

INSPECTION REPORT

GREAT BOWDEN C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Market Harborough

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120145

Headteacher: Miss Elizabeth Howe

Reporting inspector: Mrs R J Andrew
21460

Dates of inspection: 1st – 3rd October 2001

Inspection number: 193223

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	5 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Gunnsbrook Close Great Bowden Market Harborough Leicestershire
Postcode:	LE16 7HZ
Telephone number:	01858 463216
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Robin Totten
Date of previous inspection:	April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Rachael Andrew Registered inspector 21460	Science Art and design Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Peter Oldfield Lay inspector 1112		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Derek Pattinson Team inspector 19120	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Michael Roussel Team inspector 22157	English Music Religious education Foundation Stage	How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a voluntary controlled Church of England primary school. There are 87 boys and girls on the school's roll. This is smaller than the average primary school. The school serves the village of Great Bowden but also attracts pupils from Market Harborough and adjacent villages in Northamptonshire. About half the pupils are from outside the catchment area. There has been a gradual rise in the school population. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds, including a small proportion (five per cent) of minority ethnic background. None of these pupils speaks English as an additional language. The socio-economic circumstances of the majority of families are favourable and a below average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils on the school's special educational needs register (25 per cent) is broadly average, although the proportion of pupils with statements is above that found nationally. Attainment on entry is broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a successful school. Teaching is satisfactory overall with particular strengths in the infant and upper junior classes. This accounts for the high standards pupils achieve at seven and eleven. The headteacher's leadership provides a clear direction for school improvement. The governors' management supports this well but problems relating to staff changes are hindering further developments and have adversely affected the progress that pupils make as they move through the juniors. The school manages its finances well and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Through good teaching and learning in the infant and upper junior classes, it enables pupils to achieve high standards in English, mathematics and geography at ages seven and eleven and in science at the age of eleven.
- It provides consistently good teaching in the infant class so that pupils make particularly good progress in many subjects.
- It ensures that pupils develop good attitudes to work, apply themselves well and form positive relationships.
- It provides a wide range of interesting opportunities for learning, including very good provision out of lesson time.
- Teachers and support assistants get to know pupils well, respond effectively to their personal and special educational needs and help them to overcome difficulties.
- The headteacher's leadership and commitment to the school and the support of the governing body have kept the school improving through a very difficult period.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology and religious education in the junior classes.
- The creative and physical development of children at the Foundation Stage in the reception class and the overall achievements of higher attaining children, especially in writing.
- The overall quality of teaching and pupils' progress.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in April 1997. Improvement since then has been satisfactory overall. Since that time standards have risen in line with the national trend and far more pupils than in 1997 achieve higher levels. The school has recently received a government achievement award in recognition of improving results. Improvements in the way the school checks how well pupils are doing has led to improvements in teaching, especially in what is expected of higher attaining pupils in most classes. Other improvements relating to the key issues identified at the last inspection have been satisfactory. Resources for the reception class have been improved significantly to meet the needs of young children. Further improvements are required so that more attention is given to the development of children's skills, especially in the creative and physical areas of learning.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

The table indicates the above average attainment in mathematics and well above average attainment in English and science of pupils in Year 6 compared with all schools. Pupils' achievements in mathematics are broadly the same as those in similar schools and in English and science they are better. The upward trend in the school's results is broadly the same as the national trend. The results of higher attaining pupils have improved significantly. Pupils' achievements at the end of Year 6 are now good. Inspection findings support what test results show. The school set realistic but challenging targets in English and mathematics for pupils aged eleven in 2001 and these were achieved.

The results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 show that pupils' achievements in reading are very high and compare favourably with other similar schools. Standards in mathematics are above the national average and in line with those found in other similar schools. Standards in writing are average and below those found in other similar schools. Inspection findings reflect the high standards in reading and mathematics. The standard of pupils' writing has improved and they write competently in a range of subjects. Handwriting and spelling could be improved further to lift results to match those in other similar schools.

Standards in geography are above those found in most other schools at the end of Years 2 and 6. This results from good teaching and well-planned work. Good achievements were also observed in dance, art and music in the infant class and gymnastics and design work in the upper junior class. Standards in history are satisfactory. Standards in religious education and information and communication technology (ICT) are similar to those found in other schools at the end of Year 2 but below the level pupils achieve in most other schools at the end of Year 6. There are too few opportunities for pupils to improve their ICT skills in other subject time and progress is not good enough. Pupils' progress in religious education has been particularly poor in the lower junior class.

Most of the children reach expected standards at the end of the reception year, except in creative and physical areas of learning where progress is slow. Higher attaining pupils could achieve more, especially in writing.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes are good. Pupils like school, take their work seriously and are interested in all the opportunities the school provides.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well in lessons most of the time. Occasionally, when the pace is slow, a few become distracted. Behaviour at lunch and around the school is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils form lasting friendships. They respond to the respect and interest shown to them by teachers by valuing other pupils' views and ideas. They are co-operative and help the school to run smoothly. They work together sensibly

	in many lessons.
Attendance	Attendance is much better than the national average.

Pupils take a pride in their school and older pupils endeavour to set a good example for younger ones.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	satisfactory	good	satisfactory

Pupils learn the basic skills of literacy and numeracy thoroughly. The teaching of English is good overall. There are particular strengths in reading, in the teaching of reading skills in whole-class work with texts, and in improving fluency, accuracy and expression in guided reading groups. As a result, pupils become confident readers, able to use books effectively for research and also to read for pleasure. Teachers create good opportunities for pupils that enable them to learn to write fluently for a range of purposes and in many subjects. Spelling and handwriting skills are improving but expectations of accuracy and neatness are still not high enough and many pupils could do better. The teaching of mathematics is good overall, especially in number. Most pupils make good progress as a result. Teachers do not plan enough real-life problems to extend pupils' problem-solving skills and here progress is not as strong. Science is taught well. Teachers place a strong emphasis on investigating and this develops pupils' understanding well. The teaching in the infant class is consistently good and pupils make good progress in many areas, including writing and dance. There have been shortcomings in the demands made on pupils in the lower junior class in the previous school year. This shows up clearly in completed work, especially in poor progress in writing and mathematics. (A new teacher has now taken over this class.) Much has been achieved in terms of catching up and overall progress in the upper junior class as a result of good teaching in English, mathematics and science. This has enabled high standards to be achieved in spite of earlier under-achievement. Teachers in most classes have succeeded in improving the achievement of higher attaining pupils by providing more demanding work. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and make good progress towards their targets. The quality of support given to pupils with statements enables them to make very good progress. There are shortcomings in the teaching and learning of ICT and religious education in the juniors. Pupils do not have sufficient time on computers to achieve expected levels. Progress in religious education has been badly affected by the very small amount of work covered in the lower junior class in the previous school year. This has left pupils with big gaps in their knowledge. Teachers encourage pupils to do their best and praise their efforts. As a result most pupils try hard, build good relationships and grow in confidence. Weaknesses in organising practical tasks and in managing pupils occasionally hinder progress in the lower junior class.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Pupils enjoy a wide range of learning experiences that are relevant to their needs and interests. Appropriate emphasis is given to literacy and numeracy. Pupils do not get enough computer time to enable them to practise their skills. An unsatisfactory amount of work was covered last year in religious education in the lower junior class.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good and pupils are supported well. They are integrated well into the life of the school. Individual education plans are precise and enable pupils to make small steps confidently. A policy for more able pupils is having a good impact on their learning in most subjects.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	This is good overall with particular strengths in moral and social development. Pupils learn to co-operate, to develop care and concern for each other and to respect their environment. They are taught to consider how their actions affect others. There are too few opportunities for pupils to make decisions about their own learning.

How well the school cares for its pupils	There is good attention paid to pupils' welfare and safety. Pupils' academic and personal progress is monitored carefully.
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The range of activities provided outside normal lesson time is very good for a small school. Personal, social and health education is given a strong emphasis. The school works well with parents and the community to support pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads the school well. She has a clear view of what needs to be done to bring about improvements. Subject leaders have clear plans for the development of teaching and learning but not all of these have yet had an impact on standards. Developments have been slowed by staff changes.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities and support the school well. They are actively involved in school development planning and have a clear view of what needs to be done to help the school improve.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are good systems for analysing results and for reviewing the work of the school. These have identified the most important areas for improvement. The school's plan for monitoring teaching and learning and taking effective action has been badly affected by staff changes, problems of recruitment, the headteacher's teaching commitment and difficulties in finding supply teachers.
The strategic use of resources	The school's financial planning is good and ensures that money and resources are where there is greatest need. The school ensures the principles of best value are applied well.

The accommodation, learning resources and current staffing complement are adequate to teach all the subjects of the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Children make good progress. • Behaviour is good. • The teaching is good. • The school expects pupils to work hard. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps pupils become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost half those parents who responded did not feel well informed about how children are getting on. • A similar proportion felt the school could work more closely with parents. • A similar proportion did not feel that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. The school's formal methods for sharing with parents information about how pupils are getting on are good. The number and timing of parents' evenings compare favourably with other schools. The quality of written reports is good and includes individual targets for the future. The range of activities provided outside lesson times is very good for a small school. There have been communication difficulties in classes where there are job-sharing arrangements, especially when additional supply teachers are employed.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The results of National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds in 2000 show that standards were:
 - well above the national average in English and science and above average in mathematics;
 - above average in English and science and average in mathematics in comparison with similar schools.
2. There are no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls over time. Results in 2001 are not significantly different from those in 2000. The improving trend over several years is broadly similar to the national trend.
3. The findings of the inspection confirm that standards in mathematics are above average by the time pupils leave the school, and standards in English and science are well above average. The main reasons for this are the good quality of teaching and learning in the upper junior class. Pupils have a good understanding of their own learning because they are often involved in evaluating their own and others' work. Individual targets are set for them so that they know how they can improve.
4. National data indicates that the progress pupils make between the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 is good. Inspection findings confirm this good progress. It is evident from the sample of junior pupils' work from the last school year, that by far the best progress occurs in Years 5 and 6. The achievements of these pupils are good. Higher attaining pupils do well in all three subjects, showing that there has been a significant increase in the challenges made of these pupils and their achievements since the last inspection. Progress in Years 3 and 4 has been much less marked and, overall, pupils have been working well within their limits and not doing as well as they could. This is evident in the sample of last year's work, especially in the large quantity of low-level number work at the expense of challenge and a balanced curriculum. It is also evident in the lack of range and quality in pupils' writing.
5. The school set appropriately challenging targets based on careful analysis of pupils' earlier attainment and these were exceeded. The school is likely to meet the current year's targets.
6. The results of National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in 2000 show that standards were:
 - well above the national average in reading, above average in mathematics and average in writing;
 - above average in reading, average in mathematics and below average in writing in comparison with similar schools.
7. Results in 2001 show a substantial improvement in mathematics but not in writing. There is room for further improvement in the standard of spelling and handwriting throughout the school. This is improving as a result of the school's focus, but expectations are still not high enough. Many pupils are just short of the marks necessary to qualify for the higher Level 3 in the National Curriculum Tests at age seven. Improvements in spelling and handwriting could make the difference between the expected Level 2 and the higher Level 3.
8. The findings of the inspection confirm that standards in reading and mathematics are high as a result of the consistently good teaching and learning in this class. Pupils read accurately and with enjoyment. They show good levels of understanding of the books they read. They are enthusiastic readers and tackle unknown books with confidence. Pupils

make good and often very good progress. Pupils' achievements are good in number work. They are supported well by good opportunities for mental work. Achievements are satisfactory in other areas of mathematics. Opportunities to extend understanding further through real-life investigations are few. Standards in science are broadly average. In their work on materials pupils' achievements are good and include good opportunities to investigate. This is indicative of what could be achieved in work on plants and animals and forces but this is not always realised.

