

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST MATTHEW'S (CE) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Normanton-on-Trent, Newark

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122764

Headteacher: Miss Wendy Ramshaw

Reporting inspector: Mr Paul Bennett  
2234

Dates of inspection: 19 – 21 June 2001

Inspection number: 193237

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:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Mill Lane Normanton-on-Trent Newark Notts
Postcode:	NG23 6RW
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Alison Purser
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2234	Paul Bennett	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
			Science	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
			Design and technology	How well are pupils taught?
			Geography	How well is the school led and managed?
			History	What should the school do to improve further?
			Physical education	
			Equal opportunities	
11072	Shirley Elomari	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23997	Margaret Buck	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Information and communication technology	
			Art and design	
			Music	
			Religious education	
			Foundation Stage	
			Special educational needs	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Matthew's CE Primary School is a voluntary controlled Church of England primary school. Currently, there are 51 pupils on roll aged from 4 to 11 years of age and there are almost twice as many boys as girls. The school is much smaller than average. It takes pupils from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds. Currently, no pupils are registered as entitled to free school meals which is well below the national average. No pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds and none have English as an additional language. About 20% of pupils are identified as having special educational needs which is broadly in line with the national average. No pupils have statements of special educational need. Pupils enter school with a wide range of ability and the small numbers admitted means that the overall ability of different year groups may change significantly from year-to-year. Children are admitted to the school at the beginning of the term in which they become five years of age. Records indicate that attainment on entry is broadly in line with the local county average: literacy skills are broadly average; mathematics skills tend to be below average; and social and physical skills are above average.

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

This is a good school that serves its pupils well. Standards are improving and broadly average. Pupils' attitudes to work, personal development and relationships are good. Staff care very well for the pupils. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and often good. Pupils enjoy some very good teaching at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning throughout the school. Progress is often good towards the end of Key Stage 2. Very good leadership and management by the headteacher provide a clear educational direction. The school has improved substantially in the last two years and provides value for money.

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

- Very good leadership and management by the headteacher, effectively supported by the governors, provide clear educational direction and appropriate priorities for development.
- The quality of teaching at the end of Key Stage 2 is particularly good. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well across the school.
- The excellent accommodation is well organised and well maintained. It provides a good environment for learning.
- The moral and social development of pupils; attitudes to work; and relationships are good. Pupils are very well cared for.
- Links between the school and parents are very good.

## What could be improved

- The school does not monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the curriculum in a systematic way.
- Information about pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science is not yet used consistently to plan what they will learn next. There are no whole-school procedures for assessing attainment and progress in other subjects.
- The listening skills of some boys are underdeveloped and the behaviour of these boys is sometimes not well managed. This hinders their progress in some lessons.

*The school's strengths outweigh the areas for improvement which will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Following the last inspection the school experienced a period of great instability including the prolonged absence of the headteacher and the appointment of four different acting headteachers. Standards of attainment declined and pupils' behaviour deteriorated. Key issues arising from the last inspection were not addressed systematically. Since the appointment of the current headteacher in 1999, substantial improvements have been made. The leadership and management of the headteacher and governors provide a clear sense of direction. The school is now well managed. The learning environment is well organised and attractive. National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented successfully. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed compared with over 20% at the time of the last inspection. The re-organisation of teaching groups in Key Stage 2 is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' attainment which has improved significantly since 1997. An effective curriculum framework and schemes of work have been introduced. More opportunities have been provided for spiritual and cultural development. Strategies for assessment, target setting and monitoring and evaluating the school's performance have been introduced but do not yet have sufficient impact on the quality of teaching and standards of attainment. The hard work and commitment of the headteacher, staff and governors indicate that the school has good capacity to improve further.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	D	B	C
mathematics	A	E	E	E
science	C	E	D	E

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average   E

The previous table indicates that in statutory tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000 standards of



attainment were above the national average in English; below average in science; and well below average in mathematics. Year groups within the school are very small and the performance of individual pupils can have a significant impact upon the overall grades recorded above. Results may fluctuate considerably from one year group to the next and the above grades may not be reliable indicators of overall trends in performance.

