

INSPECTION REPORT

**CODDINGTON C OF E PRIMARY & NURSERY
SCHOOL**

Newark

LEA area: Nottingham

Unique reference number: 122754

Headteacher: (Acting) : Mr S Daykin

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Ann Sharpe
18101

Dates of inspection: 31 January - 2 February 2000

Inspection number: 192581

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brownlows Hill Coddington Newark Nottinghamshire
Postcode:	NG24 2QA
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Carol Norris
Date of previous inspection:	13 January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
J A Sharpe	Registered inspector	Geography	What sort of school is it?
		History	The school's results and achievements
		Religious education	How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
D Lloyd	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
J Kilner	Team inspector	English	
		Information technology	
		Special educational needs	
J Porteous	Team inspector	Mathematics	How well does the school care for its pupils?
		Physical education	
D A Bluett	Team inspector	Art	
		Music	
		Equal opportunities	
		Under-fives	
G Cooper	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Design and technology	

The inspection contractor was:

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school caters for pupils from three to eleven and is smaller than most primary schools. There are 132 boys and girls on the registers and a further 45 attend the nursery part-time. There are no pupils with statements of special educational need, but 26 pupils are on the special needs register. Pupils come from a wide variety of home backgrounds, and their attainment on entry to school is overall average. The social mix of the school is changing due to local authority plans to demolish a housing estate and re-house families further afield. The number of pupils attending is falling rapidly and there are many empty places. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is also falling, and the latest figure of 20 pupils is below the national average. The organisation of pupils, staffing and the curriculum is being adjusted due to these very unusual local circumstances. Proposals for new housing development in the area are expected to result in empty places becoming filled again in the future.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school with more strengths than weaknesses. Pupils enjoy coming and usually work hard to achieve high standards. Parents have confidence in the school and good relationships between all those concerned with the pupils' education help them to do well. The quality of education, including teaching and learning, is sound overall, although it is good in the nursery and in Key Stage 2. Children make a very good start to their education in the nursery, and their learning is particularly good towards the end of Key Stage 2. Governors and the acting headteacher are steering the school very well through the present upheaval created by staff absences and changes, a falling roll and a reduction in the school's budget. They are working hard together to move the school forward. The school costs much more per pupil than do most schools and gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science by the age of eleven.
- Good teaching in the nursery helps all children to make a very good start to their education.
- Good teaching in Key Stage 2 is helping to raise school standards.
- The acting headteacher and governors manage the school very well.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is very good.
- Parents have confidence in the school and their children enjoy coming.
- Many pupils benefit from a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The band and choir achieve very high standards of performance in music.

What could be improved

- Standards in information technology are not yet high enough.
- The quality of teaching and learning across the school is too variable and there are weaknesses in the reception class and Key Stage 1.
- Teachers do not always make sure that they give pupils the work they most urgently need to help them to make progress in the National Curriculum.
- Pupils with special educational needs do not always learn enough in lessons.
- The acting headteacher has too many responsibilities for managing subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been a significant improvement in the management of the school, and given all the difficulties needing to be faced since the school was inspected in January 1997, the rate of improvement is good. Parents' views of the school are even better than before. Standards in national test results in English, mathematics and science have risen, particularly by the end of Key Stage 2. Standards have also improved in religious education, geography and history. Teachers have put the national strategies for literacy and numeracy into place successfully, and these are improving teaching and learning. Teaching has improved; there are fewer unsatisfactory lessons and more good or very good lessons. This improvement, however, is most evident in the nursery and in Key Stage 2, and there are still a few examples of low expectations of pupils by teachers in other classes. Governors and staff who manage subjects have increased the part they play in finding out how well the school is doing, although subject co-ordinators could become even more involved. The school now looks more closely at test results in order to find out what needs to be done next. Although teachers' expertise in information technology has increased, standards are still too low by the end of both key stages. The time allocated for teaching each subject has been revised, but teachers do not always use this time rigorously to ensure that none is wasted. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is no longer the strength that it was due to staffing changes and uncertainties. The school now uses assessment information to set targets for individual pupils and targets for the national test results. There has been slower progress, however, with starting to use information about pupils' strengths and weaknesses in the National Curriculum in order to decide what they need to learn next. When the school regains stability, it will be well placed to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				<i>Key</i>
	All schools			Similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	B	D	B	A	Well above average A Above average B Average C Below average D Well below average E
Mathematics	A	A	A	A*	
Science	B	B	A	A	

Overall, pupils' achievement is good. National test results for eleven-year-olds have risen since 1996 in line with the national trend. The dip in standards in 1998 was due to the increased proportion of pupils with special educational needs who sat the tests. In 1999, pupils achieved very high standards, and did very well compared with similar schools. In mathematics, results were in the highest five per cent in the country. Governors are keen for standards to rise in English and the gap between standards in English and mathematics is narrowing due to improved teaching. Governors have set realistic targets for test results in 2000. Test results for seven-year-olds have risen since 1996. In 1999 they were average in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics. In reading and writing, a high proportion of pupils reached the level expected for their age or above it, but more pupils than nationally failed to reach the expected standard. Teachers do not do enough to find out where lower attaining pupils need most help in order for them to improve. Standards in science for seven-year-olds are

average, but in the most recent teacher assessments, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level or above was well below average. Standards in religious education are as expected for seven and eleven-year-olds, but they are below national expectation in information technology due to weaknesses in the curriculum. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in swimming are high and in performing in the band and choir standards are very high. Children in the nursery achieve very well, especially in personal, social and physical development. Pupils with special educational needs do not always achieve as well as they could in the reception class and Key Stage 1 because their work plans are not clear enough.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Mainly good. Most pupils enjoy school and take part in a wide range of activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Although many pupils behave well, a few disrupt lessons. Some teachers manage pupils' behaviour better than others.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are almost always good and pupils work together co-operatively. Pupils enjoy helping others and taking responsibilities.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The attendance pattern of a few pupils means that attendance rates are not as good as in the previous years.

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.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, although it is good in the nursery and in Key Stage 2. The acting headteacher is a very good role model for other teachers. Teaching is satisfactory or better in 94.3 per cent of lessons across the school, and it is good or very good in 49 per cent. Teaching in English, mathematics and science is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. The difference arises because teachers in the nursery and in Key Stage 2 expect more of their pupils and manage their behaviour more successfully than is sometimes the case in other classes. Teaching in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Although all teachers have adopted the new national strategies successfully, teachers in Key Stage 2 do better with helping pupils to learn to apply their skills in other subjects. Most pupils are willing learners who work hard and show enthusiasm. A few pupils, mainly in the reception class and Key Stage 1, find it harder to concentrate and at times disrupt lessons. Whilst most pupils in Key Stage 2 are careful, neat workers, many in the reception class and Key Stage 1 are untidy and careless because teachers do not set high enough standards. Skilled teaching in music for those pupils in the band and choir helps them to perform to a very high standard. Good quality marking towards the end of Key Stage 2, helps pupils to know how

they need to improve, but teachers could do better with setting well matched work for all pupils, including those with special educational needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Many strengths, particularly extra-curricular activity. Unsatisfactory overall because not all the National Curriculum for information technology is taught and curriculum time in all subjects could be better used and managed.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Unsatisfactory overall. Pupils' learning targets are not always planned carefully enough to ensure that they continue to make progress in the reception class and Key Stage 1.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision overall, especially for personal and spiritual development. The school does well with providing many opportunities for pupils to think deeply and to express their own thoughts in a wide variety of ways across the curriculum.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Adults are caring and supportive and teachers know their pupils well. Teachers do not always take enough account of what pupils already know and find out what they most need to learn next.

Governors and staff value the school's good quality partnership with parents and are keen to continue to develop this. Parents are kept well informed and involved in their children's education. The successful reading club is helping to raise standards in reading.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The acting headteacher is leading the school very well through a period of great uncertainty. Teachers are increasing the part they play in finding out about the school's strengths and weaknesses, but there is room for improvement. The acting headteacher has too many responsibilities for managing subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors play a major part in the management of the school and fulfil their responsibilities well. They face up to problems, such as a declining budget and a deteriorating building, and tackle these with vigour.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Governors and staff are getting better at finding out how well the school is doing in order to know what needs to be done next. More checking on the quality of teaching is needed in order to ensure consistency across the school.

The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall, but the new computer suite is not yet being used to full advantage. Governors do not yet do enough to find out how successful their decisions about spending have been or to apply 'best value' principles to their work.
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There are sufficient teachers to meet the needs of the pupils, but the current staffing situation is unsettled. The support staff give good quality assistance. The school is spacious, but the structure of the building is in urgent need of repair. Plans are in hand to put this right.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like coming to school and are making good progress. • Teaching is good and children are expected to work hard. • They can come easily to school to talk about problems, and their help is welcomed. • The school reaches out into the community and children become mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework is inconsistent between classes. • Pupils' annual reports are not always helpful.

Inspectors largely confirm parents' positive views of the school, but teaching and pupils' progress are not always quite as good as parents believe. The acting headteacher is aware that homework is not yet the strength that it needs to be. Pupils' annual reports vary in quality, but some of the parents' concerns arose when a teacher was absent and another teacher completed reports for pupils she had not taught.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1 National test results for eleven-year-olds in 1999 were above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. These results are very high when compared with similar schools in mathematics and well above average in English and science. Since 1996, standards in tests in all three subjects have risen, but the dip in 1998 that was due to a poorer year group taking the tests was greater in English than it was in mathematics and science. Nevertheless, the gap in pupils' results between mathematics and English is narrowing, and the overall upward trend in standards is broadly in line with the national picture. There are no significant differences between the results for girls and those for boys. Governors have set realistic targets for test results in 2000. Results are not expected to be as high as in 1999 because there are more pupils with special educational needs in Year 6. This also explains the difference between the most recent test results and inspection findings. The proportion of pupils in the school who are eligible for free school meals is falling rapidly, and it may be difficult for the school to continue to perform so well in relation to similar schools by the end of both key stages.