9. The achievements of pupils with special educational needs are good as a result of the quality of the support they receive from teachers and learning assistants and the care taken to plan for their needs.
10. Standards in ICT are broadly in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 but below expectations at the end of Year 6. Planning now provides a clear structure to the teaching programme but access to computers is too infrequent to enable pupils to achieve the standard expected at the end of Year 6. Many opportunities are missed and computers often lie idle. A few pupils achieve well but most of these have computers at home.
11. Standards in religious education are broadly in line with the expectations of the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus at the end of Year 2 and pupils' achievements are sound. Pupils' progress in the juniors is unsatisfactory. The amount of work recorded is too slight to enable pupils to consolidate their learning, especially last year's lower junior class. As a result pupils' achievements at the end of Year 6 are not high enough. There are significant gaps in their learning and particular weaknesses in their understanding of major faiths other than Christianity.
12. Standards in geography are high at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils' achievements are good. The subject is well led and the teaching is good, giving appropriate emphasis to the skills required. Pupils have good opportunities to learn at first hand in the immediate environment and further afield and to put their mapping skills into practice. Standards in history are broadly average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The amount of work pupils have undertaken is less than in geography and first-hand experiences, for example, handling historical objects, are not given such a strong emphasis.
13. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are inspired by their teachers' enthusiasm and subject expertise to achieve high standards in dance, music and art lessons. These subjects make a good contribution to their spiritual and cultural development. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 achieve above average standards in gymnastics in response to the teacher's high expectations. Standards in design and technology are broadly average. There is evidence of strengths in planning and good progress in skill development, for example, in joining techniques. Very little finished work was seen in art in the junior classes so it is not possible to make a judgement on standards at the end of Year 6.
14. Many of the children have had experience of either playgroup or nursery before joining the school. When they start, their achievements are average and in most areas they make satisfactory progress during their time in reception, although higher attaining children could do better, especially in writing. By the time they begin Year 1, most will have achieved the Early Learning Goals¹ with the exception of physical development and some areas of creative development where there are weaknesses in provision. Children's physical skills are under-developed due to the lack of frequent access to the range of indoor and outdoor equipment available. Too few opportunities are provided for children to experiment with paints and musical instruments in an imaginative way. Unsatisfactory physical and creative development were areas highlighted in the last report. There have been significant

¹ Early Learning Goals refer to the targets in national guidance for children at the end of reception year.

improvements in terms of resources but further improvements need to be made to the planning to ensure regular and frequent physical and creative activities are provided.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Almost all pupils have good attitudes towards their learning. They are keen to come to school, are enthusiastic, and play a full part in the activities provided. Behaviour is generally good. The school's expectations are clear and most pupils respond well. Behaviour is very good in those lessons where the pace is brisk and work is challenging. This is similar to the inspection findings contained within the last inspection report. Pupils behave well when they are moving around the school. Very good behaviour was seen throughout the lunchtime and in the playground, where pupils show careful awareness of others and of all the activities going on around them. There have been no exclusions. In discussions with pupils, they say that bullying is not a problem. All pupils understand the effect of their actions on others
16. Many pupils show an enthusiasm for work, particularly in the infant class and in the upper juniors. The interesting activities that teachers provide and the positive home-school links are contributory factors to pupils' enthusiasm for school. Older pupils in the reception class show a strong sense of care for the younger children and help to ensure that the youngest pupils take care of the resources they are using. Pupils in the Years 1 and 2 class are particularly caring for each other and relate well together, with a calmness and sensitivity that they learn from their teacher. There are times, however, when a few pupils in the lower junior class show little enthusiasm for their learning and cause some distractions for their classmates.
17. A majority of lesson observations confirm the good relationships that have been developed between all adults and the children. Most pupils respond positively to teachers and to each other and are well motivated. They respond well to the good opportunities that teachers make for them to collaborate in the learning, for example in science, gymnastics and design and technology.
18. Pupils with special educational needs and other pupils respond well to the way in which teachers and support assistants help them to overcome difficulties. They gain confidence and self-esteem when they realise they are making progress. Teachers know the personal circumstances of individual pupils well and this ensures that they are supported sensitively.
19. Pupils' personal development is good. They respond well to the tasks they are given, such as opportunities for older pupils to act as table monitors. Other opportunities offered to the pupils are through fund-raising activities. Here they undertake various tasks, such as running mini-sales and taking part in local community events. This helps to raise pupils' self-esteem and assists those with challenging behaviour to show greater responsibility. The school's personal and social education programme contributes well to pupils' personal development, for example through opportunities to discuss what it means to be a member of a community. There are opportunities for older pupils to take responsibility for their own learning, for example when they choose a river to study in geography, carry out their own research and record their findings. However, opportunities are too few, especially for the more able pupils, to develop independence by planning and organising aspects of their own work.
20. Children at the Foundation Stage settle well into school and become familiar with class routines due to the emphasis placed on teaching them what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They play and work well together and are good at sharing toys and taking turns when playing games. Some children are too dependent on the teacher and are not confident in choosing for themselves.
21. Attendance in the school is good. Good attendance is encouraged and monitored carefully, and action is taken to improve the attendance of individual pupils when necessary. Parents support the school well. There is no unauthorized absence.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

22. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed during the inspection was satisfactory overall. However, this judgement does obscure variations in the quality in different classes which affects the rate of pupils' learning and the progress they make. Similarly, evidence from the sample of pupils' work from last year shows differences in the progress that pupils make from year to year, in particular a marked drop in the lower junior class.
23. In reception the teaching is satisfactory overall. Children settle well into school and become familiar with the class routines that teachers take care to establish. Some children are too dependent on the teacher and are given insufficient encouragement to choose activities and equipment for themselves. This hampers their creative and personal skills. Basic skills of reading, writing and number are taught effectively. Children are developing good knowledge of sounds and learning the meaning of new words. This helps them to make satisfactory progress in reading. There are too few opportunities for them to explore writing in a variety of ways and to develop their growing skills, especially in their sessions for independent play. Similarly, although children enjoy a range of number songs and rhymes and take part in counting games, there are few examples or opportunities for writing numbers. Opportunities for children to learn about the world around them are many and varied, and children's understanding develops steadily.
24. There is insufficient clarity in the planning for Early Learning Goals about how to make the most of the learning opportunities for the reception children and provide challenging activities for higher attaining pupils. This is especially important when the teacher's focus is on the older group in this class that is shared with Year 1 pupils. The progress of the Year 1 pupils is satisfactory overall. They are the youngest Year 1 pupils and, although teachers plan their work from the National Curriculum, they also benefit from opportunities to learn alongside younger children in a less formal setting. There are times, however, when they too could achieve more, especially in the extent to which they use writing.
25. The quality of teaching and learning in the infant class is consistently good and enables pupils to make good progress in most subjects. In a third of the lessons observed, teaching was very good and pupils made rapid gains. As a result, pupils achieve high standards in reading, mathematics, geography, dance and some aspects of science, music and art. The relationships in this class are particularly effective in developing pupils' personal and social skills. The work planned is modified to suit different ages and stages and provides appropriate challenge for all. Expectations are high; the teacher inspires pupils to do their best and instils in them a love of learning. Pupils behave very well and strive to succeed.
26. The sample of pupils' work from last year provided evidence that the teaching in the lower junior class did not promote sound progress and that expectations were not high enough. The work in English and mathematics was often repetitive and unchallenging. The new teacher is making greater demands on the pupils but, as some of them were in this class last year, they are taking time to adjust. The teaching observed was generally sound and pupils were making satisfactory gains in English, mathematics, geography and physical education.
27. A small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was observed in this class. This led to slow progress in a science lesson as a result of weaknesses in organising a practical activity and managing pupils. Few gains were made in music as expectations of quality in pupils' singing were too low.
28. Pupils in the upper junior class are making good gains in learning in most subjects. Those pupils who have recently moved up from the lower junior class are quickly adjusting to the demands made on them to tackle more difficult work, though occasional lapses in behaviour still occur. Pupils are reminded what is expected in a given time and the teacher works hard to check they are on target. Older pupils set a good example. Relationships are good and

the teacher encourages hard work. As a result, younger pupils' work rate is increasing and levels of concentration are improving to match the good levels of application that the older pupils show. Expectations are high and pupils of all abilities rise to the challenge. The sample of work from last year shows that pupils make good progress in Years 5 and 6, making up lost ground and reaching high standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.

29. Basic skills of reading, writing and number are taught well throughout the school. Pupils' skills of speaking and listening are also developed well. This enables overall good progress to be made in English and mathematics. Good opportunities are made for pupils to use reading and writing skills to support the work in other subjects and to contribute to the progress made. However, teachers' expectations of accuracy of spelling and neatness of handwriting are not always high enough and this slows progress. There is not much evidence that teachers make the most of opportunities to use mathematical skills to support other subjects, although some good examples of data handling in support of science were observed in the upper junior class.
30. The work sample shows that teachers use investigations well to teach science. Pupils enjoy these, find them challenging and make good progress. The quality of this work contributes to the high standards pupils achieve in learning about materials in the infant class and most aspects of science by the time they leave the school. Evidence from the work sample and from lessons observed indicates that the teaching of geography is good in both infants and juniors. The teachers provide many varied opportunities for pupils to learn at first hand and teach skills well. Pupils make good gains in learning vocabulary which enables them to describe geographical features well. They develop a good understanding of maps and use them to study the places they visit. Planning for design work is taught well in design and technology. The involvement of pupils in evaluating their own and others' work contributes to good progress. The teaching of history is satisfactory overall, although more could be made of the value that artefacts and local studies can bring to pupils' understanding. The dance and gymnastics components of physical education are taught well and pupils make good gains in lessons.
31. It is not possible to make judgements about the teaching of ICT or art and design as no teaching was observed in the three days of the inspection. Standards of artwork in the infant class indicate good teaching and the standard of pupils' work on computers is broadly in line with expectations for this age group. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 indicate that they undertake a reasonable range of art activities. Teachers do not make the most of opportunities for pupils to work on computers in support of the various subjects of the curriculum. Computer time is therefore too short for skills to develop fast enough to enable pupils to achieve the expected standards by the age of eleven.
32. The teaching of religious education has not enabled pupils to achieve the expected standards by the time they leave the school. The sample of work from last year's junior classes was slight, especially in Years 3 and 4. It provided little evidence of how the work built logically on earlier learning or of pupils' developing understanding. Discussions with pupils indicated significant gaps in their learning.
33. In the school as a whole, target setting is improving pupils' awareness of their own learning and moving them on. Pupils are involved in setting and reviewing their own targets and this gives them a better understanding of how they can improve. The marking of pupils' work, however, is not consistent. Evidence from the sample of last years' work shows that it is often developmental and provides pupils with good guidance on how they can improve, for example in science in Years 5 and 6. However, when pupils fail to understand the work undertaken, marking has not always indicated what they must do to get it right, and inaccurate spelling of key words persists as this has not always been picked up. All teachers encourage pupils to do their best and praise their efforts. Teachers make every effort in all

lessons and activities to ensure that the contributions of all pupils are celebrated and valued. This builds pupils' confidence and leads to good levels of effort and concentration. Teachers take time in the lesson to help individual pupils to overcome problems. Where teachers explain carefully to pupils what they expect them to learn in the lesson, it has marked effect on pupils' progress. Occasionally, however, teachers' planning concentrates on what pupils are to do. This makes it more difficult for teachers and pupils to check understanding.