Children make sound progress in all areas of learning throughout the Foundation Stage. By the end of the Reception Year, most children reach the level of attainment expected nationally in Early Learning Goals for communications, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. Children's personal, social and emotional development is above national expectations.

Attainment in the current Year 6, where there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, is below the national average. However, these pupils have made often good progress in the last two years and achieve well in relation to their previous attainment. Standards of attainment are improving across the rest of the school and are broadly in line with national averages in Key Stages 1 and 2 in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, geography, history and religious education. No judgements could be made about attainment in music and physical education.

Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make at least satisfactory progress throughout the school. High attaining pupils also make satisfactory progress although, on occasions, they are given work that is too easy for them.

## **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes are good. Pupils are usually attentive and responsive in lessons. They are interested in their work and concentrate well on individual and group tasks.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good overall. Most pupils are polite and well-mannered. A small number of boys behave inappropriately in some lessons.
Personal development and relationships	The school has a warm, caring and positive ethos, enhanced by the good quality of relationships.
Attendance	Attendance is good and the great majority of pupils arrive punctually for the start of the school day.

The majority of pupils understand what is expected of them and respond well to the praise and encouragement they receive. Occasionally, some boys do not listen carefully enough to instructions or dominate oral work by calling out. At times their behaviour at playtimes and lunchtimes is too boisterous and rowdy.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged up to 5 years</b>	<b>aged 5-7 years</b>	<b>Aged 7-11 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good

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

During the course of the inspection 20 lessons or part-lessons were observed. Teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in all the lessons; it was good or better in half of the lessons; and very good in 3 lessons (15%). There was no unsatisfactory teaching which represents a very significant improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching for the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory with many positive features. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good overall. Overall, the teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory with some good and very good features.

Across the school the best lessons were planned in detail with clear and well-focused learning objectives that were communicated to the pupils. Teachers had good subject knowledge and used the technical vocabulary of the subject effectively. They had high expectations for the quality and quantity of work to be produced. Tasks and activities were matched well to the range of age and ability within the class and resources were well organised. High attaining pupils had to think and work hard to complete tasks successfully. Pupils with special educational needs were given well-planned tasks and benefited from focused teaching by the class teacher or specific support from an additional adult. Relationships between teachers and pupils were good and behaviour was well managed. Lessons were conducted at a good pace and effective use was made of teaching time. Pupils responded well to the teaching in these lessons and made good progress. They were interested in the tasks and concentrated hard whether working individually or in groups. Occasionally, homework was well used to support learning within the lesson.

When teaching was less effective, in a very small number of lessons, the behaviour of some boys was not well managed. Immature behaviour slowed the pace of teaching and learning. Some lessons did not end with an effective review of what had been learned. Occasionally, activities did not require the higher attaining pupils to think hard enough. As a result, while progress was satisfactory overall, some pupils did not make as much progress as they could have done.

## **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school offers pupils a broad curriculum that meets the requirements for the National Curriculum, religious education, personal, social and health education, sex education and drugs education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes effective provision for pupils with special educational needs. Good individual programmes are in place with clear targets for learning. Work is matched well to their needs and abilities in most lessons.
<b>Aspect (contd.)</b>	<b>Comment</b>

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. Staff and pupils have worked together to create a good behaviour policy. Pupils enjoy being given responsibility for tasks around school and carry these out enthusiastically.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Overall, the school provides a very good level of care for the well-being of its pupils. The school has sound procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science but not in other subjects.

The school has focused much recent development on implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and a substantial proportion of curriculum time is given to these subjects. Appropriate time is allocated to other subjects. The school provides a good framework to guide the personal development of its pupils and enables them to contribute to the life of the school community. The school has recognised the weaknesses in its procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. This is identified as a priority for improvement.

Relationships with parents are a strength of the school. Parents are satisfied with the standards achieved and the encouragement the school and its teachers give to their children. Parents are kept well informed about the daily life of the school.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, ably supported by a hard working and committed staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors play an active role in the school; fulfil their statutory responsibilities well; and give good support to the headteacher and staff.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Although the headteacher and governors are aware of the school's strengths and key areas for improvement, they have yet to implement a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating performance.
The strategic use of resources	The school has appropriate levels of staffing for its size; resources for learning are adequate; and the accommodation is excellent. Finances are well managed and the school makes good use of its resources.