2 The inspection finds that standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are above average in English, mathematics and science; including standards in literacy and numeracy. This represents a good rate of improvement in all three subjects since the last inspection, when standards were satisfactory. Teaching has improved and two-thirds of lessons in Key Stage 2 are now good or very good. The high expectations of pupils, combined with improved teaching methods in literacy and numeracy are having a notable influence on pupils' achievements. This is particularly evident towards the end of Key Stage 2, when pupils make greatest strides. Pupils' work in the investigative areas of mathematics and science is a growing strength of their achievements. In English, pupils do well with using books and the library to find information, and they do particularly well with writing in different styles and in other subjects. This is because teachers are very good at planning meaningful ways in which to further pupils' reading and writing skills. Pupils' handwriting and presentation in all subjects is usually good, and this is due to the high standards set by teachers.

3 National test results for seven-year-olds in 1999 were average in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, they were well above average in reading and very high in writing and mathematics. Pupils performed much better than they did in 1998, when results were well below average and very low in reading and writing. In reading and writing, although a high proportion of pupils achieved a level higher than expected for their age, more pupils failed to reach the appropriate standard. Pupils did better in mathematics at all levels of attainment. There are no significant differences between the results for girls and those for boys. As in Key Stage 2, standards dipped in 1998, but more so in English than in mathematics. Since 1996, standards have risen, greater than is the national trend, but more so in mathematics. The pupils who sat the tests in 1999, however, were a particularly bright year group, and standards in the 2000 tests are not expected to be as high. This explains the difference between the most recent test results and inspection findings.

The proportion of pupils reaching the level expected for this age in the science teacher assessments was well below average, although the proportion attaining better than expected was well above average. These assessments were not validated, however, and were completed in a hurry due to the absence of the class teacher.

4 The inspection finds that by the end of Key Stage 1, standards are average in English, mathematics and science; including standards in literacy and numeracy. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were unsatisfactory in mathematics and science. Pupils in Year 2 are good at using different methods of reading new words, but their handwriting and presentation of work in all subjects is not as good as it should be. In mathematics, pupils can rise to challenges involving number problems, and in science they have a good understanding of practical work. Pupils' achievements in all subjects are not as good in Key Stage 1 as they are in Key Stage 2, including using literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. This is because teachers do not always expect enough of pupils in terms of either their work or their behaviour, and not all pupils learn as much as they could.

5 Standards in religious education by the end of both key stages meet the expectations of the local agreed syllabus. This improvement in standards since the last inspection is due to the revised curriculum that now ensures that pupils have a wide range of meaningful activities to help them to understand what religion means to different people. Standards in information technology are below national expectation by the end of both key stages. Although there have been some improvements since the last inspection, these have been insufficient to raise standards to the expected level. This is because not all the National Curriculum is yet taught, and because pupils have too few opportunities to learn to use information technology as a normal part of their work in all subjects. All pupils are confident to use computers, but those with home computers are much more proficient. There has not been enough time for teachers' improved skills and the new teaching programmes to have a full impact on pupils' overall achievements.

6 In design and technology, geography, history and physical education, the standard of the limited amount of work seen is about as expected for primary age pupils, although standards in swimming are good by the time pupils leave the school. The standard of work seen in art and music meets national expectation by the end of Key Stage 1, and is of a good standard by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils in the band and choir and those who play musical instruments perform to a high standard. In art, pupils apply their knowledge of the work of famous artists well to their own pieces. Since the last inspection, there is evidence of some improvement in standards in geography and history in Key Stage 1 and in geography in Key Stage 2.

7 Children in the nursery do well in all areas of learning, and this gives them a very good start to their education. They do particularly well in personal and social development and physical development. They make at least good progress due to the consistently good teaching by the teacher and nursery nurse who work together closely. Not a moment is wasted in making sure that children learn as much as they possibly can. By the end of the reception year, children achieve the standard expected nationally in the specified areas of learning. Some children mark time in some lessons, however, and this is when their learning is not managed well enough and when the teacher does not expect enough of them. During the inspection, it was most evident in a literacy lesson, but this relative weakness was also seen at other times. Some children, particularly higher and lower attaining children, could do better given the very good personal and social skills they have when they enter the reception class.

8 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in the nursery, and in Key Stage 2 they usually make satisfactory progress. In Key Stage 1 and the reception class, however, their

learning is spasmodic and unsatisfactory overall. This is due to the variable quality of pupils' individual education plans. Although plans set targets for improvement, these are sometimes too vague, and in the case of pupils with behavioural difficulties, they are sometimes not specified at all. Pupils learn more when they benefit from additional support, but during the inspection, this was unevenly distributed. Provision is unsatisfactory overall because it does not always result in pupils having the right kind or amount of help they need to benefit fully from their education and to achieve to their capacity. Targets do not take enough account of pupils' assessed strengths and weaknesses within the National Curriculum. Consequently, in Key Stage 1, they struggle and take too long to move up from the lower levels. This is also evident for lower attaining pupils in Key stage 1 who are not yet on the special needs register.

9 The nature of the school's intake is changing rapidly, and there is also an unusual variation between the attainment on entry of year groups already in the school. This makes judging pupils' overall achievement across each key stage difficult. When considering the judgements of the previous report, however, pupils have done very well in Key Stage 2, most evidently in English, mathematics, science and religious education. The rate of improvement in standards since the last inspection is good overall.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10 Most pupils have positive attitudes to school. They enjoy coming and take part enthusiastically in the wide range of activities that are offered in addition to lessons. Many are developing a mature approach to their learning and to their relationships with one another and with adults. The older pupils in the school are particularly keen to show initiative and take responsibility. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory, but the overall attendance figures have fallen since the last inspection.

11 Most pupils work hard. They settle quickly and are eager to show what they have learned by answering questions and offering suggestions. A few pupils lack self-control and need firm handling teachers. Where classroom management is strong, pupils respond well and remain on task, but there are examples, particularly in Key Stage 1 and in the reception class, of restlessness, chattering and inattention, which are not always dealt with appropriately. Behaviour around the school and in the playground is mostly sensible and orderly, although children can be noisy and boisterous at times. When, exceptionally, it has been necessary to exclude pupils for unacceptable behaviour, every effort has been made to support pupils and their families. The behaviour of a few pupils continues to cause the concern expressed in the last report.

12 Relationships throughout the school are almost always good. Pupils work well together in pairs or groups, for example, they discuss sensitive issues thoughtfully in religious education, listening respectfully to one another's opinions. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the life of the school and are treated with care and consideration by others. During an information technology lesson, for example, a pupil helped a classmate who was finding the work difficult. A few pupils can sometimes be bad-tempered or unkind, but such incidents are quickly resolved and friendly relations restored. At the time of the last inspection, incidents of bullying were seen. Pupils, staff and parents all agree that bullying is now very rare. Most pupils are confident, polite, open and helpful when they speak to staff and visitors.

13 Many pupils take advantage of the numerous extra-curricular activities that the school provides. Musical activities are a great attraction, but there is also much interest in sport, the reading club, gardening and the newly formed French club. Pupils regularly take on routine jobs to help teachers, and there are many examples of their willingness to show initiative. A group of older pupils, for example, has taken on responsibility for running the library and is setting up a record system to

keep track of borrowed books. Pupils often volunteer to help in the nursery or to take on jobs such as collecting litter. The attitudes and behaviour of the majority of pupils confirm parents' view that the school is helping them to become mature and responsible.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14 Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but they are good in the nursery and in Key Stage 2. All but 5.7 per cent of lessons across the school were satisfactory or better and 49 per cent were good or very good. The largest proportion of the good and very good teaching, however, is seen in Key Stage 2 and in the nursery. In Key Stage 2, two-thirds of the teaching is good or very good. Pupils' progress and their achievement, therefore, are better in the nursery and in Key Stage 2 than they are in the reception class and in Key Stage 1. This picture is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection. There is, nevertheless, a marked improvement in teaching overall since that time, when there was more unsatisfactory teaching, very little good teaching and no very good teaching.

15 Improvement is not equally evident in all classes. There are still differences between classes in the teaching of children of five and under, and examples of lower expectations of pupils are still evident in the reception class and in Key Stage 1. There are lessons where teachers do not set high enough standards of behaviour or do not manage difficult pupils in ways that are most helpful to them. Pupils' previous work shows that in the reception class and Key Stage 1, teachers sometimes allow pupils to give 'second best', especially in terms of neatness and completing enough work. Some work does not challenge and interest pupils sufficiently, nor does it help them to learn to take much responsibility for their own learning. This means that they do not always work to full capacity and their achievement suffers. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with behavioural difficulties, have individual education plans, but these do not always pinpoint clearly enough what needs to improve and how this is to be brought about. Consequently, they do not learn as much as they could and some make unsatisfactory progress.

16 The teaching of children of five and under is satisfactory overall, but teaching in the nursery has remained the strength that it was at the time of the last inspection in all respects, and it is almost always good or very good. The teacher and nursery nurse give priority to personal and social development, and teaching in this area and in physical development is particularly successful. Children make a very good start to school life in the nursery, but the good practice is not built upon as well as it could be in the reception class, where children's pace of learning sometimes slows down. Teaching is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1 in literacy, numeracy and all subjects, with the exception of history and design and technology where no judgements were made. Teaching is good overall in literacy and numeracy and all subjects in Key Stage 2, with the exception of physical education where it is satisfactory and design and technology where no judgements were made.

17 Good teaching in Key Stage 2 helps pupils to achieve high standards in national tests as well as in their day-to-day work in English, mathematics and science. Literacy and numeracy are well taught, and teachers expect highly of their pupils to do their best in terms of both behaviour and the work they complete. This helps pupils to learn to work by themselves and to take responsibility for their own learning. It also ensures that pupils enjoy mental, physical and creative challenges. Lessons and pupils' previous work show that teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach, and are very good at finding worthwhile ways in which to ask pupils to write and to use mathematics in other subjects. Skilled teaching of the band and choir helps pupils to achieve a high standard of performance.