34. Homework is often set, especially for older pupils, in a range of subjects. Tasks are varied and include learning facts, practising skills, undertaking research in preparation for future work and completing work begun in class. Individual tasks are also given and these help pupils overcome particular difficulties. Pupils respond well and a few take the initiative to pursue further at home what they have learnt in class. The work undertaken at home effectively supports work in class. Younger pupils, in particular, benefit from the support given by parents for reading homework.
35. Very good teaching of pupils with statements of special educational needs was observed. The teachers and support assistants work closely to plan work that ensures these pupils make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans. Where appropriate, pupils use lap-top computers to record their ideas neatly and homework is used particularly well, for example, to prepare them for the residential visit. Teachers respond sensitively to varying needs, allowing pupils to work independently at times when they are able to do so, at other times acting as a scribe when ideas need recording quickly.
36. Teachers adapt work in the literacy and numeracy lessons carefully for other pupils with special educational needs. This ensures that work is at the right level, difficult enough to challenge them but at a level that encourages them to persevere. Resources are used well to help the learning process and to consolidate new work. As a result pupils, including those whose progress has been poor in the past, feel well supported and make good progress. Classroom assistants make strong contributions to the learning process by making important teaching points, frequently checking understanding and encouraging concentration and neatness.

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

37. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for its pupils, which are relevant to their ages and interests. Teachers use different methods, such as teaching the whole class, small groups and individuals to make sure that they teach all that is required. All subjects required by the National Curriculum are securely represented. The strong emphasis given to English, mathematics, science and geography, is one reason why standards are above national expectations in these subjects by the time pupils leave the school. There is good emphasis on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in most subjects to ensure that work carefully builds on previous learning for most pupils. This helps to ensure that levels of challenge in English and mathematics are better for pupils of higher ability than at the time of the last inspection.
38. The planning for the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world is generally satisfactory. Resources have been considerably improved. This enables the children to experience a wider range of physical and creative activities than at the time of the last inspection. However, planning for these areas requires further improvement to make sure children experience greater challenge and the development of skills is given more emphasis. Planning for reception and Year 1 children in the same class is not sufficiently clear to enable both groups to make the best possible progress.

39. In the junior classes, time is not always used to best effect. For example, some lessons are too long which slows the pace at which pupils acquire knowledge and understanding. Pupils do not have sufficiently regular access to computers and this affects the rate at which they develop their ICT skills. Both ICT and mathematics are not yet given sufficient emphasis in other subjects to aid learning. There are too few opportunities for pupils to learn using 'real-life' investigations in mathematics to help them develop a love of the subject and an enquiring mind. In history, teachers rarely use materials which pupils can handle and learn from at first hand, to help bring the subject alive.
40. The inclusion of all pupils, whatever their ability, age or background, is promoted strongly to ensure that they are given every chance of reaching their potential. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with learning experiences, which help them to make good progress over time. Work is usually well matched to their needs, and where additional help is available, it is usually carefully targeted to help ensure that pupils make good gains in learning. Pupils take a full part in the life of the school, for example, by attending after-school clubs. Higher attaining pupils are increasingly well catered for, such as through work which is set at the right level for them and through an after-school club, which helps meet their specific needs. 'Springboard Mathematics' in Year 5, 'Booster Classes' in Year 6, and Additional Literacy Support in Year 3 improve the confidence of lower attaining pupils and enable them to improve their skills.
41. There is good emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills within English and mathematics. The school has successfully introduced the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy to help improve standards. Literacy skills are developing well through other subjects, such as geography, and this is helping pupils to improve their knowledge and understanding of written and spoken English.
42. For a small school, a very good range of after-school clubs is provided. The well-led activities appeal to the interests of many pupils, are mostly well supported and appreciated by both pupils and parents. They include recorder, football, netball, art, chess, French and music clubs and a choir. There is a good range of educational visits, such as to Market Harborough, to farms, theatres, places of worship and a space centre. The annual residential visit to either Aberglaslyn or Kingswood centres, provides a varied programme of adventurous physical activities and ICT. This helps to further broaden pupils' learning experiences. Pupils with statements of educational needs are included and gain particular benefit. Learning opportunities are further extended through a variety of visitors, such as the nurse, an artist, a writer and local clergy, and through puppet workshops, competitions and Victorian days.
43. The curriculum places good emphasis on pupils' personal, social and health education. A structured programme is planned within and in addition to other subjects. For example, a health week held annually includes suitable work on the importance of a healthy diet, hygiene and exercise for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Instruction about road safety and cycle training are provided. Sex and drugs education is taught in line with agreed policy.
44. The community makes a good contribution to pupils' learning through the school's links with local organisations and institutions. For example, pupils' stories and poems often appear in the parish magazine. Pupils entertain local residents with maypole dancing, sing carols in the locality before Christmas, and regularly visit a nearby senior citizens' hospital. There are very good links with the local church and the vicar regularly leads assemblies.
45. There are firmly established links with the schools to which most pupils transfer at eleven. Teachers from the various schools meet transferring pupils in school, and pupils visit their chosen secondary school to help ensure that the move, when it comes, is as seamless as possible. There are good links with the local playgroup, which occasionally uses the school hall as its venue. There is a network of active support groups to which all teachers belong,

and these help to benefit pupils through new initiatives for improving learning experiences, such as the recently compiled Harborough town trail.

46. The school gives good emphasis to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as it did when the last inspection took place. All areas make positive contributions to the personal development of pupils, including those with special educational needs. Provision for pupils' social and moral development is particularly good, and is well promoted by the school.
47. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. It is more evident for younger than for older pupils. For example, Years 1 and 2 pupils have very good experiences of the pleasure that music and art and the wonder of the natural world can bring to their learning. They interpret the darkness of space and the twinkling of stars through movement and dance. Excitement in learning is occasionally evident in lessons in the junior classes, for example when older pupils discovered the mathematical pattern of changing daylight hours. An impressive array of stories collected by the headteacher is used well to encourage pupils to reflect on important issues and the world around them. Pupils learn to appreciate each other's strengths through an evaluation of the work of others. They take pride in representing their school at outside events, such as choir festivals.
48. The school promotes pupils' moral development well. All adults in school provide good moral leadership and give pupils a clear sense of direction about moral issues. All work hard to reinforce good standards of behaviour, and to develop mutual respect and understanding. The school's system of rewards and sanctions is clearly understood. Class rules are prominently displayed, and most pupils follow them. This also helps to develop a moral stance based on right and wrong, good self-discipline, and care for each other and their school. Teachers make good use of assemblies to establish moral and social values. Studies on caring for the earth and the importance of food chains for the survival of living creatures make pupils aware of the need to care for all that is around them. The school fosters values, such as honesty, fairness and respect for truth and property. The positive approaches to the moral development of pupils result in good behaviour and good attitudes to learning.
49. The school provides a good range of experiences to promote pupils' social development. All who work in school are good models of social behaviour because they show respect for and relate well to others. Pupils learn to co-operate and work together well by taking part in special events, and visits, and through group work in many subjects. They learn to respect one another and to support each other's learning. The raising of funds for local and national charities helps to develop care and consideration for others. Pupils develop a social conscience through knowledge gained of places where people are suffering, such as New York and Afghanistan. There are opportunities for pupils to take responsibility in their classrooms and around school, for example, through the setting up of equipment and checking it is safe. However, sometimes teachers miss opportunities to develop initiative and personal responsibility in the classroom. As a result some older pupils are happy to let teachers do things for them that they are capable of doing for themselves. The very good range of after-school activities enables many pupils to expand their personal interests and experiences, and is a strength of the school.
50. The cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. The school celebrates the culture of the area through its good community involvement, such as by taking part in the annual town carnival. Pupils are given insight into the culture of the locality through their work in geography and history on Market Harborough. They learn about other cultures through carefully chosen stories in assemblies. The very good work undertaken by younger pupils on Mexico gives pupils some understanding of the richness and diversity of another culture. Good quality reading material raises pupils' awareness further. In history pupils learn about past cultures, such as the Vikings, and in geography they learn about the way of life in the

African state of Benin. However, the study of other religions is given insufficient emphasis to make much of an impact. Art and music make a small contribution, although non-European artists, musicians and their work are infrequently represented in pupils' learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

51. The school offers a safe, friendly and welcoming environment where pupils of all ages feel secure and valued. Good procedures are in place for ensuring pupils' welfare. Teachers and support staff have a genuine concern for all pupils whatever their needs and work very well with individuals or groups to promote learning. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection, and is very aware of the procedures and requirements of the Local Area Child Protection Committee.
52. A detailed health and safety policy helps to ensure the welfare of all pupils. Assessments of risks have been undertaken. Detailed first aid records are kept: the school has a high number of teachers and ancillary staff who have first aid qualifications. Minor accidents are dealt with efficiently. Parents are informed about the injuries sustained by their children in line with school policy.
53. Very good procedures are in place for monitoring and improving attendance. Appropriate contact is maintained with the education welfare officer. Good attendance is expected and parents fully support their children to this end. As a result, attendance is well above national levels.
54. The school has good procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. None was seen during the inspection week and pupils and parents are confident about how any such incidents are dealt with. Good adult supervision is always on hand. Class teachers and support assistants give good pastoral care. Other adults in the school are sympathetic when pupils are upset or need someone to share a problem. The headteacher is always available and she and other longstanding members of staff have exceptional knowledge of each pupil's needs.
55. The school's arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic progress are good. They are at their best in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' progress in these subjects is carefully tracked as they move through the school. This enables teachers to know how well pupils are doing. Assessment arrangements in most other subjects enable teachers to make reasonably accurate judgements about what pupils know and understand but there is little assessment of how pupils acquire important skills so that work can build carefully on previous learning. In geography, teachers are beginning to chart older pupils' progress in important skills, but this is at an early stage of development.
56. A range of tests and assessments are carried out, mostly in English, mathematics and science, as pupils move through the school. These enable teachers to:
 - discover what pupils know and understand;
 - obtain information which enables them to set individual and group targets to help pupils with their learning;
 - place pupils in groups by ability so that work is more closely matched to their needs;
 - plan work for pupils of different abilities;
 - assess pupils' work against National Curriculum levels.
57. Some teachers use information gained to better effect than others. For example, in Years 3 and 4 last year, assessment was not used well. As a result, many pupils were given work which was too easy for them. This prevented them from making the gains in learning of

which they were capable. However, most teachers use assessment well. This is most evident in the improved achievement of higher attaining pupils.