The school has emerged from a period of considerable instability following the last inspection. It is now very well led and managed. The headteacher and governors recognise the need to introduce a more structured approach to monitoring school performance.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pupils are happy and well-cared-for.</li><li>• Pupils make good progress.</li><li>• Behaviour is good.</li><li>• Teaching is good and pupils are expected to work hard.</li><li>• Parents are kept well informed and encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school.</li><li>• The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher.</li><li>• The school has improved significantly in the last two years.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The setting of homework is seen as inconsistent across the school.</li><li>• Many parents feel that there are too few opportunities for learning outside lessons.</li></ul>

The inspection team agrees with the many positive comments about the school made by parents. While behaviour is generally good in lessons, inspectors feel that the behaviour of a small number of boys could be improved in some lessons and at playtimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors agree that there is not a consistent approach to setting homework and the school would benefit from developing a clear homework policy and sharing it with parents.

A considerable number of parents are concerned that the school does not provide a range of interesting activities outside lessons. The school has sought to provide a good range of activities, with the exception of music, and outside providers have been encouraged to run out-of-school activities. The school tries hard to ensure that pupils broaden their experiences, for example through educational visits to the theatre, Southwell Minster and other places of interest.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 The inspection took place in June 2001 after the statutory assessments for seven and eleven-year-olds had been completed but before results had been published. Therefore, while there is strong evidence of the attainment of pupils currently reaching the end of Years 2 and 6, national comparisons are made against the results of statutory assessments in 2000. Great caution is needed in interpreting these results because of the very small number of pupils in each year group. For example, the performance of just one pupil could mean that the judgement about the year group's overall performance in a subject changes from below average to well above average. Furthermore, because the ability profile of year groups changes from one year to the next, one year group's results may not be reliable indicators of trends in performance. It should also be noted that the disproportionately large percentage of boys in the school has a negative impact on comparative attainment in relation to schools nationally and similar schools who are likely to have larger proportions of generally higher attaining girls.
- 2 Evidence of attainment and progress was also gathered through lesson observations, examples of pupils' work in each year group, work on display in classrooms and corridors, teachers' planning and assessment folders and discussions with pupils and teachers.
- 3 ***Children enter school with a wide range of attainment and ability. They make satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 2 overall attainment is similar to the national average. Pupils make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 2 and in most year groups attainment reflects the national average. However, standards of attainment at the end of Year 6 are currently below average.***
- 4 The present Year 6 group comprises only five pupils, two of whom were absent for most of the inspection. This year group has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are making good progress in relation to their previous achievements.
- 5 Children are admitted to the Reception class at the start of the term in which they become five years of age. The Nottinghamshire baseline assessment process is used to establish attainment on entry to school. The data show that children enter school with a broad range of ability, including high-attaining children and those with special educational needs. There are significant variations between year groups from one year to the next. Overall, children's social and physical development is above average; their language and literacy development is broadly average and their mathematical development is below average. Girls' average scores are higher than boys in literacy, mathematics, social and physical development.
- 6 Children make sound progress in all areas of learning throughout the Foundation

Stage. By the end of the Reception Year, most children reach the level of attainment described in Early Learning Goals for communications, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. Children's personal, social and emotional development is generally above the national average.