Teaching is very good in the Year 5 and 6 class in English, science and information technology. This is because teachers are skilled at keeping pupils' interest and challenging their thinking, and not a minute is wasted in finding ways to ensure that pupils learn as much as they can in the time available.

18 Since the last inspection, teachers in both key stages have worked hard and increased their understanding of the subjects they teach, especially information technology. They have successfully adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies into their day-to-day teaching. They have continued to give generously of their time to extra-curricular activities, along with support assistants, so that these remain strengths of the work of the school. All teachers set worthwhile homework, and in Key Stage 2, this is having strong effect on pupils' learning at school. The policy for homework however is not consistently applied. Teachers often add interest to the curriculum and encourage pupils to learn by the variety of teaching methods they use. Educational visits, for example, stimulate interest in subjects such as religious education, history and geography, and in Key Stage 2, investigative work in subjects such as science, helps them to understand the purpose of their learning.

19 There are examples of very good marking towards the end of Key Stage 2. This makes sure that pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve. This marking often challenges pupils to take their own learning even further. All teachers give feedback to their pupils as part of their day-to-day teaching, but they are not yet very good at making use of assessment information to decide what needs to be taught next in relation to the National Curriculum. This means that some pupils, particularly those who need most help and those with special educational needs in the reception class and Key Stage 1, do not always make the progress they need to if they are to catch up with other pupils in the class.

20 The quality of teaching in the school is enhanced significantly by the work of the acting headteacher who is a very good role model for other teachers. He checks the quality of teaching in other classes, and deals with concerns as they arise, but improvements are not always happening as quickly as they need to under existing arrangements for the performance management of teachers. The acting headteacher has too many responsibilities for managing subjects to enable him to give enough time to working with teachers to improve their teaching.

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

21 The curriculum has several areas of considerable strength, but it is unsatisfactory overall. This is because the requirements for information technology and equality of opportunity are not met fully. Requirements are met in all other respects. There have been clear improvements since the last inspection, especially in the introduction of a long term curriculum plan to guide teachers in ensuring that pupils do not repeat work unnecessarily or miss important parts. In addition, the most recent national guidance about literacy and numeracy is well in place and having a notable effect on pupils' achievements in English and mathematics. Guidance for science, geography, history, and design and technology has been adopted successfully. This gives good support to teachers when they plan lessons and helps them to focus on teaching important skills.

22 The guidance for information technology has also been adopted, but this has not yet had sufficient time to have a full effect on the curriculum. Important parts of the National Curriculum are not yet taught. The new information technology suite means that pupils have access to more computers during their visits, but they do not learn to use information technology as a regular and integral part of their work in other subjects in their classrooms. Within the overall curriculum, investigative and practical work in mathematics and science are now strengths, but opportunities for pupils to continue to develop their speaking and listening skills are not planned as systematically. Nevertheless, the

worthwhile opportunities that pupils have to write in many other subjects have a good effect on the standards they achieve in Key Stage 2.

23 The school aims to provide equality of opportunity and is usually successful with this. Inequality arises, however, where those pupils in the band and choir have more time for studying music than do other pupils; they follow a different curriculum. The lesson time spent by pupils who are not in the band and choir is not planned sufficiently rigorously to ensure that all learning time is used to very best effect. Where some pupils are withdrawn from various subjects for private instrumental tuition they miss parts of lessons, including lessons in religious education. Enough time is set aside for teaching literacy and numeracy, but several other subjects are not covered in depth due to a lack of weekly lesson time. This time is reduced further because teachers do not use all the time available as efficiently as possible. Slippage of lesson time is seen too often, and the actual time spent teaching and learning is less than that recommended nationally, and less than the school brochure indicates.

24 The curriculum for children of five and under is satisfactory overall, although it is very good in the nursery, especially in personal and social development. This gives children a very good start to their education. Little has been done since the last inspection, to make sure that teachers work together closely when planning the curriculum to ensure that children in the reception class build step by step on what they have learned previously in the nursery.

25 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is inconsistent and unsatisfactory overall. Some pupils have a great deal of support in lessons on a regular basis, whilst others have insufficient support. Individual education plans vary in quality and usefulness. Whilst some of the learning targets set for pupils are very clear and guide teachers and support assistants well, others are unclear and too broad to be helpful. Pupils with behavioural difficulties do not always have targets specific to their needs.

26 Provision for extra-curricular activity is very good and this is a strength of the school that has been maintained since the last inspection. There are many opportunities for pupils to further their skills in music, sport and other interests such as French and gardening. These activities further the good links with other schools and with the community outside the school. This helps pupils to make a smooth transfer to their secondary education. The reading club, with its own room, helps parents to become active in their children's learning at school and is helping to raise reading standards. Local police provide drugs awareness education as part of science lessons. A range of educational visits and visitors to the school, links with churches and local colleges all contribute well towards pupils' personal and social development.

27 Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and this is also a strength of the school that has been at least maintained since the last inspection. Very good opportunities for pupils to reflect on the deeper meanings of their lives are seen in assemblies. A good climate for thinking about worship is established by the example set by adults and by the high quality singing and playing. Pupils listen to stories that help them to understand themselves and others. This climate for personal thinking continues in lessons in religious education, where pupils learn to understand what Christianity means to some people and what people of other faiths believe. Pupils are encouraged to think of themselves creatively – as musicians and writers in the arts and sciences. This very good provision helps pupils to have positive views of themselves.

28 Moral understanding is promoted well through assemblies. A true story about a caretaker and an injured cat helped pupils to think about the differences between right and wrong. Pupils learn to put their thoughts and ideas into action by creating their own class rules based on what they believe to be 'right' or 'wrong' behaviour at school. The school's behaviour policy is a helpful guide for teachers. Provision for pupils' social development is good. Opportunities for pupils to work in pairs, groups and

teams often help them to learn to co-operate and to contribute towards a good end result. Pupils are encouraged to think about others less fortunate than themselves, for example by raising funds for Bosnia. Visits to places away from the school environment help pupils to develop a sense of what the community can offer and what they can offer back to the community.

29 Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Many lessons, links and visits help pupils to learn to understand their own culture and to appreciate the diversity of other cultures. Pupils learn about society in geography and about past cultures in history. In art and music they learn to appreciate the culture of creativity, and in religious education, they study a range of world religions. This is an improvement since the last inspection when there were limited opportunities for pupils to study other cultures. Given the unusual degree of upheaval experienced by the school since the last inspection, the rate of improvement in this area is better than could be reasonably expected.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30 Arrangements for ensuring pupils' health, safety and protection are satisfactory and meet requirements. Teachers know their pupils well and adults know what to do if they have any concerns about them. Although the person trained in child protection issues is absent, another member of staff is hoping to be trained shortly, and the acting headteacher keeps in close contact with external agencies. Governors take health and safety matters seriously, and regular checks of the premises help to spot any potential dangers so that these can be dealt with quickly.

31 Procedures for encouraging regular attendance and keeping a close eye on pupils' attendance patterns are good. Although rates of attendance are falling, the school is doing everything possible to halt this decline. Particular problems are faced up to and often resolved by working closely with families, especially where problems arise due to pupils' anticipated move to other schools. Everyone works hard to stamp out the rare incidents of bullying, and the acting headteacher goes to considerable lengths to work with families to diffuse conflicts between pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection when bullying was not always dealt with successfully.

32 Teachers encourage good work and behaviour in classes by awarding team points, certificates and entry of pupils' names into the 'Gold Book'. Weekly celebration assemblies and displays of their work spur pupils on to continue to behave well and to complete work of a high standard. Good relationships with parents help pupils to understand the importance of their education and to want to do well. There are occasions, however, when teachers in the reception class and Key Stage 1 do not set high enough standards of behaviour, and a few pupils get away with unacceptable behaviour. When problems are dealt with, this is not always in a manner most likely to help pupils to improve. Those pupils on the special needs register for both learning difficulties and behaviour do not always have precise targets to work towards, and their progress at school is hindered. Nevertheless, since the last inspection, the involvement of most pupils in raising standards of work and behaviour has improved.

33 Procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. They are especially good in the nursery, where adults have a clear knowledge of what children can already do and what they need to learn next. This good practice is not as evident in the reception class. Reading test results in Key Stages 1 and 2 show how much reading ages have risen from the last test, and this has highlighted weaknesses in teaching. These weaknesses have been addressed through the school management plan, and a weekly reading club for pupils and their parents is helping to raise standards in the school. This assessment information is also used to set improvement targets for individual pupils, and pupils in Year 6 respond particularly well to the challenges set for them. National Curriculum assessments enable governors to set targets by the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and

science. Governors study these and take account of teachers' assessments to decide if the targets are sufficiently challenging for the school.

34 A weakness arises, however, because school test results are not analysed in detail to find out where pupils' strengths and weaknesses lie, in order that planning for the curriculum can be adjusted accordingly. Although teachers assess their pupils in different ways, they do not find out enough about what individuals or groups of pupils do well and where they need more help. Consequently, most pupils often have the same work regardless of their age or prior attainment. There is no specific planning, for example to show how lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are to be helped to move to a higher level in the National Curriculum. The links between planning and assessing pupils are not yet firmly embedded in the school's practice. Progress in this area since the last inspection has been slow.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35 Parents' views of the school are good, and the inspection questionnaire suggests that they think even more highly of the school now than at the time of the last report. Most parents are very happy with what the school teaches and with the progress their children are making. They have seen improved test results and, as individuals, those who attended the inspection meeting or returned the questionnaire feel that their own children are making good progress. They believe that teaching is good and that children are given work to match their abilities, including sufficiently challenging work for the brighter ones. Almost all parents feel that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible, and that behaviour is good. They are happy with the range of extra-curricular activities that are offered and are particularly pleased with the way the school reaches out to the community, for example, when children visit the local elderly people's home to sing. They feel well informed and have found that any suggestions they make are taken seriously and acted upon. They find that staff are always approachable, and that their help is welcomed and valued.

