in line with those expected for seven and eleven-year olds. This does not indicate standards have declined since the previous inspection, but reflects the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the subsequent reduction in time allocated to the subject. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
101. By the age of seven pupils develop enquiry skills and an understanding of the difference between past and present when, for example, they compare fire fighting procedures now with those used to tackle the Great Fire of London in 1666. They learn about famous people in the past such as Florence Nightingale. Year 1 pupils develop their understanding of what life used to be like when they examine the contents of 'granny's suitcase'.
102. Between seven and eleven-years of age pupils are increasing their knowledge about life styles through the ages at a satisfactory rate. In Year 3 they learn about what it would have been like in Tudor times, making comparisons between schools then and now. Year 4 pupils take on the role of imaginary characters such as 'Ethel the Unready' and 'Hannah the Hairy' and show their understanding of events, empathising with their feelings and reactions when the Vikings invaded Britain. Pupils in Year 6 explain the nature of historical evidence and select and combine information sources such as drawings and Tapia's Chronicle to gain some understanding of religion, architecture, dress and food in the Aztec civilisation.
103. From the scrutiny of pupils' work and the lessons seen, teaching is satisfactory overall, but varies between the classes. During the initial part of the lesson observed in Year 2, the teacher did not ensure that all pupils were taking part in the discussion at the start of the lesson. This resulted in a few pupils becoming inattentive and making insufficient progress. In a Year 6 lesson seen the teaching was excellent. The teacher dramatically set the scene of a confrontation between the Aztecs and the Spaniards. This triggered the pupils' imagination and their interest was instantly aroused. Excellent organisation of individual and group roles enabled the pupils to recreate in words and actions what might have taken place. So in a colourful and realistic way the pupils were able to explore the interlinked destinies of Cortez, Montezuma and their followers. This, together with excellent use of the end of the lesson session, when pupils examined and interpreted Aztec drawings of the chain of events, ensured that excellent gains in learning were made by all pupils.
104. The subject makes a good contribution to literacy in terms of speaking and listening. Analysis of work shows that it makes a satisfactory contribution towards writing skills when pupils express their learning and ideas in their own words. Sometimes however they are required to provide written answers to questions designed to test factual information rather than understanding. Good use is made of CD-Roms to research information about the different periods in history. The residential visit to York, visits to places such as those to Market Bosworth and Beaumanor Hall and the opportunity to handle objects of historical interest from the beginning of the last century help pupils to learn about the past and enhance the work undertaken.
105. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has had

opportunities to work with different year groups and has monitored teaching and pupils' work and has given useful feedback to colleagues.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

106. Standards are above average for seven and eleven-year olds and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils achieve well. The drive and enthusiasm of the curriculum co-ordinator has been instrumental in securing these standards with little improvement in the number of computers available. The pace of learning, as shown in the work on display and talking to pupils, is good throughout. The pace of learning is particularly good in Year 6, where the teacher explains how to carry out tasks on computers at home, which may vary from those in school, such as when they were putting information into spreadsheets. Pupils with special educational needs also make similar progress towards their targets. Those with emotional and behavioural difficulties often enjoy using computers and are given more access than others and this does not give all pupils the same opportunity to learn and make progress.
107. By the age of seven, pupils are confident in using computers, controlling the mouse well when moving the cursor to the program required. They can retrieve information stored previously and use word processing programs to present their stories and verses for inside 'Get Well' cards. Pupils change the size, colour and type of font to present their work in an appropriate style. An effective link between design and technology and computer skills was evident when seven-year olds designed a pattern on a coat to represent their ideas of Joseph's dreamcoat, which they were then going to make. Pupils can control a programmable toy to navigate a predetermined route.
108. By the age of eleven, pupils create multi-media presentations; for example a talking book about the story of 'Goldilocks', which they present to the youngest children in the school. Pupils use the digital camera to photograph their 'egg shelters' and incorporate the pictures with their written evaluation of their work. Pupils can create 'crystal' images. Currently pupils are working on spreadsheets and they understand how to enter information, to hide a formula in a cell and to calculate answers when other information is entered. For example pupils linked this task to their work on the area of shapes. They understand how to access information from the Internet and CD-Rom for use in other subjects, such as science when studying teeth, geography when researching other countries and history when finding information about aspects of daily life in different periods. Emails are also sent and received and pupils know how to access them. They understand why it is easier to print some messages so you can refer to them at a later date when planning a reply. They can create wallpaper patterns by flipping and rotating patterns and then repeating them.
109. A strength of the subject is in the use of skills in information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in many other subjects. In Year 6, pupils are given opportunities to use the computer before school and at break times and this helps their rate of learning.
110. The limited teaching seen with five to seven-year olds was satisfactory and for seven to eleven-year olds was good. Most teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and make good use of computers to produce their weekly plans that are of good quality. This secure knowledge enables them to give clear