- 7 ***Overall, standards in English are broadly in line with those found in primary schools nationally. There is evidence of higher levels of attainment, particularly in Year 2, Year 4 and Year 5. However, in the current Year 6 standards are below the national average.***
- 8 The results of statutory assessment for seven-year-olds in 2000 indicate that overall attainment was below the national average in reading and broadly in line in writing. When compared with similar schools, results in reading and writing were well below average. The percentage of pupils (100%) achieving the expected Level 2 in writing was very high. However, no pupils attained the highest level (Level 3) in reading or writing which was respectively very low and well below average when compared with all schools. In reading, 80% attained Level 2 which was below the national average. However, had one more pupil attained Level 2, the school's results would have been very high when compared with schools nationally. In the last two years, boys have attained better than boys nationally in writing but worse in reading. Girls have attained better standards than girls nationally and significantly better than boys within the school in the last two years. Again, the very small numbers of pupils mean that these statistics have to be treated with caution.
- 9 The results of the statutory tests for eleven-year-olds in English indicate that attainment was above average when compared with all schools and broadly in line with similar schools. The number achieving the higher level (Level 5) was well above average when compared with all schools and broadly average in comparison with similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000, unusually there were more girls than boys. Over the last three years the performance of boys and girls has fluctuated and there are no significant gender trends.
- 10 ***By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is broadly average.*** In Key Stage 1 pupils show confidence in talking with adults and sharing ideas in small groups and with the class. They use sentences and descriptive language to share their experiences and feelings. Most pupils listen carefully, but a minority of the boys finds it hard to pay attention to the teacher and sustain concentration. Progress in speaking and listening through Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall.
- 11 In Key Stage 2 pupils speak with increasing confidence, in lessons, and most listen carefully to explanations and instructions. A few have a good sense of audience and adapt their talking to respond well to their classmates, teachers, and visitors to school. Overall progress is satisfactory but when teaching is good or very good – for example, at the end of the key stage - pupils pay very careful attention to the teacher and listen well to each other when carrying out group tasks. Here they make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills.

- 12 ***Attainment in reading is broadly average when compared with seven-year-olds nationally.*** Pupils read simple sentences in their reading books with increasing accuracy and understanding. The higher attaining pupils read with fluency and expression; and pass opinions about what they have read, including their favourite stories read at home. Overall, progress is satisfactory. Some pupils benefit from good support in sharing reading at home and regular visits to the library.
- 13 ***In Year 6, attainment in reading is below the national average.*** Proportionally there are more pupils with special educational needs in this year group. Some pupils often halt their reading to attempt unknown words using strategies they have been taught, such as breaking words into syllables and reading on for meaning. Some are more fluent but less confident in understanding and recalling significant aspects of the story or characters. In other year groups, attainment in reading is broadly in line with national expectations and higher attaining pupils in Years 4 and 5 read with expression; infer and deduce meaning; and support their views with reference to the text. Overall progress is satisfactory, including Year 6 where the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- 14 ***At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in writing is broadly average when compared with seven-year-olds nationally.*** Generally, written work shows some characteristics of different forms, for example story openings are used appropriately. Punctuation of sentences is increasingly accurate and spellings are correct or reflect pupils' knowledge of letter sounds. Handwriting is not always well formed and sometimes presentation is untidy. During the year, pupils write for a range of purposes, including stories, accounts, instructions and labels, and practise skills such as spellings and handwriting. Progress in writing, over time, across the key stage, is satisfactory.
- 15 ***The standard of writing in Year 6 is below the national average.*** Pupils practise handwriting, and writing skills and techniques, such as using metaphors and synonyms. Handwriting is increasingly joined but often lacks good control and sometimes work in books is untidy. Writing in other year groups in Key Stage 2 is broadly in line with standards nationally and there is evidence that some pupils are achieving higher levels of performance than the average for their age. Progress over time is satisfactory and pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- 16 Overall, the progress made by pupils, in all aspects of English, as they move through the school, is satisfactory. Pupils have a positive attitude to their work and the majority show increasing levels of concentration and perseverance, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2. A small number of boys in Key Stage 1, and in the earlier years of Key Stage 2, find it hard to listen, but at the end of the key stage, where there are significantly more boys than girls, pupils listen attentively and stay on task.
- 17 ***Overall, standards in mathematics are broadly average. While attainment in the current Year 6 is below that expected nationally, standards across the rest of the school reflect the national average. Some pupils, in Years 2, 4 and 5 particularly, achieve above average standards of attainment.***
- 18 The results of statutory assessments for seven-year-olds in 2000 indicate that overall attainment was broadly average in comparison with schools nationally but well below that of similar schools. Attainment at the expected Level 2 (100%) was very high in

comparison to schools nationally and similar schools but it was very low (0%) at the higher Level 3. Nevertheless, results have improved markedly since 1998. Boys have performed significantly worse than boys nationally for the last three years whereas girls have performed better than girls nationally and boys in school for the last two years.