36 The school keeps parents well informed and involves them in children's learning. Written information includes an attractive prospectus and regular newsletters. Meetings are held to explain such matters as how literacy and numeracy are being taught. Termly parents' evenings allow time for discussing pupils' academic and personal progress. The 'open door' policy ensures that parents are able to come to school to talk about problems. Pupils' annual reports to parents vary in quality. Whilst some give very clear information about what pupils know, understand and can do and what they need to do to improve, others concentrate on what they have been learning about and their attitudes towards work. This was also a concern at the time of the last inspection. The school is keen to forge a strong partnership with parents and makes sure that their views are taken into account when decisions are made. Parents were invited to talk about the proposed home and school agreement and were consulted about the sex education policy.

37 The school values the support that most parents give at home by listening to children reading, helping them to learn tables and spellings or helping with research projects, and this encourages children to try harder at school. Performances in music and drama are always well attended, and the knowledge that their parents are proud of them helps pupils to feel good about themselves. A number of parents regularly help in classrooms with reading or practical activities, and the dedicated members of the Friends' Association organise events that are well supported. These provide enjoyable social occasions for staff, parents and pupils as well as raising funds to buy extra resources. A local college runs courses in 'Parental Partnership' and these encourage parents to extend their own horizons, as well as helping pupils are able to see that learning can always be an important part of their lives.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

38 The school is going through a period of great upheaval and uncertainty due to the gradual demolition of a local authority housing estate and the re-housing of families in other parts of Newark. There is an acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher as well as several teachers who are part-time and temporary to the school. In addition, since the last inspection, there have been several longer term sick absences, including the absence of the headteacher. The number of pupils in the school is falling rapidly, and staff redundancies and a reduced budget have added to the many difficulties that governors and the acting headteacher now have to face up to. Given these very unusual circumstances the current leadership and management of the school is good and standards by the time pupils leave the school are rising. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when there were significant weaknesses in school management.

39 Relationships are good. Parents have great confidence in the acting headteacher, who is steering the school very well through current difficulties. He knows and understands many of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is working hard with governors, staff and parents to build on the strengths and address the weaknesses. He keeps a very high profile around the school, and tries to make sure that pupils' needs always come first. He has a teaching timetable, and is a very good role model for other teachers. Due to temporary circumstances, however, he has too many major responsibilities for subjects and important areas of school life. This means that he is unable to attend to them all as well as he would like to. Consequently, there are some weaknesses in the management of provision for pupils with special educational needs and overall provision for children of five and under. These relative weaknesses are detrimental to the quality of education that the school provides. The acting headteacher checks the quality of teaching and knows where most strengths and weaknesses lie, but the management of teachers' performance is not yet having the influence it needs to on school standards. The acting headteacher has been unable to address some weaknesses fully. Arrangements for appraising teachers are linked to a whole school theme, and these are unlikely to address the main weaknesses in teaching identified by the inspection.

40 Governors play a major part in the management of the school and tackle problems with vigour. They take their responsibilities very seriously, especially their duty to find out directly how well the school is doing. They delegate responsibilities to individuals and groups of governors and are active and well informed about matters such as finances, staffing, curriculum, and premises. They know about standards in the school and prioritise developments carefully. By looking at test results, for example, governors have seen the need to improve pupils' performance in English, and this has clearly been achieved by concerted effort. The school management plan, however, provides too little detail and guidance to enable everyone to know and understand their part in improving the school. Plans for spending and staff training are not sufficiently linked and there is no written longer term plan for future years. Governors have already started to discuss putting a better model into place. Although they make efforts to ensure that their spending represents good value for money, they do not yet include this as an integral part of monitoring how well they are doing. The principles of 'best value' are in the early stages of putting into practice. The requirements for information technology and equality of opportunity are not quite met fully. This is because not all the curriculum for information technology is taught and because pupils are withdrawn from lessons for instrumental music tuition.

41 Since the last inspection, teachers have improved their work as subject co-ordinators. Depending on the timing in the school management plan, some play a more active part than others do, but all have started to find out how they can help other teachers to improve teaching and the curriculum. The current unstable staffing situation is making it very hard to put a fair and equitable management structure into place, and to ensure that all teachers' management responsibilities are utilised to best effect.

42 Governors are experiencing significant difficulties with managing a decreasing budget, but they are determined to overcome these. They are trying to plan to get the budget back in balance and are taking the necessary action to reduce spending. They make sure that specific grants to the school are used appropriately. They are facing up to other problems, such as the deteriorating state of the fabric of the building, and have secured an undertaking for this to be put right in the near future. Support staff, including the office manager, nursery nurses and classroom assistants are a particularly valuable asset to the school, and are well worth the funding allocated to this aspect of the budget.

43 There are now more computers in school, but these are almost all sited in the computer suite. The suite is not yet used to full advantage, and pupils do not have enough access to computers in their classrooms. This means that they do not have enough opportunities to learn to use information technology as an integral part of learning in all subjects.

44 **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

1. Raise standards in information technology by:-

- making sure that the National Curriculum is taught fully and meets requirements;
- providing more opportunities for pupils to use information technology in other subjects.

See paragraphs 5, 40, 43, 58, 59, 72, 75, 76, 81, 91, 92 and 95.

2. Ensure greater consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across the school by:-

- improving existing arrangements for monitoring the quality of teaching;
- supporting identified weaknesses and addressing them quickly;
- identifying a teacher with overall responsibility for the quality of teaching for children of five and under.

See paragraphs 7, 14, 15, 16, 20, 24, 39, 55, 60 and 70.

3. Ensure that, as part of their day-to-day teaching, teachers find out what pupils know, understand and can do in the National Curriculum and areas of learning for children of five and under in order to plan what they need to learn next.

See paragraphs 19, 34, 64, 72, 95 and 108.

4. Identify the precise needs of pupils with special educational needs and plan clear and specific targets for their future learning.

See paragraphs 8, 19, 25, 32, 34, 64 and 71.

5. As urgently as possible, review the management structure of the school to ensure that responsibility for the leadership of subjects is distributed fairly between teachers.

See paragraphs 20, 39, 41 and 79.

In addition to the above key issues, the school should also consider the following:-

- ensuring that all the time available for teaching and learning is used efficiently, and that timetables provide equality of opportunity for all pupils;
See paragraphs 23, 102, 104 and 108.
- developing further the procedures for ensuring that teachers' assessments are accurate and reliable;
See paragraphs 3, 57, 66, 74 and 79.
- making sure that the proposed school management plan is a clear document in helping the school to improve; this should give increased attention to judging the value for money of all decisions about spending;
See paragraph 40.
- extending existing arrangements for ensuring that the principles of 'best value' are applied to all areas of the management of the school.
See paragraph 40.

45 PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
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
0	11.3%	37.7%	45.3%	3.8%	1.9%	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	23	132
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		20

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6	20
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English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

		No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission		4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving		61

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

School data	6.6%
National comparative data	5.9%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	10	9	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	5	9
	Girls	8	8	9
	Total	14	13	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (55)	69 (53)	95 (73)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	8	6
	Girls	8	9	8
	Total	14	17	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (50)	90 (54)	74 (50)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	13	12	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	12
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	21	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (56)	92 (82)	96 (83)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	12
	Girls	10	12	12
	Total	21	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (60)	92 (71)	96 (77)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black - Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		

Chinese	1
White	124
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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)	6.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	49

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	11
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FTE means full-time equivalent

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

33.7%

Number of questionnaires sent out

169

Chinese		
White	2	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	384,387
Total expenditure	406,692
Expenditure per pupil	2,152
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,180
Balance carried forward to next year	- 14,125

Number of questionnaires returned

57

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	26	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	35	0	4	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	42	0	4	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	54	7	4	2
The teaching is good.	63	33	0	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	35	5	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	26	2	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	33	2	0	0

The school works closely with parents.	60	33	5	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	53	37	4	4	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	40	0	2	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	58	32	4	2	5

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Nine parents added additional comments to the questionnaire forms. Several parents praised the acting headteacher for managing the school well during the absence of the headteacher. There were no significant concerns raised but the problems with homework expressed through the questionnaire were repeated.

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

46 Children of five and under attend the nursery part-time until they transfer to the reception class at the beginning of the term in which they become five. They are taught alongside younger Year 1 pupils, and they attend full-time. When children start school, there is a wide range of attainment, and year groups vary considerably. Overall, however, children's attainment on entry is average. During the inspection, there were 45 children in the nursery and 14 children in the reception year.

Personal and social development

47 Children make very good progress in the nursery and their attainment is better than expected for children of their age. This is due to the very good teaching on the part of the teacher and the nursery nurse who work together closely and have a very good understanding of how young children learn. They have established a purposeful atmosphere where children feel happy, confident and stimulated to learn. This has a positive effect on their work in all other areas of learning. The very good relationships between parents, staff and children provide a sense of security for the children, and this helps them to learn to communicate well with adults and with other children. Children are kind and supportive towards others; for example they involve a child in a wheelchair in their play. Teaching is very good because adults encourage children to take responsibility for themselves, and activities help children to learn to enjoy exploring, investigating and experimenting with a wide range of materials.

Even the youngest children know the expected routines, such as collecting milk and putting their pictures to dry.

48 Satisfactory teaching in the reception class ensures that children come to school happily. They are likely to attain the standard expected by the end of the reception year. They are friendly and open, but their concentration is sometimes limited. Some become bored when their work does not interest them or give them anything new to learn. They sometimes show enthusiasm, as when comparing artefacts in a history lesson, and they sometimes persevere, as when two children made reasonable models of fruit from dough. They take turns when using the computer, but in other activities, especially imaginative play in the 'pretend' house, some still find it difficult to share toys and to play together co-operatively. When children are expected to sit and listen for too long and when too little is expected of them in terms of both their achievement and their behaviour, children's learning comes to a stand still.