58. Pupils with special educational needs are soon identified through initial assessment procedures. Teachers use this information well to set precise targets on individual education plans. Pupils' work is carefully monitored to assess the progress they are making towards meeting their targets. This contributes to good progress.
59. Older pupils have started to become involved in their own assessment, such as through marking their own work in mathematics and contributing to their targets to help them improve. This is helping them to become more involved in their own learning and giving them a greater understanding of how they can improve further.
60. Assessment data from national tests is studied thoroughly with the assistance of a computer program, which helps to identify trends and weaknesses clearly. This is proving helpful to teachers as it enables them to see clearly what needs to be done in order to raise standards further.
61. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Pupils are well known within the school family and adults effectively support them. A survey of pupils' attitudes contributes strongly to this process and enables teachers to identify and support those pupils who, for example, have difficulty in forming friendships or need help to work successfully with others. Thoughtful class assemblies build up self-esteem and successes outside school are celebrated.
62. In the reception class, teachers' records, including what children can do when they first start school and observations of the children's subsequent learning, are of a high quality. Further improvements could be made to the way in which this information is used to plan more challenging activities for more able children.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

63. About half the parents returned the questionnaires. A high proportion of those parents who did made it clear that they held positive views of the school, its work and what pupils achieve. The 21 parents who attended the meeting prior to the inspection generally echoed these comments. About half the parents who responded felt that they were not well informed about pupils' progress and that links with the school could be improved. These concerns spring mainly from difficulties that have occurred in the past where there have been a number of different teachers in charge of a class in the same week. This occurs when supply teachers need to be employed in classes where there are already job-share arrangements. Parents of children in the reception class find this particularly disconcerting although they conceded that children are rarely troubled by these arrangements. The headteacher has again stressed that contact can be made with her or the class teacher at any mutually convenient time. This is clearly indicated in the governing body's report. Inspection evidence indicates that formal reporting of pupils' progress is good and that during the inspection parents came into school to discuss informally how pupils were getting on.
64. The school provides good quality written information about children's progress. Pupils' annual progress reports are of good quality, and give a clear indication of progress, levels achieved in each subject and individual targets for further improvement. There are opportunities for pupils and parents to respond and many do so positively. The timing and number of parents' meetings compare favourably with other schools. The school provides regular newsletters and the quality of information supplied to parents in the prospectus and governors' annual report, now combined, is good. There have been opportunities for parents

to attend meetings to inform them of changes to the curriculum, for example about mathematics. These have not always been well attended.

65. The parents of children in the reception class are involved the monitoring of progress. They have an opportunity to meet the teacher after the first assessments are made when they discuss the findings with the teacher. In the following terms, parents have informal opportunities and parents' evenings at which to discuss children's progress.
66. Some parents have reservations about the amount of homework and the consistency with which it is set. The governing body has played a positive role in dealing with concerns. Parents have been formally consulted and the governing body is in the process of reviewing the school's policy. All agree that improvements have been made but there is further to go. Inspection findings indicate that the homework provided is wide ranging, supports pupils' learning well and is often tailored to meet individual needs. Parents generally provide good support for pupils' homework. There is a particularly effective exchange of information between pupils and parents in the infant reading diaries. Fewer parents help in school than in most other schools. The vast majority of parents support school performances.
67. About half the parents who responded to the questionnaire were dissatisfied with opportunities provided for pupils to take part in activities out of lesson time. None of them provided further comments about why they were dissatisfied and this was not an issue of concern at the meeting. Inspection evidence shows that a very good range of provision is made for a small school. Pupils attend in good numbers and are enthusiastic about what the school provides.
68. Effective links have been forged through parent governors and through the splendid work of the Parent and Teacher Association (PTA) whose wide programme of social and fund-raising events has provided generous funds for the continued work of the school. Support from the local community to their fund-raising events has been positive. The PTA sends out a regular newsletter and keeps all parents aware of specific events and of the money raised.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

69. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff is sound overall.
70. The headteacher leads the school well. She has developed a team approach so that staff members support each other well. She has a strong commitment to continuous improvement. She has a clear overview of what needs to be done to bring this about, based on accurate evaluations of the school's performance. The school development planning process is thorough, involves all teachers and governors at an early stage and sets out clearly the action required to bring about the improvements identified as priorities. The success of initiatives is discussed informally as the year progresses and formally before the next year's plan is adopted. The checking of progress and pupils' work in English, mathematics and science, the analysis of results and teacher assessments, and the comments of governors following their visits, contribute further to the process the school undertakes to assess how well it is doing.
71. The school has established a system for improving the quality of teaching through performance management. This is closely linked to target setting and pupils' progress. The headteacher sets high standards for others to follow in the quality of her own teaching. There is a well-conceived system for monitoring teaching and learning, involving the headteacher, subject leaders, and the local education authority advisor.
72. Under normal circumstances this should have led to success in achieving most if not all of the school's intentions. Staffing problems, including teacher turnover, difficulties in obtaining supply cover and in recruiting permanent staff, have added to the headteacher's already

considerable workload and made it unmanageable. This in turn has impeded the improvement process. It is therefore to the school's credit that improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall and standards have risen in English, mathematics and science. The most important adverse effect has been the lack of time to put into practice the full range of strategies in the school's plans to monitor teaching, learning and pupils' work to ensure that:

- the quality is consistent in all classes and subjects;
- the school's aims are fulfilled to the same high level in all classes;
- the action taken to bring about improvements is secure.

73. Teaching has improved overall, especially in the challenge provided for higher attaining pupils but there have been, and to a lesser extent remain, considerable variations from one class to another in pupils' progress. The degree to which subject leadership contributes to high standards has also been affected by staff changes. Although there have been significant improvements in the amount of responsibility delegated to subject leaders and to the training given to enable them to fulfil these responsibilities, the impact has been slow to emerge in some subjects. This is because staff changes have led to the headteacher carrying too many subjects, and to other subjects having no permanent leadership. Subject leadership has been successful when subjects are identified as a priority in the school development plan, for example in English and mathematics.
74. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities and supports the school well. Individual governors, some with considerable expertise, take responsibility for gathering information about a particular subject or area of the school's work, for example special educational needs. They monitor its work closely, including observing lessons, and have a good understanding of its strengths and where it needs to improve. The governing body as a whole is taking an increasingly active role in leading developments through the forward planning process.
75. Good financial planning supports educational priorities well. The priorities identified in the school development plan are costed carefully. The resources available are earmarked for these developments. The bursar, headteacher and governing body have a good overview and keep firm control on matters affecting finance. The chair of the governing body leads the finance committee and has a good knowledge of the requirements. The school bursar gives regular financial information to the governing body. Clear statements of income and expenditure are shown. She gives a very good commentary to explain the information given. Governors discuss reports thoroughly in the finance meetings.
76. Monies are spent wisely including those that are clearly identified for the development of designated projects, for example special educational needs. Careful adjustments are made as various additional funding has been released through the Standards Fund and other initiatives. There are good policies established for the purchase of goods and services; in particular care is given to ensuring the best possible purchase value for money. Good office administration ensures that accounts are correctly paid on time. The last audit, in November 1999, stated that there was good management of finance and this standard has been maintained.
77. The accommodation is adequate for the delivery of the National Curriculum. The hall is used effectively for physical education and also as an additional teaching area. The library provides a quiet area and useful small group teaching space. A portable classroom now provides adequate accommodation for the reception class, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Another portable classroom provides a space for occasional individual and small group support and office space for the headteacher. The school grounds include an excellent playing field, recently re-surfaced playground, quiet areas for pupils to sit, a wild-life area, a living willow dome and enclosed pond. The accommodation has been

maintained well and is cleaned to a very high standard. It is treated well and respected by all in the school. There are no signs of wilful damage.

78. Resources are adequate throughout the school. The pupils have access to a range of computers and to the Internet, although these resources are not used as well as they could be. The library area is well stocked and provides a valuable resource for supporting work in the classroom. More could be made of it for pupils to follow up their own interests. The PTA has given generous help in providing funds for books, particularly for literacy and numeracy.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

79. In order to improve pupils' progress and standards further the headteacher, staff and governors should:

1. Raise standards in ICT and religious education at age eleven by:
 - monitoring teaching to ensure that the school's well-structured plans for both subjects are implemented consistently in all classes;
 - checking pupils' work to ensure that they are given sufficient opportunities to record what they have learned;
 - ensuring that computers are used regularly to support pupils' learning in all subjects.
2. Ensure that planning for children's activities in the reception class focuses more clearly on the development of children's skills to provide greater challenge for:
 - higher attaining children in particular, especially in writing;
 - creative and physical skills generally.
3. Review the headteacher's teaching commitment to ensure that more time is available to:
 - monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning;
 - work alongside other teachers as necessary.

80. The following less important areas for improvement should be considered when the governors formulate their action plans.

- Continue with strategies already in place to improve spelling and handwriting further.
- Ensure that as well as planning the work to be undertaken, teachers and pupils are clear about what is to be learnt in lessons.
- Review the timing of lessons to ensure that the best possible use is made of the school day and the pace of work is maintained.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	24
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	8	10	2	0	0
Percentage	0	17	33	42	8	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than four percentage points

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	87
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	22
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	7	8	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	15	14	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (82)	93 (82)	100 (94)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	14	12	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (82)	80 (82)	93 (94)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

* Numbers of pupils omitted where there are fewer than ten boys or girls.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	4	11	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	14	13	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (89)	87 (89)	93 (100)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	12	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (89)	93 (89)	93 (89)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

* Numbers of pupils omitted where there are fewer than ten boys or girls.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	75
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.8
Average class size	21.8

Education support staff: YR –Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	121

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	228374
Total expenditure	233414
Expenditure per pupil	2432
Balance brought forward from previous year	6132
Balance carried forward to next year	1092

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	99
Number of questionnaires returned	51

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	27	4	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	53	37	4	4	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	49	2	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	53	20	2	4
The teaching is good.	45	39	6	2	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	22	29	41	4	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	27	14	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	37	2	4	2
The school works closely with parents.	20	33	39	4	4
The school is well led and managed.	47	41	2	4	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	45	0	2	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	29	27	14	4

Other issues raised by parents

Although parents had been consulted about homework by the governing body and a new policy drawn up, a few parents felt that further improvements were needed, especially in terms of all teachers following the policy consistently.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE²

81. Children who are in the Foundation Stage of learning are taught in the reception class. Attainment on entry is average. This is confirmed by baseline assessments. Children generally have well-developed speech and language skills on entry to the school and this has a positive impact on learning as the pupils move through the school. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage of learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers are continuing to adapt and develop the provision to take account of new requirements. The support staff are fully involved in the work and make an effective contribution to children's learning. The documentation, including baseline assessment, pupil profiles and observations are of a high quality.
82. Children's personal, social and emotional skills are as expected of children of this age. Most children have either attended a local playgroup or nursery school before joining the school and settle well into the structured routines of the Foundation Stage curriculum. During the week of inspection, there were eight children who were following the Foundation Stage curriculum. The remaining eight Year 1 pupils were working on the National Curriculum in the infant stage. These pupils will transfer to the infant class of Years 1 and 2 pupils in January. The progress of the reception children in different areas of learning is variable. It is satisfactory overall in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world, but weaker in creative and physical development. Children with special educational needs make sound progress and all children are well supported by hardworking and caring staff. Most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning except creative and physical development by the time that they enter the infant stage. However, activities provide for the higher attaining children are insufficiently challenging and as a result they could achieve more.