explanations and to answer confidently questions raised by pupils. Throughout the school teachers use the limited resources well to teach skills to the whole class and give time for individuals to practise the new skills over the course of the week. They keep rotas to check that all pupils have practised the new skills. Classroom support assistants or parent helpers are often deployed effectively to support younger pupils in completing the tasks.

111. Further funding to access the National Grid for Learning is currently being spent, but this will not bring resources to the level found in most schools of this type and size. If the school is to maintain its above average standards, further resources are necessary to provide more than one computer per classroom, especially in large classes. The school cannot rely on pupils practising skills at home.
112. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator effectively monitors the planning, checking it against the scheme of work. She then collects samples of work to check on standards, or notes where she has seen the evidence. This keeps her well informed of standards throughout and where individual members of staff need more support. She has also produced a map of the software available to support learning in other subjects in each year group, which identified shortages that have now been overcome. The school shares the services of a computer technician with other local schools and this is an efficient way of maintaining the resources. There is no policy on the use of the Internet to guide staff but the action plan for the subject has identified this as being necessary.

## **MUSIC**

113. Standards for seven and eleven-year olds are average. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below those expected for pupils' ages. The reason for the below average standards was the unsatisfactory teaching as teachers lacked confidence and secure subject knowledge. There was a focus on the activity rather than on building pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. The school has addressed these issues and pupils, including those with special educational needs now make satisfactory progress in their learning.
114. Year 1 pupils sing simple songs tunefully from memory to a keyboard accompaniment, adding meaning to their songs by altering the tone of their voices. They are learning to accompany their music with sounds made by shakers, tappers and scrapers. By the age of seven, pupils sing unaccompanied, maintaining the tune. They make up, clap and copy quite complicated rhythms and correctly reproduce a note played by the teacher on a glockenspiel adding more of their own to produce a harmonious sound.
115. Seven to eleven-year olds develop their knowledge and skills satisfactorily through singing, listening, responding to music and composing. By the age of eleven pupils make up melodies using the pentatonic scale and record these on a two-line staff. They can improvise, for example when responding to a melody. They use music software to develop and refine musical compositions.
116. Teaching is satisfactory for pupils up to the age of seven and is good for seven to eleven-year olds. The weakest teaching is with five to seven-year olds, with occasional unsatisfactory lessons, almost always related to poor management of pupils. Work is interrupted as teachers admonish pupils whose inattention is due

entirely to the slow pace of the lesson. The content of a Year 1 lesson did not match the learning objectives and pupils became restless waiting too long for their turn to use a musical instrument. This resulted in them making unsatisfactory progress in their learning.