Language and literacy

49 By the end of the reception year, most children are likely to attain the standard expected for their ages. Some children in the nursery do very well, particularly with speaking and listening. This is due to good teaching during which adults encourage children to improve the range and quality of their talking at every opportunity. Children know that they are expected to listen carefully to adults and to each other. During 'circle time', for example, they listen carefully to what they are being asked to do. Teaching sometimes has weaknesses in the reception class. This is largely due to problems with managing and organising children and because the teachers' expectations of children are not high enough. Children learn to extend their understanding of new words, however, for example they learn to use words accurately to describe tropical fruits. They answer questions confidently, and some of the teacher's questions challenge them to think for themselves. The teacher has not yet established a continuously purposeful working atmosphere, and not all time is used to children's best advantage.

50 All children enjoy activities that focus on learning to read, and most make at least satisfactory progress. Children in the nursery regularly work in pairs to choose a book and talk about it; they know that pictures can tell a story. They use writing tools to make marks on paper, and some can write their own names, showing good control with the shape and size of letters. Children in the reception class know what the words 'title' and 'author' mean. They recognise and name individual letters and simple words, often using pictures to help them. A few can use simple dictionaries to find words for themselves. They try to join in with the class reading session, but the print is not always large and clear enough for them to learn as much as they could. Children in both classes often write for a reason, for example notices, lists and labels. Children in the reception class do not always take enough care with this, however, and they still write too many letters incorrectly. The teacher does not encourage them strongly enough to improve their writing, consequently, their progress is not as great as it could be.

Mathematics

51 Most children are likely to attain the standard expected by the end of the reception year. Good teaching in the nursery makes a significant contribution towards children's overall progress. Staff focus on specific areas of mathematics and are very clear about what they want children to learn. As part of the current topic on shapes, children learn to recognise and name triangles, circles, squares and rectangles. Many can describe these and use them to create patterns. Some know the properties of shapes and use a computer to practise working with them. Daily activities provide opportunities for counting, ordering and sequencing numbers, and some children can say which number comes next or before. Most can count at least to ten accurately. Staff seize every opportunity to help children to learn to understand mathematics through their daily activities. They keep careful records of what children can do, and this helps them to focus on what children need to learn next. Teaching in the reception class is satisfactory overall. Children extend their understanding of numbers into money, and

they can recognise 1p, 2p, 5p and 10p coins. The role-play in the imaginary bus provides a good opportunity for children to learn to solve simple money problems by giving the correct change. During this session, however, the behaviour of a few children was unacceptable, and this limited the progress made by others. The teacher has not yet managed to establish a consistently purposeful working atmosphere, and not all the work is sufficiently demanding, especially for the highest attaining children.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

52 Satisfactory teaching overall helps children to learn at a steady pace so that by the end of the reception year, most are likely to attain the standard expected. Children in both nursery and the reception class can talk about their families and where they live. They visit a local farm and the church, but their knowledge of the wider world is limited. Children in the reception class, however, are making a display of stories from around the world linked to a large map. Children in the reception class can observe historical artefacts and compare these. They show interest and make sensible comments and suggestions about what the artefacts might have been used for. This helps to increase their understanding about the past. They use junk materials to make model houses, and can fold, cut, join and stick a variety of materials. Children begin to learn to use technological equipment confidently, including computers, in the nursery. They build on this in the reception class by completing programmes that support their learning in areas such as reading and number work. As in Key Stages 1 and 2, however, they do not yet use computers regularly enough as part of their day-to-day learning.

Physical development

53 Teaching is satisfactory overall and most children are likely to attain the standard expected by the end of the reception year. Teaching is good in the nursery, where daily activities outdoors are planned carefully to promote both social and physical skills. The youngest children quickly learn to pedal, steer, push and pull large outdoor toys. Staff intervene in their play to suggest how they can improve. They learn to climb with safety and confidence, as well as using the climbing frame for imaginative play. Children in the nursery make good progress during their weekly sessions on the school apparatus, and this also helps them to become more confident when moving around the school building. It prepares them well for school. Consequently, children achieve higher standards than expected for their age. Children in the reception class have no planned outdoor provision. In their physical education lesson, they make satisfactory progress with learning to move in different ways on gymnastics apparatus. They move freely around, along and under apparatus at different speeds. Not all children can follow their teacher's instructions well, however, and she does not yet have very secure control of them. In the classroom, they use construction kits to make quite complex models. They roll, mould and cut dough and improve their finer physical skills at a steady pace.

Creative development

54 Teaching is satisfactory overall, and children are likely to attain the standard expected by the end of the reception year. Children in the nursery sing together regularly. They remember the words and actions of songs and rhymes, and keep to a steady beat. They can name percussion instruments and enjoy experimenting with the sounds they make. They improve their hand and eye control through exploring with materials such as paint, sand, water and dough. Some of their paintings show good brush control and an ability to mix paints to create new colours. Where children need more help with this, staff guide them carefully to help them to make progress. During the inspection, there were no direct observations in the reception class. A video of singing in Key Stage 1 indicates that children join in with this, and can sing tunefully. They keep to a steady beat when playing simple percussion instruments. Previous work in art is of a generally poor standard, and some children lack control with using tools and creative materials.

55 Since the last inspection, provision in the nursery has remained the strength that it was, and this gives children a very good start to their education. There remains, however, too much difference between provision in the nursery and that in the reception class. The acting headteacher has assumed overall responsibility for children of five and under, but he admits to a need for a greater understanding of recent national developments in this field of education. Many features of good practice, including making regular observations and assessments of children's achievements, are not continued into the reception class. This means that children's progress is inconsistent across the key stage.

ENGLISH

56 The results of the 1999 national tests for eleven-year-olds were above average and well above results in similar schools. Standards in tests have risen since 1996, a little more so than is the national trend, but not as much as in mathematics and science. There has been little difference in the performance of girls and boys. Standards dipped in the 1998 tests, when there were more pupils with special educational needs in the year group. Governors have set targets for test results in 2000, but these are not expected to be as high as in 1999 due to a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The inspection finds that standards are above average in speaking, listening, reading and writing, and this represents an improvement since the last inspection when they were satisfactory.

57 The results of the 1999 national tests for the end of Key Stage 1 in reading were average, but well above average when compared with results in similar schools. Pupils did better in writing tests, and results were well above average and very high when compared with similar schools. In both reading and writing tests, there were more high attaining pupils, but also more pupils who failed to reach the expected level 2. In the teacher assessments, including speaking and listening, the proportion of pupils attaining the standard appropriate for this age or higher was well below average, but in writing and speaking and listening the proportion attaining the higher level 3 was well above average. These assessments were not verified for accuracy, however, and were completed in a rush due to the absence of a teacher. As in Key Stage 2, standards in tests dipped in 1998 due to a poorer year group of pupils, but overall they have risen since 1996, more so in writing than in reading. The performance of girls and boys has been similar to the national trend. The inspection finds that standards are average in speaking, listening, reading and writing, and this indicates that provision has been maintained since the last inspection.

58 Most pupils in Year 6 can pose and answer questions clearly and talk about their work in all subjects. They do particularly well in plenary sessions in literacy lessons. Pupils were able to articulate the features of a series of myths, whilst their friends listened intently. They often use the correct terminology associated with each subject. They read fiction and non-fiction books with confidence and can make inferences and deduce things from what they have read. They refer quickly back to the text in order to emphasise their understanding of a 'pun', by noting references to 'knights' and 'dark ages'. They use dictionaries and thesaurus and are very good with finding information in books or the school library. They recall characters and plots in stories, and talk about their preferences when choosing books. They write widely in many subjects, for example, poems, stories, play scripts and different kinds of factual writing and recording of their work. The standard of presentation, handwriting, spelling and grammar is good. Pupils do not use information technology as often as they should to record their ideas in a wide range of ways.

59 Most pupils in Year 2 usually listen well and speak with confidence when answering questions. They can develop their ideas and explain their work to other pupils and to adults. In reading, they are particularly good at using different methods of finding out what new words are, and this increases their fluency and understanding. High and average attaining pupils read easier books aloud to adults

confidently and with expression. The reading diaries they keep, along with the clear guidance given to parents, are used well to encourage higher standards and are much appreciated by parents. Good quality and well-organised books are adding to the success of school reading initiatives. Most pupils can write several sentences by themselves, and can adapt the style of their writing to its purpose. They have good spelling habits. Their handwriting and presentation, however, is often too 'slap dash', and teachers do not do enough to correct this or to show pupils that they expect more of them. Although teachers provide good opportunities to write in other subjects, lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs often struggle and get very little done. Only a few pupils write to a standard better than expected for their age. As in Key Stage 2, pupils have too few opportunities to learn to use information technology to further their learning in English.

60 Teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 are variable, but satisfactory overall. Teachers have put the National Literacy Strategy into place successfully, and they usually follow this well in lessons. It has already addressed some of the school's weaknesses in reading, and teachers work well with parents. Although teachers' subject knowledge is good, their lesson plans do not always make it clear enough what they want pupils to learn. Teaching was poor in one lesson, and this was due to a series of weaknesses, including poor management of pupils' behaviour and a lack of expectation in the work set for them. In these circumstances, pupils' attitudes are poor and they do not learn enough. The behaviour of the same pupils is much better, however, in another lesson where those pupils with special educational needs are supported by several additional adults.

61 Teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 are good overall. Teachers have a good level of expertise that they use to teach the National Literacy Strategy successfully. Teachers are particularly good at planning purposeful reasons for pupils to write in other subjects. This helps pupils to learn to write in lively, thoughtful, and sensitive ways. Teachers' lesson plans are clearer than in Key Stage 1, but there is still room for improvement. Lively and stimulating lessons are taken at a brisk pace, and pupils are encouraged by the praise given by teachers. Teachers' marking of work is good towards the end of Key Stage 2. This helps pupils to know where they need to improve as well as praising them for their efforts. Classroom support assistants are managed in ways that make sure that time is used well in supporting pupils with special educational needs. In both key stages, there remain examples of work that expects too little of pupils, such as the completion of worksheets; these activities restrict opportunities for pupils to develop their own ideas and writing skills.