Personal, social and emotional development

83. Both reception teachers and support staff give a high priority to the development of children's personal, social and emotional development. Children have settled well into school and are becoming familiar with class routines. This is because staff are consistently teaching the children what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They are patient, but insistent on children listening and not calling out and this enables all children to make at least satisfactory progress. For example, 'time out' is an effective strategy that is used eventually, if all else fails for children who interrupt repeatedly. Children with special educational needs are well supported by the staff and are beginning to settle well and make sound progress.
84. At the beginning of the day children happily settle into their class and most are unaffected when their parents or carers leave. The staff create a happy welcoming atmosphere which helps children to feel secure and builds their confidence. Children respond very well to the staff who are good role models. This helps them to develop their personal and social skills. Children play and work well together and are good at sharing toys and taking turns when playing games. They enjoy their activities and are enthusiastic when listening to stories and are keen to join in. For example, when reading the big book about Polar Bear, the children

² The Foundation Stage refers in this case to those children who are in the reception class and have not yet reached Year 1 or six years of age. Early Learning Goals refer to the targets described for the end of reception in the national guidance for children of this age.

were keen to read along with the teacher and especially the younger children who could join in with, "Polar Bear, Polar Bear, what do you hear?"

85. Teachers do not always help children to become independent because most activities are strongly teacher-directed and materials are chosen for them. Children refer to the teacher for help, for example to tie aprons or clear up spills. They do not expect other children will be able to help them although many are capable of doing so. A significant feature of the teaching of personal and social development is that staff are very aware of pupils' emotional needs and are very supportive of them. All pupils receive good care and this provides them with a good start to their education and helps them develop positive attitudes to learning.

Communication, language and literacy

86. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers and support staff provide a good range of activities to develop children's language and communication skills. They use resources well, which engage children's interest and help in their learning. Children enjoy listening to stories and readily share books together or with staff. They quickly develop a love of books. They understand that print conveys meaning and use pictures to tell stories. In all adult-led activities questions are used well to help children develop their vocabulary and very good explanations are given. For example, in a lesson where children had been introduced to an activity related to Teddy's birthday and how they could help Teddy celebrate and how he would feel on his birthday, the children were keen to add their own ideas. Responses such as "He would rush down to find his cards when the postman came" and "He would feel excited" all gave the children effective opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills.
87. Children listen well to their teachers and to each other. They are developing good knowledge of sounds and learning the meaning of new words. Many words are displayed around the classroom, for example as captions to children's work. Elements of the Literacy Framework are used, but these could be extended further, especially for higher attaining children. Activities that follow whole-class reading of the big book do not always develop writing well enough. More could also be made of opportunities for children to explore writing in a variety of ways in structured play activities. For example, whilst the class reading included the Polar Bear story and a tortoise hand-puppet, who kept getting the sounds wrong, impacted positively on the learning of all children, the follow-up tasks were targeted more at the Year 1 children. Reception children undertook low-level tasks to extend their learning of the 'p' sound. Computers are not always used to advantage to support reading and writing.
88. Teachers are working hard to provide a balanced curriculum which includes all areas of learning and significant input has gone into planning of the practical organisation to ensure that all children get good opportunities to learn. This has included a move to a more suitably equipped mobile classroom and the purchase of more resources.

Mathematical development

89. Children experience many practical activities and by the end of the reception year most children will have reached the Early Learning Goals for mathematics. Most children can count reliably to ten and many can read and count to 20. Children are able to sort and order numbers, enjoy a range of number songs and rhymes and take part in counting games. For example, in one lesson children took turns to beat a number on a wood block and another child would then guess the number and say it out loud. In the same lesson children in the Foundation Stage were looking at two-dimensional shapes and they went on a walk in the school grounds with a classroom assistant to see what shapes they could find in the environment. Some children were working in a group, selecting and drawing around shapes and also identifying and drawing shapes in the sand tray.

90. Children are beginning to use mathematical language and are confident in choosing the square, rectangle, circle and triangle, naming them when asked. For example, the children who had been looking at shapes in the environment talked about what they had found and one child talked about the hexagon shape she had seen on the walk. Teachers provide a range of games and puzzles to support children in sorting, ordering, matching and counting. Children also enjoy using the computer to develop their number skills. This was seen in shape work where children were using a computer program that required them to choose the correct shape. There are too few opportunities for children, especially higher attaining children, to write numbers or to solve and record their answers to simple mathematical problems.
91. The teaching observed was sound overall and in the lesson on number and shape it was good. As in literacy work there were some missed opportunities to develop children's skills in a range of structured activities. For example, the teacher missed opportunities to consolidate understanding of the number five when talking about Teddy's birthday. Teachers and support assistants make good use of questions and give very precise explanations. Sessions are generally well planned and resources used well. There are displays to support mathematical learning, including an interactive display on the colour of eyes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

92. The majority of children enter the school with average attainment in general knowledge. Teachers further develop their knowledge by helping them understand more about where they live and what has happened to them since they were babies. Children have looked at their own history of 'When I was a baby,' and 'I went to playschool and now I go to school.' They complete their own home and family books, draw their home, bedroom and family. A display on going to the seaside and a 'Seaside Tea Rooms' role-play area all contribute to their knowledge of the world about them. The seaside photographs also show what seaside was like a long time ago, and what it was like for the children this summer. In addition, the children explore their local environment, including the local park, and go shopping with real money. Children have a growing understanding of the five senses through the activities provide. In one lesson they went on a walk to identify the sounds they could hear. They used their sense of smell to identify different foods and tasted different types of crisps. Appropriate emphasis was placed on health and safety and hygiene.
93. Photographs taken during the spring term show a range of activities that include making sandwiches for a Teddy Bears' picnic, taking part in a class assembly about pets and learning about being happy and sad. Good links have been established with parents who support the work well. For example, a parent painted children's faces for the assembly about pets.
94. Children enjoy using the computer and some of them are competent in using the mouse to move objects on the display screen. It is not used as often as it might be to support children's learning. In addition to the structured activities planned by the teacher, there is a two-week rolling programme of free choice activities for the children. However, teachers are not always clear about how these activities will develop children's learning. They do not always seize opportunities to move their learning on by responding to children's own ideas.
95. Teaching in this area is satisfactory. Teachers are continuing to develop the Foundation Stage curriculum to take account of the new requirements for children of this age and are aware of the need to provide more challenging activities for higher attaining pupils. Most children achieve the Early Learning Goals.

Physical development

96. Children's physical skills are under-developed and some children may not meet the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning. Teachers timetable regular but infrequent indoor and outdoor physical activities, including dance, gymnastic activities and games. Teachers' plans and observations, including photographs, show that these activities do take place and record what pupils have learned. There was little opportunity, due to timetable changes as a result of bad weather, to observe formal physical education lessons or the quality of teaching.
97. Children's manipulative skills develop soundly. They can use scissors and glue sticks confidently to cut and join materials. They mould play-dough and use rolling and cutting tools. They develop control in pouring in the water tray. A few children have poor pencil control skills and opportunities are missed to overcome this, especially by using supportive pencil grips and planning activities where children can explore a range of ways for mark making.
98. The opportunities for outside play are a present weakness. Although outdoor wheeled toys have been purchased, opportunities to extend pupils' physical and co-ordination skills through using these are missed. Likewise there are too few opportunities for children to use the playground and field to develop agility and for vigorous physical activities. There is an action plan that highlights this weakness and plans are being made to develop a more secure play area and a covered walkway is to be constructed from the mobile classroom to the school.

Creative development

99. Most children make sound gains in their learning and many will attain the Early Learning Goals for this area of learning by the end of the reception year. The work on display shows a good range of materials, and topics are undertaken such as seaside paintings, symmetrical patterns, pictures using shapes, harvest plate collages, paintings of themselves and a drawing of a friend. There are examples of models made including those made using construction kits. Further evidence of this was seen in photographs. Opportunities to work with mouldable materials such as play-dough and wet sand are planned in the free choice activities and children choose them regularly. Children benefit from all these activities. Children were observed planning for Teddy's birthday, making birthday cards to their own designs. The teacher provided pre-cut card and the children shared equipment well with others and chose from a range of tissue, card, string and shiny spots, which they used well to decorate their cards. Teachers' planning is thorough but insufficient emphasis is given for children to explore, develop and record their own imaginative ideas, especially in paint.
100. Teachers provide appropriate and stimulating musical activities, which help to develop children's singing, listening and rhythmic skills. For example, they enjoy listening to music and singing rhymes and action songs. There are few opportunities, however, for children to explore percussion instruments at other times and to develop their musical ideas. Pupils enjoy drama and role-play but the scope for imaginative play is limited. Opportunities are missed to enable children to develop early skills of building a character and imagining through drama how characters react, respond and show emotions. Teaching is satisfactory overall but some over-direction limits children's creative response.

ENGLISH

101. Teachers provide a wide range of learning opportunities to extend pupils' skills in speaking and listening. In the infant class, the teacher uses a wide range of vocabulary herself, introduces technical vocabulary well, for example when teaching music, and explains new words carefully. Pupils' vocabulary increases rapidly alongside their good progress in reading, as they meet new words in their reading books and talk about stories they share. Good teaching of music contributes strongly to pupils' listening skills. As a result the quality of their speaking and listening is above average by the end of Year 2. In the junior classes

progress is also good. This is because teachers provide good opportunities to answer questions, to contribute ideas and to explain what they have found out. Older pupils make especially good progress through evaluating their own and other pupils' work and through opportunities to speak more formally to the class. . They listen carefully to the teacher and to other pupils and are able to adapt their remarks to a widening range of contexts. The teacher values each contribution so that pupils are not afraid to answer questions and to add their comments in lessons. They have developed a broad vocabulary and this is being helped by their ongoing progress in reading and writing, and the introduction of technical words, for example in science and geography. Pupils achieve above average standards by the end of Year 6.