- 19 Evidence from lesson observations and pupils' books indicates that pupils in the current Year 2 are working at the expected Level 2 and some are achieving the higher Level 3. Pupils have a sound understanding of the relative values of hundreds, tens and units up to 1000. Some pupils are confident in recognising numbers above 1000. They can recognise simple fractions such as halves and quarters and they can identify common two and three-dimensional shapes.
- 20 In Key Stage 1 pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and work is often well matched to their needs. Higher attaining pupils make generally satisfactory progress but on occasions they are given tasks which are too easy and which do not extend their learning sufficiently. The attainment of a small number of boys in mathematics is sometimes constrained by poor listening skills and low levels of concentration.
- 21 At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000, the results of statutory tests for eleven-year-olds in mathematics indicate that performance was well below that of schools nationally and similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 (60%) was well below average whereas the proportion attaining the higher Level 5 (20%) was close to the national average. The small number of pupils in each year group has led to overall results fluctuating from year-to-year. While attainment remains below the national average, there has been a trend of improvement since 1997. Girls tend to perform worse than girls nationally, although their rate of improvement has been better than the national rate.
- 22 Evidence from lesson observations, pupils' work and discussions with pupils indicates that standards of attainment in the current Year 6 are generally below the national average. These pupils are not confident when using mental computations, especially multiplication and division, to solve number problems. However, some Year 5 pupils use mental computations confidently and their attainment is above average. These pupils also demonstrate a secure understanding of fractions, decimals, simple percentages and ratios. They can calculate the perimeters of shapes and have developed formulae for calculating the area of squares and rectangles.
- 23 In both key stages there are examples of carefully presented work. However, standards of presentation are variable and in general expectations for the quality of presentation are too low.
- 24 In Key Stage 2 pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory and sometimes good progress. They are well supported in lessons. Higher attaining pupils make generally satisfactory progress and attain standards above national expectations. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls at the end of the key stage.
- 25 ***In Key Stage 1 standards of attainment in science are broadly average for those***



*found in primary schools nationally. Although attainment in the current Year 6 is below average, elsewhere in Key Stage 2 standards reflect the national average and there are examples of above average attainment.*

- 26 The results of teacher assessments for seven-year-olds in 2000 indicate that attainment was very high at the expected Level 2 (100%) but well below average at the higher Level 3 when compared with schools nationally and similar schools. Attainment in experimental and investigative science was particularly low. Evidence from lesson observations and pupils' work in 2001 indicates that attainment across Key Stage 1 is broadly average with some examples of work at the higher Level 3.
- 27 At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000, the results of statutory tests for eleven-year-olds in science indicate that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 (70%) was well below average whereas the proportion attaining the higher Level 5 (30%) was close to the national average. Overall results have improved significantly since 1997. The performance of girls has improved markedly since 1997 at a much better rate than that seen nationally, whereas there has been little change in the overall performance of boys since 1997 against a national trend of improvement.
- 28 Evidence from lesson observations, pupils' work and discussions with pupils indicates that current attainment in Key Stage 2 reflects the national average and that some pupils are now attaining above the expected level for their age. In Year 6 most of the pupils are working at Level 4 and some Year 5 pupils are already achieving this. For example, in conversation with an inspector, Year 5 and 6 pupils could describe accurately the main functions of a leaf and were aware of the term 'photosynthesis'; they understood the processes of filtration and evaporation and could identify situations when these would be appropriate; they talked knowledgeably about the significance of light reflecting and sound vibrating; and they were able to describe the key principles of fair testing. Pupils' work includes clearly written reports of investigations with appropriate conclusions. Sometimes opportunities are not provided to record predictions or hypotheses.
- 29 Across the school pupils of all abilities make generally satisfactory, and sometimes good progress in science. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively and higher attaining pupils are given appropriately challenging tasks. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.
- 30 ***The school has set appropriately challenging targets for individual pupils and used these to produce statutory targets for each year group's performance in national tests in English and mathematics.*** The small numbers of pupils involved renders the year group targets fairly meaningless and the school rightly focuses attention upon the attainment and progress of individual pupils. The school has analysed the results of statutory tests and other tests to identify where improvements need to be made in teaching and learning. The school is on course to meet the targets set for individual pupils.
- 31 ***Overall, standards in information and communication technology are broadly average when compared with those found in primary schools nationally.*** By the age of seven pupils attain standards in that are generally in line with those expected for