62 Pupils' attitudes are largely dependent on teachers' ability to motivate and interest them. Although attitudes are often good, in both key stages a few pupils do not follow the classroom rules, and shouting out or other mildly annoying behaviour occurs. Pupils work well together, however, when asked to. This was seen in a lesson in Key Stage 2 where older pupils acted as mentors to younger ones when re-drafting their poems.

63 English has already been identified as an area for further development, due to the fact that pupils' performance is not as good as it is in mathematics. The gap in standards between English and mathematics is beginning to narrow. Attention has already been given to reading, and writing is to be the next focus. Since the last inspection, the involvement of governors and the subject co-ordinator in finding out how well the school is doing and planning what needs to be done next has increased.

64 There are now more planned assessments, such as standardised reading tests, that help teachers to know how well their pupils are doing in reading. Assessments to find out what pupils know, understand and can do in the National Curriculum, however, are not used sufficiently to plan what pupils of differing ages and levels of attainment need to learn next. This is particularly important for pupils with special educational needs and those who do not reach the level expected for their age.

These pupils make satisfactory progress when they benefit from additional support, but their pace of learning is sometimes slow at other times. Individual education plans vary in quality and usefulness, and class teachers do not always take these into sufficient account when lessons are planned. Overall, the rate of improvement since the last inspection is good.

MATHEMATICS

65 In the 1999 national tests for seven and eleven-year-olds, standards were well above average and very high when compared with similar schools. In the Key Stage 2 tests, 92 per cent of the pupils reached the expected level 4 and 36 per cent reached the higher level 5. Pupils in both key stages did better in mathematics than they did in English. Boys did better than girls in Key Stage 1, but there was little difference in their results in Key Stage 2. Fewer pupils than nationally failed to reach the levels expected for their age, and more pupils reached higher levels in both key stages. Standards in the 1999 tests rose considerably from 1998, when they dipped, especially for seven-year-olds. Governors have set targets for eleven-year-olds in the 2000 tests, but results are not expected to be quite as good as in 1999 because there are more pupils with special educational needs. Since the last inspection, standards in national tests have risen even more so than is the national trend. Standards in the work seen have also risen in both key stages.

66 This inspection finds that standards are average by the end of Key Stage 1 and above average by the end of Key Stage 2. Any differences between test results and inspection findings occur because of the varying composition of year groups in the school. Teachers' assessments of pupils' ability to use and apply mathematics in Key Stage 1 in 1999 did not reflect the same high standards as indicated by test results. The school does not yet have very secure methods of ensuring that teachers' assessments are always accurate, but staff have started to address this.

67 Most pupils in Year 6 are quick thinking and accurate when they work with all four rules of number. They understand the value of digits within larger numbers and can calculate with decimals to two places. They apply their skills well to solving problems. They calculate percentages and understand how this will help them in their everyday lives. They have a good understanding of negative numbers and of how to use inverse operations to check their own answers. They know their multiplication tables well. Pupils have a good knowledge of shapes and can use protractors accurately to measure angles. They calculate the area and perimeter of two-dimensional shapes. In algebra, they understand the function of brackets and make calculations using these. In science and history, pupils translate information from a table into a graph, and calculate the cost of an imaginary stagecoach journey when passengers are charged different rates for riding inside and outside. Pupils' ability to apply mathematics and numeracy skills to other subjects is a growing strength of their achievements.

68 Many pupils in Year 2 can count forwards and backwards in tens and double and halve smaller numbers. They recognise different patterns in numbers, and can use a number square to solve problems. They write numbers up to a hundred in both words and figures, and solve problems about numbers up to 100 and money up to £1. Pupils measure lines accurately and calculate the area of simple shapes using squared paper. They recognise regular shapes according to the number of their sides, and are beginning to understand the meaning of symmetry. Pupils do not have as much opportunity to use mathematics skills in Key Stage 1 as they do in Key Stage 2.

69 Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Although, for reasons beyond the control of the school, training in the National Numeracy Strategy is behind schedule, teachers have made a positive start with putting this into practice. It is already showing results in pupils' achievements in number work and in using and applying mathematics; the latter being a weakness at the time of the last inspection. The school's method of teaching numeracy is good

overall, but more evidently so in Key Stage 2. This is because teachers have the expertise they need to excite and motivate pupils about mathematical ideas. They make their expectations very clear to pupils by setting targets for both the level and the amount of work to be completed in lessons. Also, teachers in these classes use questioning astutely to challenge their pupils further, for example, “How do you know that?” and “Think of another way to do that”. They make good use of pupils’ answers to help them to understand the complexities of what is being taught. In a lesson in Year 6, for example, pupils were helped to turn a lengthy problem into relatively simple arithmetic by questions such as, “Which mathematical process do I need to use?” and “What do I need to do next?” In this way, pupils learn that difficult mathematical problems can be broken down into small, manageable steps, and they learn to use this knowledge to extend their calculating skills. Good relationships between teachers and pupils are a significant factor in the good pace of pupils’ learning, especially in classes towards the end of Key Stage 2.

70 Lesson planning is more successful in Key Stage 2 than it is in Key Stage 1 where teachers sometimes focus more on what pupils will do rather than what they will learn. In lessons, however, teachers in Key Stage 1 expect pupils to use correct terminology, and even the youngest pupils become confident to use such words as ‘diagonal’, ‘vertical’ and horizontal’. Relationships between pupils in Key Stage 1 and the adults who work with them are such that most pupils want to please their teachers, who in turn praise pupils for their efforts. Good teaching in Year 2 challenges pupils’ thinking about number squares. It also ensures that those pupils who can rise to further challenges have the opportunity to do so by constructing squares for others to complete. A few pupils in Year 2, however, find it hard to concentrate, and a high level of adult support was used during the inspection to keep them at their work. Teachers in Key Stage 1 do not expect enough of pupils in terms of the presentation of their work in books, which is sometimes untidy and poorly set out.

71 Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, but their individual education plans vary in quality. Most pupils have good attitudes towards mathematics, and many enjoy mental challenges. An example is where older pupils were asked to construct their twelve times table from their knowledge of other times tables. Older pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to their friends. They discuss mathematical ideas sensibly and readily acknowledge good ideas and suggestions. In a few lessons, pupils take time to settle down, and occasionally inappropriate calling out spoils lessons. In Year 4, a small group of pupils were not as active in their own learning as they should be, despite the best efforts of their teacher. Consequently, they made slower progress in their lesson. Teachers know which pupils can be reluctant to work hard and concentrate, and set tasks to try to engage their interest. This is sometimes successful, especially when additional adults work with groups or individual pupils.

72 Considering that the school has recently lost a knowledgeable subject co-ordinator, and the acting headteacher has added this to his many other responsibilities, overall, the rate of improvement since the last inspection is good. Governors have increased their involvement in finding out directly how well the school is doing. Teachers tailor their questions well towards pupils of differing prior attainment, and marking in Key Stage 2 helps pupils to know how they need to improve. Clear assessment information, however, is still not gathered and used as systematically as it could be to plan future work in order to drive standards up even higher. Provision in Key Stage 2 is still better than in Key Stage 1. Also, there are too few opportunities for pupils in both key stages to learn to use information technology as a regular part of their work in mathematics.

SCIENCE

73 In the 1999 national tests for eleven-year-olds, pupils attained standards that were well above average and well above similar schools. Ninety-six per cent of the pupils reached the expected level 4 and almost half reached the higher level 5. Staff believe that the pupils who sat the tests, however,

were a bright year group, and standards are not expected to be quite as high in this year's tests. Since 1996, standards have risen more so than is seen in the national trend, although in 1998, standards dipped a little more than the national trend. There has been no significant difference in the performance of girls and boys. The inspection finds that standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are above average, and this indicates a good rate of improvement since the last inspection when standards were satisfactory.

74 In the 1999 teachers' assessments for seven-year-olds, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level 2 or above was well below average and well below similar schools, whilst the percentage attaining the higher level 3 was well above average and very high when compared with similar schools. This did not include experimental and investigative science, where results were poor at all levels. This suggests that teaching in this area is weak; these assessments were completed quickly and during a staff absence, however, and accuracy may not have been secured correctly. Nevertheless, results indicate that the more able pupils do well, but the average and below average pupils perform poorly. The inspection finds that standards by the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with national expectations, and this represents sound improvement since the last inspection when standards were unsatisfactory.

75 Pupils in Year 6 have completed many investigations across the breadth of the science curriculum, and they have gained a broad range of scientific knowledge. The rigour with which they tackle their work gives them a good insight into scientific thinking. They collect and record information and evidence carefully to support scientific predications and conclusions. Investigations with magnets, for example, lead them to an early understanding of the properties of ferrous and non-ferrous metals. Pupils know how exercise affects their bodies and what a balanced diet consists of. Older pupils in this key stage make good use of the school grounds to study the habitat of different plants and animals, and they know about different life cycles. They apply mathematics skills well as they make tables and graphs to help them to understand the data they have collected. There is no evidence, however, that they use information technology for this purpose on a regular basis.

76 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils show a good understanding of practical work. They observe what happens in experiments, make predictions and record what they find out. Much of their written work is untidy, however, and teachers do not expect enough of their pupils with this. Pupils know the differences between living and non-living things and between animal and vegetable. They know that certain foods and hygiene are important to keep themselves healthy. Pupils know that solid chocolate can be melted and then returned to a solid state again. They understand that friction slows down objects and that force can speed them up. Pupils do not use information technology as a regular part of their work in science.

77 Pupils' attitudes to science are good overall. They enjoy practical work and like talking about it. Some grow impatient during long introductions to lessons, and this sometimes leads to a lack of concentration by a few pupils. Behaviour is usually good, but it is better in those lessons where the pace is brisk and where pupils are comfortable with the challenges set for them by the teacher. Most pupils work well in pairs and groups showing mature social skills. Older pupils have intense discussions about their plans for scientific investigations. Such discussions lead to a good understanding of what needs to be done and what practical problems need to be faced.