102. The infant teacher provides carefully sequenced teaching of reading. There is a clear focus on the recognition of simple, frequently used words and on the development of early phonic skills. The teacher uses good strategies to stimulate and encourage a love of reading, especially reinforcing the idea that reading is useful, enjoyable and can be fun. In a group reading activity, pupils took it in turns to read, following the text as they listened to other pupils read. The teacher supported them well by providing examples of expressive reading. She used well-chosen questions to check their understanding of the story and unfolding plot. Pupils benefit from the generally good match of reading scheme books to their levels of competence. They gradually increase their familiarity with the visual shape of common words and use letter sound skills for new words. They grow in confidence and tackle unfamiliar books competently. A firm commitment is made to encourage pupils to read individually at school and classroom assistants provide good quality reading support especially for pupils with special educational needs and other lower attaining pupils. The excellent home-school reading arrangements support this strongly. The quality of the teaching and home-school links contribute to high standards in reading by the end of Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs receive extra support and make good progress.
103. Teachers in the junior classes ensure that reading progress is maintained. Teachers provide good quality guided reading sessions. They make good opportunities for pupils to discuss their reading and to compare the styles of different authors. The enthusiasm and enjoyment of reading is developed well and the home-school links contribute to high standards. Older pupils read fluently, accurately and expressively. Higher attaining pupils recognise many complex words and show a very good understanding of character development and story structure. Most pupils know how to use the school library system to find books on different subjects and many read regularly at home. Pupils know how to use the higher order skills of skimming and scanning for accessing information. A notable feature is the effective way they make use of indexes, contents lists and glossaries in non-fiction books. This is evident throughout the key stage.
104. Book resources are satisfactory overall, but there is a need to single out some of the worn books and replace them with a new stock, especially a wider range of fiction. Money has already been earmarked for buying a new reading scheme. There is a sufficient range of non-fiction in the library and non-fiction books, relevant to topics being undertaken, are allocated to different classes. Books used in assemblies are chosen well and capture pupils' interests. They are displayed in the entrance so that pupils can read them for their own enjoyment. The library is open for pupils to use after school so that they have access to books to support their homework or follow their interests.
105. The school's focus on writing in response to its analysis of results and assessments is contributing to rising standards. Teachers now provide tasks that cover a broader range of writing. In the infant class, for example, pupils retell familiar stories and write about what they have done. The classroom support assistant is used well to help children with their writing, for example by working at the computer with a small group of pupils. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can write for many purposes, such as giving instructions, making lists and writing their own stories from their imagination. Pupils' story writing is enhanced by

opportunities to discuss settings, events and characters. It develops well and they gain confidence. Most examples include interesting words and story lines but few pupils write at length. They can write well enough to record their work in many subjects. For example, they record what they found out from a science investigation into melting. At this stage, pupils' written work includes capital letters and full stops. Sound progress is evident as they make more consistent and appropriate use of other punctuation, for example, question marks. Pupils' spelling also improves. This is a direct result of a more systematic approach. Handwriting is taught well and good attention is given to posture and pencil grip. These improvements are raising standards but a few pupils fail to use their skills other than in handwriting lessons and spelling tests. Test results last year showed that standards were average. Many pupils were just below the standard needed to achieve the higher Level 3 at the end of Year 2. This year a few pupils are already approaching this level.

106. The teacher in the upper junior class has increasingly high expectations of what pupils can do and ensures that all pupils, including higher attaining pupils, achieve well. As a result there is a significant group of pupils who reach high standards. They study how different authors handle character and plot and structure their stories. They develop their own ideas into extended creative writing. Pupils also get the opportunity to prepare for a debate on a particular issue and this also enhances their skills in taking a position in an argument for and against an issue. This was clearly seen in the preparation for a debate on the issue of foot and mouth disease. In addition, pupils are given the opportunity to prepare and write a presentation which is then given to the class. Pupils study a range of poetry and also write their own. This was the focus for the Millennium celebrations when the school published their own book of poetry. They write play scripts with scene plans and directions, combined with well-constructed dialogue written in script form. Writing also supports work on other subjects, such as science, history, design and technology and religious education. There are good opportunities for note writing in other subjects. Pupils also write book reviews and diaries, for example, following their residential visit to Wales. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are well supported by teachers and classroom support staff. These pupils make good use of lap-top computers to record and edit their work and present it to a high standard. There are generally too few opportunities throughout the school, however, for pupils to improve their writing by using computers to edit their work.
107. Better progress is evident in the upper junior class than in the lower junior class. Work completed last year shows that pupils in Years 3 and 4 tackled a narrower range of work. Large amounts of time were spent on spelling practice but this was having a marginal impact on pupils' spelling in their written work. The marking of work did not always provide pupils with the help they needed to improve. It is too soon to assess pupils' progress at this early stage in the current school year. The provision of additional literacy support for lower attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 is helping them to improve their reading and writing skills.
108. The handwriting, spelling and punctuation of junior pupils are satisfactory. Handwriting shows improvement over the key stage. It is always legible but in a few cases the presentation of pupils' work is untidy. However, pupils, especially average and higher attaining pupils, could do more to improve their own spelling. They rely too heavily on teachers to provide help with spellings and rarely use dictionaries to check words.
109. The teaching is good overall. Teachers generally have good subject expertise and their use of the National Literacy Strategy is contributing to rising standards. The quality of teaching in the infants and by the end of the juniors is strong and moves pupils on in their learning. Some particularly good features include high expectations, challenge and pace. Learning activities are usually stimulating and well matched to the prior attainment of the pupils. Small steps in learning build up confidence in pupils with special educational needs and contribute to good progress in their understanding and skills. Teachers foster good relationships and praise pupils' efforts. As a result pupils have good attitudes to learning. They are keen to learn and work at a good pace.

110. Although the majority of marking is helpful in showing pupils how they can improve, this is not always so. The school's policy is not yet fully understood and effectively used by all teachers.
111. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She has used opportunities well to observe her colleagues teaching English and has regularly monitored pupils' work. This has supported the rising standards in teaching and learning across the school. Standards have improved since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

112. Progress is inconsistent as pupils move through the school. Most pupils make good progress as they move through Years 1 and 2. However, it slows considerably in Years 3 and 4 before improving again in Years 5 and 6. Progress slowed in Years 3 and 4 last year because of unsatisfactory teaching. Pupils regularly completed work they clearly understood and which was too easy for them. The range of mathematical learning experiences was too narrow and dominated by too much number work. As a result, pupils did not make sufficient progress in developing an understanding of shape, space and measures, handling data or in trying different approaches to solving mathematical problems. This year, pupils are not making the best possible progress in Years 3 and 4 because control strategies are not secure enough to maintain a brisk pace of learning.
113. However, in all other classes, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well because:
- work is carefully matched to their different needs;
 - most planning is well focused, enabling teachers to build carefully on previous learning;
 - the way in which teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy, is helping to raise standards over time;
 - there is a good range of learning experiences;
 - teachers encourage their pupils by valuing all their contributions, seeking explanations of how they are solving problems, and marking their work carefully;
 - pupils are becoming increasingly involved in checking how they are getting on and setting targets for themselves, enabling them to understand how they can improve;
 - 'Springboard' and 'Booster' classes improve the progress and confidence of lower attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6;
 - the homework club for higher attaining pupils in Year 6 gives them additional opportunities to tackle higher level work.
114. As a result of the good progress made in the infant and upper junior classes, standards have improved since the last inspection. In particular, increasing levels of challenge have led to a significant improvement in the achievements of higher attaining pupils.
115. Most pupils achieve well in their development of understanding of number. By the end of Year 2, pupils solve number problems using mental calculation and sequence numbers to 100 in different ways, showing understanding of the place value of digits. They are beginning to use simple fractions and solve number problems using a good range of mental calculation. They achieve standards that exceed the national average. By the end of Year 6, despite earlier variable progress, pupils still reach standards that are above national levels. They are starting to use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers by 10, 100, and 1000. They use a variety of mental computations to solve number problems, and start to represent data in frequency diagrams.
116. Teaching is satisfactory in the lower junior class and good in the infant and upper junior class. Where teaching is consistently good, teachers' high expectations result in challenging work, and pupils put more effort into getting it right. Purposeful questioning develops clear understanding of new knowledge. A good choice and use of resources ensures that learning is effective. Good relationships and good pupil management ensure that no time is wasted. All these good features were seen in the Years 1 and 2 class during the inspection. Strengths outnumber weaknesses, indicating why most pupils respond well to mathematics lessons. However, teachers provide too few opportunities for 'real-life' investigations to strengthen pupils' understanding. This weakness, together with the small amount of time previously spent on data handling and shape work in the lower junior class, are the most likely reasons why standards in mathematics at the end of Year 6 are not quite as high as

they are in English and science. Better use could be made of ICT to develop pupils' learning, especially in data handling. There is further room for improvement in the quality of the mental starter and final plenary in numeracy sessions, to improve the speed of mental recall and checking with pupils what they have learned in the lesson. Not all teachers insist on well-presented work.

117. There are plans for the subject's continued development, for example, by increasing opportunities for mathematics in other subjects. There are good systems to help teachers find out what pupils know and understand, and pupils now have targets to help them learn more effectively. The headteacher is currently leading the development of mathematics. Her heavy teaching commitment reduces the amount of time available for checking the quality of teaching and learning and is impeding further improvement.

SCIENCE

118. There have been substantial improvements in the standards pupils achieve by the end of Year 6. The last inspection report describes under-achievement amongst higher attaining pupils. Recent results show that more than half the pupils achieve higher than expected levels in National Curriculum tests at eleven, and overall standards are well above average, comparing favourably with other similar schools. Pupils' of all abilities achieve well. Inspection findings confirm this improvement.

119. This has been achieved by good teaching, particularly in the upper junior class, which:

- has high expectations of what pupils can achieve and provides challenging work so that all pupils, including higher attaining pupils, make good progress;
- uses information about what pupils know, understand and can do to plan the next steps for groups of different ages, abilities and stages in the class;
- provides good opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations;
- uses pupils' knowledge of everyday science, for example, that puddles on the playground dry up, as starting points for investigations;
- uses pupils' own ideas for planning investigations to find answers to questions posed by the teacher;
- requires pupils to evaluate their own and others' work so that they see how they can improve;
- supports pupils with special educational needs well, for example by providing recording formats and going over new learning;
- includes developmental comments in the marking of pupils' work.

120. The standards that pupils achieve at the end of Year 2 have not improved to the same extent except in the materials component of their science work. Here they show good progress and thorough understanding. A good range of work has developed pupils' skills well and higher attaining pupils have achieved high standards. For example, pupils classify materials according to their properties, know how materials change when heated, cooled or shaken and whether or not these changes can be reversed. They record their findings in a good variety of ways including keeping records over time. A good start is made to work on forces and plants and animals by using the immediate environment. However, there is no evidence to indicate that standards of work in these components of science, although sound, are as good as those in the materials component. Not as much work has been accomplished and progress has not been good enough for pupils to achieve higher levels of understanding than those expected for their age. For example, after studying plants pupils did not move on to investigating conditions for growth or recording changes over time. This indicates that the overall time spent on these aspects may have been a factor. Nevertheless, pupils' progress is sound overall and they reach standards at the end of Year 2 that are broadly average.