pupils of this age group. However, in the current Year 6 standards are below average. This reflects both the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group, and the lack of a clear structure for teaching information and communication technology in previous years. The school now benefits from a well-planned curriculum which ensures that learning experiences build progressively from one year to the next. Evidence gathered during the inspection from lesson observations, scrutiny of work in pupils' books and discussion with pupils and staff indicates that standards are improving across the school. Pupils are making at least satisfactory progress in developing information and communication technology skills. Progress is often good towards the end of Key Stage 2.

- 32 ***By the age of seven and eleven pupils attain standards in religious education that are broadly average.*** They make at least satisfactory progress as they move through the school and good links are made with some other subjects, such as English.
- 33 ***Standards of attainment are average in both Key Stages 1 and 2 in art and design, design and technology, geography and history.*** There are some examples of good work in design and technology in Key Stage 2. Standards in the current Year 6 tend to be below average.
- 34 ***During the inspection, there was too little evidence of pupils' work and performance in music and physical education to make a secure judgement about standards of attainment.***
- 35 ***Pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are developed effectively across the curriculum.*** There is evidence of a good range and quality of writing in history, geography and science. Mathematical development relates mainly to measurement and data handling in science. Across the school, standards of presentation and handwriting are variable and often not as good as they should be.
- 36 ***In general, pupils' progress in their learning, and the gains they make in knowledge, skills and understanding in lessons, are at least satisfactory and often good across the school.*** They are provided with a range of interesting learning experiences in a bright and attractive environment. They respond well in most lessons and work with sustained concentration. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. They often make good progress in Key Stage 2. Their progress is supported by the inclusive approach of the school; the good quality of relationships between adults and pupils; well-focused individual education plans; the relatively small size of teaching groups in Key Stage 2; and the high quality of teaching at the end of Key Stage 2. Higher attaining pupils make similar progress for many of the same reasons. However, their progress is sometimes not so marked because on occasions the tasks set for them do not extend their learning sufficiently.
- 37 ***Overall, there is no significant difference in the performance of most boys and girls.*** Both boys and girls feature among pupils with special educational needs and high attaining pupils. At times the progress of a small number of boys within lessons is hindered by under-developed listening skills and immature behaviour. This is much less evident at the end of Key Stage 2.

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

- 38 *Pupils' attitudes to learning are good throughout the school. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good overall but a small number of boys do not always behave as well as they could. The school has a warm, caring and positive ethos, enhanced by the good quality of relationships. Pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility for tasks around school and they undertake these enthusiastically. The majority of pupils understand what is expected of them and respond well to the praise and encouragement they receive. Attendance is good.*
- 39 Pupils are keen to come to school as they enjoy the lessons and planned activities. The purposeful start to the day has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to learning and they settle quickly to their work. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire stated that their children like school. Pupils have a positive attitude to their work and often show enthusiasm for it. For example, in a Years 5 and 6 English lesson, they enjoyed learning about different customs, attitudes and beliefs. They take a pride in having their work on display, particularly when the work is mounted and framed for all to see. Most pupils are attentive and responsive in lessons, concentrate well and try to complete their work. Children under five and pupils with special educational needs share these positive attitudes and usually behave well.
- 40 Behaviour in lessons was judged to be very good at the time of the previous inspection. Since then, there is evidence that behaviour deteriorated during the period of staff instability. Behaviour over the last two years has improved significantly and currently behaviour in lessons is good overall. In none of the lessons observed during the inspection was behaviour unsatisfactory. Of the five lessons observed in Key Stage 1, behaviour was good in three lessons and satisfactory in the other two. Ten lessons were observed in Key Stage 2. Behaviour was satisfactory in two of these; good in five; and very good in three. However, in a few lessons the inappropriate and immature behaviour of a small number of boys marred the otherwise high standards. At times boys dominate the lessons by calling out, instead of putting up their hands and waiting for the teacher to invite their contributions. Some boys find it hard to listen attentively to the teacher, or to their peers, and this leads to some disruption, especially when the teacher does not ensure their attention. Often, however, other pupils do not allow themselves to be distracted. In those lessons where behaviour was very good, this clearly related to the high expectations set by the teacher. The good behaviour in lessons makes a positive contribution to learning for the great majority of pupils; but, for a number of boys, poor listening skills lead to inattention and less effective learning.
- 41 Behaviour at breaks and lunchtimes is satisfactory overall. Almost all girls behave well and play harmoniously together, but boys' behaviour is sometimes boisterous and rowdy, especially when they are outside. Although almost all pupils are well mannered, noise levels in the dining hall can be unduly high. Movement around the school is well supervised and orderly. Pupils are almost always polite to one another and to adults. They enjoy talking to visitors and are confident to do so. Many play well and harmoniously together. They look after their own property well and show due respect for the school's books and other resources. There have been no exclusions in the last school year.