78 Teaching and learning are very variable, but satisfactory in Key Stage 1, and good in Key Stage 2. This means that pupils' progress is better in Key Stage 2 than it is in Key Stage 1. The difference occurs because the pace of lessons and the demands placed upon pupils are greater in Key Stage 2. Consequently, pupils achieve higher standards of work, including the presentation of their written work. In Key Stage 2, previous work shows how the expectations placed upon pupils increases from year to year, until Year 6 when they produce work of a consistently high quality. This is largely due to the expertise and enthusiasm of teachers to provide imaginative and challenging investigative work. Good quality homework further motivates pupils' interest in science. These factors lead to a

high degree of thinking and doing on the part of pupils. Teachers in Key Stage 1 make good use of time given by support assistants, but do not assess pupils sufficiently in order to find out what they need to learn next. The emphasis on practical work, particularly in Key Stage 2, helps pupils to think about what they are seeing and doing. This ensures that they learn to predict what might happen and then to test their predications out. Pupils' understanding of scientific 'fair testing' develops well as they grow older.

79 Staff make good use of the more recent national guidance about the curriculum, and this is increasing their own knowledge and understanding of the subject. They have identified investigative science as an area of priority, and further training has had a good effect on teaching in all year groups. Even the younger pupils, for example, are able to talk about their investigations and explain their thinking. Since the last inspection, the rate of improvement has been good overall. A subject co-ordinator and governors now have greater involvement in finding out how well the school is doing and with planning what needs to be done next. The co-ordinator, however, is the acting headteacher, and he has several other major responsibilities. Expectations have been raised, but more evidently so in Key Stage 2. A weakness still arises because teachers do not yet use accurate assessment information well enough in order to plan what pupils of differing ages and prior attainment need to learn next.

ART

80 By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above national expectations in the work seen. Some pupils can shade and experiment with lines using different art materials and showing good control. They use charcoal pencils effectively to portray landscapes on the theme 'In the Bleak Midwinter'. Other pupils understand the idea of proportion, and use this with skill to draw faces before extending their ideas into cartoon images. By discussing the work of Picasso and comparing it with previous studies of Tudor paintings, pupils realise the impact of a having a limited choice of colour combined with the shape of features. This results in drawings in the style of Picasso that are good. Older pupils know what is required when planning illustrations in the style of Quentin Blake to accompany their poems in the style of Roald Dahl. Pupils use sketchbooks well when experimenting with drawings; a group of higher attaining pupils have reflected on their work with paint and improved it by using pastels. There are some good examples of using colour, such as the display entitled "A Warm Feeling". The ability to mix colours, however, is still underdeveloped, as seen at the time of the last inspection.

81 By the end of Key Stage 1, standards meet national expectations in the work covered. Pupils can record what they see, for example artefacts sketched during a visit to a Hindu temple and later photographs of the same artefacts. They observe plants and use pastels to draw them accurately. Too much of pupils' work in their portfolios, however, lacks sufficient detail and care. Throughout the school, work on display and seen in lessons shows that pupils use their knowledge and understanding of the work of famous artists to produce imaginative responses to ideas about shape, line, colour and pattern. There are too few opportunities in both key stages for pupils to learn to use information technology as a regular part of their work in art.

82 Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Only one lesson was seen in Key Stage 1, and resources were used well to add interest to the lesson. The teacher gave pupils feedback to help them to know how they could improve their work. Too little was expected of pupils, however, for example by giving them paints that need no mixing. Poor handling of a minority of pupils with behavioural difficulties dampened the enthusiasm of many pupils. In Key Stage 2, teachers inspire pupils, explain the specific skills they want them to learn and use questioning well to encourage pupils to think carefully and to make wise choices about their work. Not all pupils

yet have the range of basic skills they need to be able to do this. Teachers in both key stages are well prepared and organised for lessons. They display pupils' work carefully around the school in order to promote the subject positively and to celebrate pupils' artistic achievements.

83 Most pupils are enthusiastic and keen to work hard. They often concentrate for a considerable length of time. They organise themselves when necessary and can co-operate well in groups and discussions. When motivated, as in the introduction of a lesson about Picasso, pupils quickly learn how to think for themselves and to make deductions. They usually respond to challenges set by teachers, but a few are too easily satisfied with their own efforts and show little inclination to improve. This is reflected in the variable quality of work throughout the school, and not all teachers do enough to set higher standards of both work and behaviour. This means that some pupils do not always make the progress they could.

84 The school does not yet have a scheme of work for art, and there is no systematic way of ensuring that pupils are taught skills in a way that builds on what they already know, understand and can do. The subject co-ordinator is keen and eager to put this right. Links between lesson planning and assessing pupils are in the very early stages of putting into place. Since the last inspection, the standard of the work seen in Key Stage 2 has improved, but the subject has not been a priority for further development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

85 By the end of both key stages, standards are broadly in line with national expectations in the work covered. The school has maintained the standards seen at the time of the last inspection. No lessons were seen, although pupils were involved in food technology during a science lesson. Judgements are based on the school's documents and curriculum plans, as well as on displays, photographs, a discussion with pupils in Year 6 and pupils' work in sketchbooks.

86 Pupils in Key Stage 1 keep useful sketchbooks that show their planning for the practical work they do. It is clear that they are learning to plan as a first step in making things. Their writing shows an increasing understanding that some materials are more suitable than others for specific purposes and that materials need to be shaped and joined according to their properties. Pupils plan before making Christmas biscuits, and photographs show that they can convert plans into suitable end products. Pupils in Year 2 make plans for their designs of raincoats. They know that some materials resist water and they choose these materials for making the raincoats. Other pupils design animals to create using threads.

87 Pupils in Key Stage 2 do not keep sketchbooks, but evidence of their work is found in displays and photograph albums. Pupils have made a windmill from a construction kit, adding a motor to propel the vanes through the use of elastic bands. They have made card houses from nets and show sufficient skill with measuring, cutting and joining materials. In food technology, photographs record pupils' success with in making Bramley apple pies for a local competition and pupils learn rules about hygienic food preparation. A display of work shows that pupils plan how to make model space vehicles and choose both resistant and pliable materials in order to do so. Their written evaluations show how they have modified their ideas in the light of their experiences. When talking about their work, pupils are eager to explain how they designed and made their artefacts. They are clear about the tools used and how different materials can be used, shaped and joined.

88 It is clear from talking to pupils that they enjoy a range of suitable experiences in design and technology. Teachers' plans and the finished products suggest that teachers have enough knowledge and understanding and that they use suitable methods of teaching pupils. Teachers have made good use

of the most recent national guidance about teaching this subject by developing curriculum plans that focus on teaching the necessary skills. They have pinpointed what they want pupils to learn and planned the activities that are most likely to enable this to happen. Also, time for teaching the subject has been allocated in blocks in order to make best use of the small amount of lesson time available. This ensures that a minimum of time is wasted in starting activities and putting materials away again. In the limited amount of time available, the school has done well to maintain the standards found at the time of the last inspection. Teachers' enthusiasm for the subject places the school in a good position to improve further.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

89 Due to school timetables, no lessons were seen in history, and only two lessons were seen in geography. Judgements are based mainly on pupils' previous work and discussions with them about it. This work is of the standard expected nationally by the end of both key stages. Since the last inspection, programmes of work have been planned for each year group, and this has helped to raise the low standards previously found in both subjects. It has also increased teachers' expertise, especially in Key Stage 2 and teachers now focus their lesson plans on teaching the necessary skills. National guidance about temporary changes to the allocation of teaching time to subjects has led to relatively small amounts of teaching time for geography and history, especially in Key Stage 1. This means that topics are not covered in as much detail as teachers would like. Since the last report, teachers and governors who lead these subjects have increased their involvement in finding out about standards and teaching in order to decide what needs to be done next. Progress with this, however, has been better in geography than in history, due to the extended staff absence of the history co-ordinator.

90 Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. This difference arises because teachers in Key Stage 2 expect higher standards of work and behaviour, and they plan activities that challenge pupils' thinking and motivate them to want to do well. Consequently, pupils' attitudes to lessons are good. Most pupils behave well, but in Key Stage 1, pupils with special educational needs should have clearer plans for helping them to improve their work and behaviour. Teachers in Key Stage 2 use a good range of different teaching methods that help pupils to learn. They take full advantage of opportunities to develop pupils' skills as writers as an integral part of the work. The oldest pupils recently wrote strong letters of protest about an environmental issue in the locality, and took account of the views of other citizens. Teachers in both key stages help pupils to learn to use geographical resources to find out things for themselves. Pupils in Year 2, for example, use travel brochures to help them to find out about the wider world, and pupils in Year 6 use newspaper reports to study the weather. All teachers make good use of a wide range of educational visits and field trips to help pupils to understand about the past and about the world today. This also makes a good contribution to the spiritual, social and cultural development of all pupils.

91 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good knowledge of the periods of history they have studied recently, such as the Victorians. They can talk about this showing an understanding of how and why things change over time. Their understanding of the order of events in history, however, is still not very good. They label maps of the world correctly, use geographical terms when talking and writing and answer their teachers' questions about resources showing that they can look for evidence and interpret this well. Pupils in both key stages do not yet use information technology regularly as an integral part of their learning. The progress of less able pupils and those with special educational needs is sometimes slow in Key Stage 1 when they struggle to write down their ideas and get very little done. Although good quality marking for the older pupils helps them to know how they could improve, there has been little progress since the last inspection with using information from assessing pupils to guide lesson planning.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

92 Standards are below national expectations by the end of both key stages. This was also the case at the time of the last inspection and progress with raising standards has been fairly slow. The school has made good progress, however, with increasing teachers' subject knowledge through a programme of staff development, and this is now good. Teachers attend regular workshops and their confidence to teach the subject is now having a good effect on pupils' learning. A room has been set aside for computers, and pupils visit the suite according to the school timetable. Pupils have very few opportunities to use computers in their classrooms as part of their day to day work in all subjects. Even where computers are available in classrooms, during the inspection these were not often switched on. This limited pupils' ability to make further progress with increasing their skills and with learning to apply these to different kinds of work across the curriculum.