121. The scrutiny of junior pupils' work from the last school year indicates that the quality of the learning and the progress they make varies from class to class. Progress in the upper junior class is better than in the lower junior class, largely as a result of the opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding through investigations.
122. Other areas for improvement to bring the rate of progress up to the best achieved in the upper junior class include:
- a greater clarity in lesson planning so that pupils understand what they are intended to learn in each lesson and older pupils in mixed-age classes work at higher levels;
 - better organisation of investigative work and management of pupils to improve the pace of learning;
 - more use of predicting outcomes and comparing them with findings;
 - using information books to support learning.
123. There is evidence, in past work, of data handling and sensing equipment being used to extend pupils' thinking. Pupils' numeracy and ICT skills were used particularly well in one lesson observed but there is room for improvement in terms of the regularity that this occurs in infant and both junior classes. Science contributes well to pupils' speaking and listening and writing skills through opportunities for pupils to describe what they have done and observed, and, as they get older, to explain their understanding. Inaccurate spelling of important scientific words is often not picked up and slows the development of spelling skills.
124. The headteacher is currently leading the development of science in addition to her many other areas of responsibility. There are clear and appropriate plans for improvement including better use of the immediate environment, the development of pupils' skills to devise their own experiments and introducing the checking of investigative skills to the assessment of knowledge already undertaken. There is insufficient time for the subject leader to monitor teaching and learning so that developments can be consolidated.

ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

125. These subjects are taught in rotation. It was not possible to see art and design (A & D) lessons during the inspection, as the current term's emphasis is on design and technology (D & T). Evidence was scarce in both subjects as the school retains few examples of finished models, drawings or paintings other than those displayed on classroom walls. At this early stage in the school year, displays in the junior classes showed little work in either subject. There was a wide range of artwork to examine in the infant class. The planning that infant and junior pupils had done last year for their model making was plentiful. This provided the strongest evidence for judgements about D & T. Teachers' planning, and discussions with pupils in the upper junior class about their work, provided further evidence of the range of work undertaken in both subjects.
126. Pupils in the infant classes undertake a satisfactory range of work in art. They use the computer to achieve a range of styles and finishes in their Noah's Ark pictures, showing good use of the tool bar and control of the mouse. Pupils use contrasting colours and tree silhouettes to record their ideas and capture different moods well in day and night pictures. There are some examples of very good work based on a study of Mexican art including collage and three-dimensional 'God's Eyes'. Pupils have also looked at the work of Piet Mondrian and experimented with line and blocks of colour in a similar style. By the end of Year 2 pupils' achievements are broadly in line with those found nationally in art, with some pupils reaching high standards. Teachers' planning for D & T in the infant class and records of pupils' work indicates that pupils have planned and constructed winding mechanisms, designed and made a colourful coat for the biblical character, Joseph, made puppets with

moving parts and designed and made a fruit salad. Opportunities to record how the work could be improved are used well. Teachers' plans and the development of pupils' skills indicate that both subjects are taught well. Progress in a range of skills including planning, sewing and joining is good.

127. In the junior classes, pupils' design skills have improved significantly since the last inspection. Pupils of all ability show good progress over time in the plans they have drawn, before making activities. These include increasing amount of details of tools, measurements, fixings and steps required to complete their models. Few completed items were observed but older pupils were able to talk about fitness for purpose and the importance of a good finish. There are good examples, on their plans and in lessons, of pupils evaluating and improving their work. Pupils in the upper junior class have undertaken a good range of activities including bridge designing and building, comparing different types of bread, making musical instruments and performing their own compositions on them. Pupils in the lower junior class have designed papier-mâché minibeasts, fabric money holders and pop-up Christmas cards. By the end of Year 6, pupils' achievements in D & T are broadly in line with those found nationally.
128. There is little evidence on pupils' plans of gathering ideas from a range of different sources but, in the upper junior lesson, pupils were consulting information books to give them ideas for construction of 'lifters and shifters'. This lesson was well taught and led to good progress in the lesson because:
- the teacher used her marking of the previous week's work to make important points for improvement;
 - pupils contributed their ideas well in response to searching questions and then went on to modify their plans;
 - some pupils had completed plans for homework and were at the construction stage;
 - teachers and support assistants gave good advice and taught specific skills as necessary so that pupils with special educational needs and others overcame the difficulties they encountered;
 - computers were used to help pupils with drawing and writing difficulties achieve well-presented plans;
 - good quality resources were stored and labelled to allow pupils to access them freely;
 - the many elements of the lesson were carefully planned and organised which allowed learning to proceed at a good pace.
129. Pupils showed reasonable levels of competency in the making process, consulting plans and working systematically.
130. The small amount of work retained makes it impossible to make secure judgements about standards in A & D at the end of Year 6 or the quality of teaching in the juniors. Discussions with pupils provide evidence of the work undertaken and indicate satisfactory progress and understanding. A reasonable range of work is covered. This includes both two- and three-dimensional work although the latter is not strongly represented. Pupils have had experience of using paints, pastels, crayons, natural materials and fabrics to record their ideas. They have used different pencils to achieve a range of lines, tones and shading in observational drawings. They have been taught how to use perspective and explain how it helps to give depth to a picture.
131. Pupils discussed the merits of different media and how different effects can be achieved. Their knowledge of artists and craftsmen in the locality and of a range of styles and traditions is limited. They were able to discuss briefly Van Gogh, Monet and Impressionism but they did not find it easy to use specific terminology relating to art. This is an area for improvement as is a wider experience of three-dimensional work. ICT is used infrequently to support work in A & D in the junior classes.

GEOGRAPHY

132. Pupils of all abilities make good gains in learning in most classes as they move through the school. The high standards evident at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. This is because:

- geography continues to have a high profile in school: Sufficient time is given to it to ensure that it is securely represented and there are good plans for its further development;
- teaching is mostly good. Teachers ask good questions to develop geographical knowledge and understanding, use praise well to instil confidence and enhance self-esteem and show that their own knowledge is secure, which helps pupils learn;
- questions and tasks are matched to pupils' needs and support assistants provide support to help pupils with special educational needs to overcome difficulties;
- pupils have many opportunities to develop their skills of geographical enquiry and acquire a geographical vocabulary as they move through the school;
- pupils learn many geographical facts and skills from the local area and from visits further afield, such as to Aberglaslyn in North Wales, and this helps to bring the subject alive for them;
- teachers choose resources carefully to make the subject more interesting for their pupils;
- the subject is well led by the headteacher who shows much enthusiasm for the subject and teaches it very well, setting a good example to others;
- in response to good teaching, most pupils are keen to learn, demonstrating positive attitudes which help them to make good progress overall;
- there are good links with other subjects which extend pupils' learning: for example, pupils develop note-taking skills in English and interpret geographical data in mathematics.

133. By the end of Year 2, pupils demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding in local studies and places further afield, to standards which exceed national levels. They interpret maps of Market Harborough, showing developing understanding of grid references and map keys. They show their route to school on a map, produce a graph of their findings in a good link with mathematics, and compile directions in a good link with literacy. They already have a good vocabulary, such as 'ocean', 'island', and 'weather', and know different types of houses, such as 'detached', 'bungalow' and 'maisonette'. Through a colourful study of Mexico, pupils show they have a good awareness of localities beyond their own.

134. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach high standards. They show good understanding of the work of rivers, and complete detailed, interesting and carefully presented projects on one of the world's major rivers, such as the Nile. They discover how coastal erosion is changing features of our coastline, and how it can be protected. They appreciate how Market Harborough can be damaged and how it might be improved. They do this in various ways that include considering whether the high street should be closed to traffic, compiling a questionnaire to seek people's views on this issue and sharing opinions about its changing character. They learn that West Runton and Great Bowden have similar and different characteristics. In a good link with English, pupils find out about the way of life for people living in mountainous regions of the world, such as the Alps, by studying different texts, including encyclopaedias and holiday brochures.

135. However, areas for development are still evident. These include:

- providing more depth for older pupils in the study of contrasting places outside the United Kingdom;
- extending existing links with ICT, for example through surveys, which generate data handling activities;

- checking how well pupils' skills are developing so that work builds carefully on earlier learning for all pupils.

HISTORY

136. History was not part of the teaching programme for this part of the term. Evidence was gained from teachers' plans and pupils' completed work. Pupils of all ability make sound gains in learning as they move through the school and reach standards in history, which are broadly typical of those seen in other schools because:

- teachers' planning uses national guidelines effectively;
- marking provides guidance on how to improve;
- pupils' knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past are developed soundly;
- pupils represent their developing knowledge in different ways, such as through writing in different forms, pictures, discussion and maps;
- there are developing links with literacy and ICT, such as through the researching of information from text, CD-ROMs and the Internet to support their work;
- there are opportunities to visit a museum as part of their studies.

137. By the end of Year 2, through a study of books, pictures and photographs, pupils discover differences between a Victorian and a present-day seaside resort to gain an understanding of change over time. They study the lives of famous people, such as Louis Braille. They find out about important historical events, such as the Great Fire of London. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn about Queen Boudicca, and the way of life of the Celts. By the end of Year 6, pupils have undertaken group projects to develop their knowledge and understanding of an important person, such as Adolf Hitler, Isambard Kingdom Brunel and Elvis Presley. This helps them to develop initiative and independence, which contributes to their personal development. Individual pupils are encouraged to follow up their own interests.

138. However, there are weaknesses in the learning experiences provided for pupils which prevent them from making the same good progress and reaching high standards observed at the last inspection because:

- the range of work is narrow and the amount of written work small;
- timelines and dates are insufficiently used to help develop understanding of time, especially for older pupils;
- teachers do not use objects of historical interest sufficiently to help bring the subject alive for pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

139. Progress is sound in the infant class so that, by the end of Year 2, pupils reach standards that are expected for pupils of this age. They write short stories, gaining confidence at the keyboard. They use graphics programs competently, for example to create pictures in the style of Mondrian, choosing from a range of tools to draw straight lines and filling spaces using different colours. They use other tools to complete pictures of Noah's Ark and compare them with pictures they have drawn. Good opportunities are made to help pupils, especially those with special educational needs, to improve their reading, writing and mathematical skills on the computer. Classroom assistants support them well. However, pupils use ICT infrequently to share ideas in graphs and tables as well as text.

140. By the end of Year 6 all pupils have made further progress but at too slow a rate for most of them to reach national standards. This is because:

- pupils of all abilities, including pupils with special educational needs, do not have sufficient or regular access to computers to enable them to improve their skills in all areas of the ICT curriculum at an appropriate rate for them to reach national standards. During the inspection computers were often not in use;
- teachers do not ensure that all pupils have the same opportunities for time at the computers, which results in some pupils having more access than others at present;
- all teachers are not yet equally competent and confident to teach all components of the curriculum to the required levels, although this is improving;
- record-keeping systems emphasise what has been completed rather than the skills that pupils are developing, and this prevents teachers from building carefully on previous learning;
- effective links with other subjects are evident, but are not planned often enough for pupils to practise and improve their ICT skills.