117. Because of the overall good teaching that they receive seven to eleven-year old pupils respond positively in lessons and enjoy them. They are enthusiastic, listen carefully to their teachers and work to the best of their ability. In all the lessons observed they showed great confidence when performing and when discussing their work and sharing their ideas and feelings. In Year 6 a large group of pupils made very good progress in their ability to respond to a short melody by improvising final bars to create balanced pieces of music. This was because from the start of the lesson pupils engaged in activities which consolidated previous learning. They practised their singing both as a group and individually so that they tackled this challenging task confidently. Other pupils in the class, working in pairs and using keyboards and computer programs, effectively improved their compositional skills after the teachers' clear explanation and demonstration of the task. Throughout the lesson the teachers' own infectious enthusiasm and enjoyment of music stimulated the pupils and they displayed very good attitudes for the whole of the lesson. Year 3 pupils made good progress in developing their singing skills because the teacher, at the beginning of the lesson, clarified exactly what she wanted the pupils to achieve. The teacher commented on and analysed for the pupils the improvements noted during the lesson. Pupils were encouraged continually to evaluate their singing, which they did and so refined their own performance.
118. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' speaking and listening skills and to their social and cultural development. They learn the importance of working together to compose music and improve their interpersonal skills. They learn to appreciate different styles of instrumental and vocal music and have opportunities to attend musical performances and concerts outside school. Several pupils have instrumental tuition that includes the flute, the guitar and the violin. Pupils also have opportunities to learn to play the recorder. These pupils at times perform for the whole school and their success is effectively celebrated. Co-ordination of the subject is effective. The scheme of work is comprehensive providing good support for the teaching. The co-ordinator organises extra-curricular provision for music. Pupils are encouraged to join the school choir that takes part in various festivals and competitions.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

119. It was not possible to evaluate standards in physical education as only four lessons were seen. One lesson in gymnastics was seen with Year 1. Two lessons in orienteering and one in swimming were seen with seven to eleven-year olds. During the present half-term, Years 2, 5 and 6 go swimming; they do not have lessons in games, gymnastics or dance. Planning indicates that the curriculum is balanced and covers the National Curriculum programme of study. From Year 1, all pupils have opportunities to swim at different times of the year. By the time pupils leave the school almost all can swim 25 metres unaided. Many achieve competence in water skills, speed and style beyond this level. There are residential visits for pupils in Years 4 and 6, which have a positive impact on the development of pupils' physical and social skills.
120. A very good number of enthusiastic parents help with the organisation of the

thirty-minute swimming session and this has a positive effect on standards. Helpers have received training, lessons are planned appropriately and all group leaders use guidance sheets. Good attention is paid to health and safety matters. Pupils work hard and enjoy the lessons.

121. The teaching seen was satisfactory, both for five to seven-year olds and in the seven to eleven age group. In the gymnastics lesson observed in Year 1, pupils shared space and apparatus quite well with others as they explored ways of linking movements by hanging, jumping and rolling. The teacher provided opportunities for pupils to observe good examples of others' movements. The very limited range of apparatus used meant that pupils spent too much time waiting their turn. This affected the pace of learning and progress. In swimming teaching is very good as pupils work in small groups with an adult. Pupils soon gain confidence in the water working with others of similar prior attainment
122. There is not enough room in the hall for physical exertion, and the fixed and free-standing apparatus is mostly unsuitable for infant pupils. It is too heavy for them to handle. Older pupils set up the apparatus but this limits both the space available for floor work and opportunities for the younger pupils to arrange apparatus within a planned structure.
123. Year 3 and 4 pupils used a map of the school building and grounds for orienteering activities. They worked co-operatively and competitively in pairs, showing enthusiasm by locating the markers quickly and returning to base. They expended much physical effort by running. Most pupils worked co-operatively for problem solving activities that required good teamwork. Year 4 pupils practised and improved their performances well with much enjoyment. They showed agility when linking movements and passing through hoops, and controlling a ball in a confined space. Three boys, including two with special educational needs, found it difficult to co-operate and take part. The situation was well managed by the teacher who provided an alternative activity. Teaching and learning in the lessons seen were satisfactory.
124. The post of co-ordinator is held temporarily for one year. National guidance on the subject is under trial before being adopted by the school in September 2001. Resources are currently being matched to the new units of work and orienteering and problem-solving activities are being developed well by the co-ordinator.