93 Pupils in Year 6 have very good attitudes towards new technology. They listen carefully and with interest when their teacher explains and demonstrates the importance and use of the Internet in our society. They show that they understand by the sensible questions they ask. Some pupils are far more experienced than others, depending on what they have already learned at home. Many pupils have too little experience with using computers to control events, handle information and explore modelling to be able to achieve the level expected by the end of the key stage. During the inspection, a pupil acted as mentor and helped another pupil with special educational needs to overcome difficulties. Pupils' attitudes are not always good, however, and a few in the Year 4 and 5 class disrupted their lesson and this spoiled it for other very sensible pupils.

94 Pupils in Key Stage 1 are alert and confident when using a computer keyboard and a 'mouse'. Their attitudes and behaviour when working with computers are good. They can open and close programmes, and edit text on the screen. They ask the teacher if they are unsure what to do. All pupils in the Year 1 and 2 class, including those with special educational needs, can explain their task and how to overcome problems. In the computer suite, they learn key characteristics as well as skills in word processing. They have too few opportunities, however, to progress beyond this basic skill level of information technology. As in Key Stage 2, their attainment is limited by lack of teaching across the curriculum.

95 Due to the fact that the full curriculum for information technology is not yet taught, especially at the higher levels, the subject does not meet requirements fully. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in both key stages, and the small amount of teaching seen during the inspection was good. Teaching in upper Key Stage 2 was very good. This was where enthusiastic and challenging teaching motivated all pupils to do their best. A good lesson was seen in Key Stage 1, where the teacher taught pupils how to use a printer. The clear explanations, well structured lesson and emphasis on teaching pupils how to use correct terminology enabled pupils to make good progress with learning a new skill. Although teachers give feedback to pupils in lessons to help them to know how to improve, they do not yet assess them systematically in order to find out what pupils of differing ages and levels of attainment need to learn next. This was a concern expressed at the time of the last inspection. Teachers focus too heavily on asking pupils to re-draft previous work, and this provides insufficient challenge for some pupils.

96 The new computer suite is well maintained and has sufficient computers to allow for one computer between two pupils. This very good level of resourcing is not yet used very efficiently, due to the fact that the computers often stand unused, especially during literacy and numeracy lessons. Since the last inspection, more time within the curriculum has been allocated to teaching information technology, but the full impact of the staff training that followed the previous report has yet to be seen.

An experienced and knowledgeable co-ordinator now supports other teachers. Overall, the rate of improvement is satisfactory, and the school is now well placed to begin to raise standards.

MUSIC

97 By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above national expectations in the work seen, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. A high proportion of pupils learn to play a variety of musical instruments. The teaching undertaken by visiting teachers and an unqualified member of staff, enables pupils to quickly learn to perform with brass, woodwind, string or percussion instruments. When they play together in the school band, pupils reach very high standards. Emphasis is placed upon clarity of sound and playing together as a team, and pupils work very hard to improve. They persevere, practise, and respond to music with feeling. Most can read musical scores competently, and many understand musical terms, such as ‘dynamics’, and ‘tempo’. They know about music from different cultures, times and places. Both boys and girls sing in the choir and have positive attitudes towards singing with expression. They react quickly to the conductor’s hand signals, and make spontaneous adjustments to ensure accuracy when necessary.

98 By the age of eleven, pupils sing a wide repertoire of songs, including part-songs and harmony, with extremely good technical control. Teaching and learning are good overall; the success of the band and the choir is due to the expertise, strong leadership, thorough teaching and talents of the co-ordinator. She understands pupils’ capabilities and they respond positively to her expectations that she makes clear to them. During lessons, pupils progress from a quite ragged start to a polished performance. Their very good behaviour impacts greatly on the musical standards they attain.

99 Satisfactory teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 helps pupils to attain the standard expected by the time they are seven. The lessons seen were based on pre-recorded teaching programmes, and video evidence suggests that standards overall are in line with the national expectations in the work covered. Pupils in Year 2, including those with special educational needs, keep a regular beat and can listen in order to respond with accurate echoes. They handle musical instruments with care, and talk confidently about which might be selected, for example, to represent ‘The Sugar Plum Fairy’. They use words correctly to describe sounds and are developing a good sense of musical imagination. In lessons, they sing with enthusiasm and mainly in tune, but are not always given the chance to improve further. Teaching is not very successful where pupils are asked to follow words from a chart and when many younger ones are unable to read them well enough.

100 Aspects of music other than performing are covered in rotation. There is limited evidence of work with composing, but now that even the youngest pupils learn to play recorders, more opportunities are possible. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have opportunities to listen to music and to express their ideas about it. After listening to pieces of classical music, for example, pupils discuss the atmosphere created and the feelings evoked. Some pupils create music in the same style, and others interpret the different parts of a circus, using percussion instruments with understanding and ingenuity. These pupils, who are not members of the band or choir, work well together and listen attentively. Their teacher’s knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum enables them to acquire new knowledge and apply new skills so that they attain the standard expected by the end of Key Stage 2.

101 Pupils throughout the school have too few opportunities to use information technology as a regular part of their work. The standard of singing throughout the school is good. All pupils sing in assemblies, in church and for special performances. They enjoy singing together, and the singing is tuneful and in time. Most pupils memorise the words and enunciate them clearly.

102 Music plays an important part in the life of the school, contributing strongly to pupils' personal development and their overall achievements. The school maintains a strong tradition in performance music, and parents support this very well. Pupils are very successful in local competitions. As yet, there is no formal assessment to gauge how well pupils are progressing within the breadth of the National Curriculum. This was a weakness found at the time of the last inspection. The practice of selecting and withdrawing pupils from classes for band, choir or individual tuition means that full equality of opportunity is not ensured. Some pupils have much more time than others devoted to musical activities, and some pupils miss important parts of other subjects to have additional music lessons during the teaching day.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

103 Pupils in both key stages, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and attain the standard expected nationally by the time they are seven and eleven. Pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 learn to swim and they do particularly well by the end of Key Stage 2. All the pupils in Year 6 can swim and almost all can swim at least 25 metres. About two-thirds of these pupils have advanced swimming certificates. Standards in swimming are above national expectation.

104 Teaching and learning are variable, but it is satisfactory overall in both key stages. Good teaching in Year 2 helps pupils of all levels of attainment to improve their gymnastic skills. The teacher asks pupils to demonstrate for others when they are performing well, and this helps other pupils to learn how they can improve their performances. She helps pupils to learn the particular words associated with gymnastic movements, such as 'strength' and 'control', and pupils use these when explaining their work. She gives clear instructions and praises pupils when they do well; consequently, their behaviour is good. This good teaching enables pupils to learn to use apparatus creatively to perform rolls, balances and sequences of movements. Teaching is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2 line dancing, however, because pupils are not encouraged or helped sufficiently to improve the quality of their performances. Also, two classes are taught together, often wearing unsuitable shoes, and lesson planning does not show how pupils are intended to make progress with the National Curriculum. Pupils' learning in such lessons is too slow, and this is not sufficiently rigorous use of precious curriculum time. Most pupils enjoy the line dancing, however, and many try their best to learn the complicated steps. Older pupils in the gym club build on the work undertaken in classes, showing good control and balance.

105 Teachers make good use of the support offered by visiting coaches and student teachers. In a lower Key Stage 2 lesson, for example, pupils responded well to an aerobics warm up that was led by a student. They improved their ability to move to music with control, balance and correct timing. The lesson helped pupils to learn at a good pace and kept their interest and enthusiasm. Students from a local college give good support to the teaching of gymnastics and games, and coaches from local soccer and cricket clubs visit the school. Students helped older pupils to refine their soccer skills in a lesson that was enjoyed by both girls and boys. These activities help pupils to have good attitudes towards sport. The satisfactory provision found at the time of the last inspection has been maintained, but the school does not yet have an up-to-date scheme of work for each class to guide teachers with their lesson planning. Teachers are in the very early stages of putting procedures into place to assess pupils' work.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

106 By the end of both key stages, pupils achieve the standards expected by the local agreed syllabus. This is an improvement since the last expectation when standards were unsatisfactory. The

school has made good progress by preparing programmes of work for each class, and by ensuring that there is a good balance of work between the study of Christianity and other major world religions. Teachers in both key stages now use a wide range of teaching methods to motivate pupils and to help them to have good attitudes towards the subject. The visits they plan to different places of worship, including a Hindu temple, a Jewish synagogue and a Sikh gurdwara are excellent examples. This helps pupils to gain sufficient knowledge and understanding of different religions and to further their ability to use resources as a way of learning. The work covered makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in both key stages, but particularly in Key Stage 2.

107 Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Teachers are positive about their work and are careful to make sure that pupils are helped to think for themselves. They often ask probing questions, and pupils respond with very sensible answers. The difference between the key stages arises because teachers in Key Stage 2, set higher expectations for their pupils to behave well, apply themselves to work and to present it carefully and neatly. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils listen well in discussions and read or listen to religious texts with interest. They are particularly good with writing thoughtful ideas in different ways, such as researching from books, considering the relevance of parables in people's lives and writing play scripts from religious stories. They can think deeply about religious ideas and express their ideas with sensitivity and confidence. When discussing fairness and justice in the world, for example, they show great empathy for people's suffering. Pupils in both key stages do not yet use information technology sufficiently in their lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into classes, but they learn at a slower pace in Key Stage 1 when they struggle to write their ideas and get little work done.

108 Since the last inspection, the time available for teaching religious education has been reviewed, but it is still less than in most schools. This means that teachers are not always able to plan in-depth studies of the topics taught. Time is reduced further or interrupted for some pupils when they miss important parts of lessons to have additional music tuition, or when weekly lessons are split into two short sessions. There are good examples of assessing pupils' work by marking in Key Stage 2 and by listening to their answers to questions in both key stages. Assessment, however, is not yet an integral part of teachers' lesson planning, and pupils often have the same work regardless of their age or stage of learning. This sometimes prevents them from doing as well as they could.