141. However, pupils have improved their word-processing skills, and many can produce, organise, amend and present ideas using computers. Some pupils are learning how to use a digital camera. As part of a design and technology bridge building project, some pupils use ICT very well to produce a graph of their findings to compare the load bearing capacities of different types of bridge, and write instructions for their plans. A group of able Year 6 pupils use computers to present data to develop understanding of the seasons. Older pupils with special educational needs use lap-top computers to help them achieve their targets. Older pupils are starting to use CD-ROMs and the Internet, to locate specific information to support their learning, such as in history. More able pupils, many of whom have computers at home, do reach national levels.

142. Standards were described as meeting expectations in the last inspection report. Pupils' skills are of a broadly similar standard now but national expectations have risen with rapid developments in ICT. Although standards are low throughout the junior classes, there is no indication that they have fallen since the last inspection. In fact, they are beginning to rise throughout the school because:

- there are clear and detailed plans for the subject's continued development, and rigorous time scales to ensure that targets are met;
- the new co-ordinator shows good qualities of leadership;
- resources are gradually being improved as finance allows;
- government funding is enabling teachers to attend training to improve the quality of their teaching.

Although resources are improving, they are barely adequate to ensure that sufficient pupils practise their ICT skills through, for example, drafting their writing in literacy and extending mathematical skills in numeracy lessons.

143. There was insufficient evidence to form a judgement about the quality of teaching during the inspection because very little direct teaching was seen. However, good teaching points are made as pupils work and clear explanations are given to help pupils make progress and overcome problems. As a result, most pupils work confidently on computers. They work well in pairs, supporting each other as they work.

MUSIC

144. The school has adopted national guidelines for music and this is beginning to improve standards. Pupils experience a range of music through listening, appraising, composing and performing, and music played during assemblies. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 indicate that their knowledge and understanding of music and composition skills are broadly in line with what is expected of pupils of this age. Pupils talk about music from other countries for example, pan-pipe music, drum beat music from Africa, banjo and Irish music. They learn about the elements of music and can distinguish between high and low, loud and soft

sounds and can refer to the musical terms of pitch and dynamics. Pupils talk about rhythm and melody and are keen on rap. They know and can name a wide range of musical instruments and sort them into percussion, wind, brass and string instruments. Pupils' own compositions encompass graphic and pictorial scores representing sea life, mood, peaceful music and rough and calm seas. They have opportunities to use a wide range of instruments including those from other cultures. It is not possible to make a judgement about their performing skills as no lessons were observed in the upper junior class.

145. In the infant class, teaching is good. Pupils experiment with musical instruments to gain a good understanding of the sounds that can be made. They know whether sounds are made by tapping, striking, scraping or blowing. The teacher uses her own voice well to ensure that pupils sing in tune. She encourages them to listen carefully to improve pitch. They work on melodic shape and dynamics to improve their performance. When they listen to music the teacher sometimes encourages pupils to clap or move to the beat so that become more proficient at keeping to the beat in their own compositions. In a series of two lessons, pupils were listening to Mexican music. The teacher introduced a good range of recordings representing different tempos and moods. Pupils are given good opportunities to discuss their response to the music, to think of music as a 'different language', to discuss mood and feelings and to make comparisons. Pupils were then asked to draw a picture of their own interpretations of the music. The following lesson built well on the earlier work, the teacher's explanations were clear and pupils were well prepared for the task. They worked in small groups, choosing pitched and non-pitched percussion instruments and creating and performing their own sound pictures. The teacher's enthusiasm and enjoyment inspires the pupils to work hard. Pupils of all abilities and ages, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Year 2 pupils, experiencing their second year in the class, achieve high standards.
146. Standards of singing vary from class to class. In the infant class, pupils' singing is well pitched and responsive. Singing in assembly is generally enthusiastic and joyful. The standard is similar to that found in most schools. The quality is better when they are accompanied by a recorded tape. They listen carefully to the pitch and warmth of the singing voices and respond well to the example set. At other times, when recorders lead the singing, pupils sing less confidently, though in tune. The emphasis in one junior lesson observed was on enjoyment rather than on quality. Pupils responded enthusiastically but the quality of singing was poor. Pupils were allowed to shout, little attention was given to improvement of pitch, tone or dynamics and progress was unsatisfactory.
147. A few pupils receive instrumental tuition, including cello and clarinet, from a visiting peripatetic music teacher. Many others play in the recorder group and sing in the choir. This broadens the musical experiences and improves the skills, including reading musical scores, of those pupils who take part. The recorder group performs with a good musical quality. Pupils play regularly to accompany hymn singing. Other groups, for example pupils playing flutes, clarinets, and percussion instruments as well as recorder groups, contribute to school music performances and dramatic productions. Pupils also entertain regularly in the community and take part in joint choir festivals with other schools.
148. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory in the juniors. It is good in the infants, where the teacher has considerable expertise, helping the pupils to make good progress. As a result, standards have improved since the last inspection at the infant stage but not at the junior stage, where teachers' subject knowledge, although adequate, is not as strong. Progress is satisfactory overall in the juniors but more variable. Resources are good and support pupils' learning well, although better use could be made of ICT to support pupils' learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

149. The school has maintained the above average standards observed during the last inspection. High standards were observed in both dance and gymnastics. Physical activities are taught well and pupils continue to have the opportunity to take part in a wide range, in spite of the increased amount of time now allocated to English and mathematics. These include gymnastics, competitive games, swimming, dance and athletics, in a rolling programme. Older pupils extend their skills further by taking part in adventurous outdoor activity during a residential week that also benefits their personal and social skills. Later this term, pupils in the upper juniors will have the opportunity to take part in a dance project with other schools, culminating in a public performance.
150. Teachers' planning is now based on recent national guidelines and the 'TOPS' scheme, and has improved further as a result. Teaching is good overall. A very good infant dance lesson was observed. Pupils make good progress in dance and gymnastic lessons. Skills are taught carefully and developed well during the lessons. For example, upper junior pupils are taught to develop a sequence on the apparatus to get down in a controlled way and to hold a balanced shape to finish, although in this lesson, there was insufficient attention to different ways of taking weight. Teachers make good use of pupils to demonstrate high standards and pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own and others' work. In this way they learn from good examples and understand how they can improve their own performance. Teachers have high expectations of what can be achieved and pupils persevere, practising and refining their techniques, extending movements into short sequences and then into longer ones. Music is used very well in dance to inspire pupils to express their imagination. Pupils learn to use different levels of movement and different parts of the body to dramatic effect.
151. Pupils are developing good collaborative skills, both in the way they handle and set up gymnastic apparatus and in the way they work with partners or small groups in dance, gymnastics and games lessons. In a lower junior games lesson, for example, pupils learn to aim for their partner's batting hand so that the return hit will be easier. The teacher pointed out that, for the purposes of batting practice, it is better to keep a rally going than to see their partner as an opponent. There were good opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their skills. A pupil with a statement of special educational needs made good progress in this lesson. He worked with a support assistant, gaining a better control of his aim so that he was able to join a small group of class members in a team activity. Relationships in all lessons encourage and reward concentration and effort and contribute to the good progress that pupils make whilst they are working. Pupils showed a sense of satisfaction and in the dance lesson, enthusiasm and real enjoyment.
152. Teachers manage their classes well, expectations are high and pupils behave well. In the upper junior gymnastics lesson, the pupils' attitudes and efforts were exemplary. There is good attention to safety and pupils respond by ensuring that they do not encroach on the space others are using or use uncontrolled movements. In most lessons, good teaching ensures that pupils warm up thoroughly, sustain energetic activity and complete cool down exercises before they return to the classroom. In one lesson, pupils were not active for long enough as the limited space in the hall meant that half the class took turns to watch whilst others practised their skills. There could have been better opportunities to maintain levels of energetic activity if this lesson had taken place outdoors.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

153. Pupils in the infant classes develop a good appreciation of the key features of religious communities, their special places of worship, their ceremonies and their distinctive clothing. They have talked and written about Old Testament characters who led their people, for example Moses and Joseph and, at the present time, they are learning about Noah. The range of recording is extended by good opportunities to paint, for example, pupils' impressions of Noah's Ark displayed in the entrance hall. Pupils of all abilities including

those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. The quality of the work covered ensures that pupils achieve the standards expected in the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus.

154. Discussions with pupils in the upper juniors revealed a sound understanding of their work in class. Pupils of all abilities could explain clearly what they had learned about Christianity. They were confident when talking about Jesus, who he was, what he did and the importance of his teaching. They understand how belief in Jesus affects peoples' lives and actions. They have gained knowledge and understanding through the nativity stories, parables told by Jesus and through learning about the Last Supper and Easter. They have learned about the events following Easter and the spread of the early church. They understand why people undertake pilgrimages. Through their visit to the Church of St Peter and St Paul and from attending the church for Ash Wednesday, Ascension and for other services, pupils learn about acts of worship and consider such features as prayer, reading the Bible and the part music plays in worship. They know why Sunday is special to Christians and are familiar with church features. They help to decorate the church for the Harvest and Christmas celebrations and write regularly for the church magazine. Progress is satisfactory in this aspect of the work and indicates sound teaching.
155. Discussions about other faiths, however, highlighted significant gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils talked about a visit to a Hindu temple and remembered some of the features. They could not recall the most important beliefs of Judaism or Islam. They had difficulty in naming any festivals, apart from those associated with the Christian faith, the stories behind them and why they were significant to believers. As a result they are unable to make comparisons, to discuss similarities and what is distinctive.
156. The scheme of work is a two-year rolling programme and is comprehensive in what is to be covered by each year. However, the work recorded in their books by junior pupils last year is small in content, especially in the lower junior class. It highlights the gaps in knowledge identified through discussions with pupils. The work on faiths other than Christianity has not been thorough enough to develop pupils' understanding. Pupils' progress and the quality of teaching in this aspect are unsatisfactory. As a result pupils are not reaching the standards expected in religious education by the time they leave the school.
157. A judgement on the quality of teaching in lessons cannot be made as only one lesson was observed. In this lesson pupils made sound progress as they studied the story of Ruth and discussed what value it held for people today. Good links were made with the following personal and social education lesson, for example how our actions can benefit others. A group of pupils recorded their ideas on the computer but there is very little other evidence of ICT being used to support the work. The school has purchased four faith boxes that include artefacts, combined with published religious education books to supplement the policy and scheme of work. There is a very good range of religious education books in the library but the use of these resources has not yet had a significant effect on raising standards.
158. The subject co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject. In addition, she has attended regular training, including how to use religious objects in teaching. As a result there has been some improvement in pupils' learning the infant class. However, she has been unable to spread her influence sufficiently to ensure similar improvements in the juniors.