- 42 When pupils are given the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning, they respond well. In lessons pupils worked well together and most continued to work hard even when not directly supervised by the teacher. For example, during a Key Stage 2 science lesson, two pupils worked sensibly together, for half an hour, on a computer in an adjoining teaching area, researching information, without the direct intervention of the teacher. Pupils are willing to help their teachers by distributing books and other equipment, and by tidying the classroom at the end of lessons. The school provides a range of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility - for example giving out hymnbooks and looking after the outdoor play equipment. Pupils are consulted and involved in the school community - for example, they helped to write the classroom rules.
- 43 The school is successful in fostering good personal development of pupils. They learn to co-operate with others through working together in pairs and small groups. Throughout the school, pupils have a good range of opportunities to discuss their feelings and responses and begin to listen with respect to the views of others. Pupils are willing to help one another. They usually share books and equipment sensibly.
- 44 Relationships are generally good and, in some cases, they are very good. Almost all pupils co-operate well with each other. However, a small number of boys have a limited understanding of the impact of their words and actions on others, and this leads to some inappropriate name-calling and boisterous physical activity. Instances of serious bullying are infrequent. Pupils understand the importance of reporting bullying to staff and are confident that teachers and other staff take their concerns seriously.
- 45 Attendance is well above the national average, and unauthorised absence is low. This good level of attendance clearly supports learning and the progress that pupils make across the school. The majority of pupils attend punctually but there is some lateness in the mornings, not all of which is related to transport difficulties.

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

- 46 Pupils are organised into two class groups – a Key Stage 1 class comprising Reception, Year 1 and Year 2; and a Key Stage 2 class with Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Currently, the Key Stage 2 class is divided into two teaching groups (Years 3/4 and Years 5/6) for literacy and numeracy lessons. Three teachers share the teaching responsibility in Key Stage 2, on a part-time basis, while one teacher is responsible for teaching the whole curriculum in Key Stage 1.
- 47 ***The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching for the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory with many positive features. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good overall. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning throughout the school. Progress is often good towards the end of Key Stage 2.***
- 48 During the course of the inspection 20 lessons or part-lessons were observed. Teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in all the lessons; it was good or better in half of the lessons; and very good in three lessons (15%). There was no unsatisfactory teaching which represents a very significant improvement since the last

inspection.

- 49 In the Foundation Stage (Reception Year) five lessons were observed and the quality of teaching was good in two and satisfactory in three. In Key Stage 1, five lessons were observed and the quality of teaching was good in one and satisfactory in four. The teacher has good subject knowledge and plans lessons well. Relationships with pupils are good but occasionally expectations for boys' listening skills are not sufficiently high. Numeracy, reading and science skills are taught well. Activities are well organised and appropriate resources are used. Pupils are encouraged to feel safe, secure and confident and they experience an appropriate range of interesting learning opportunities. Overall, the quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 was judged to be satisfactory.
- 50 In Key Stage 2 ten lessons were observed from three different teachers. The quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good. Three lessons were judged to be very good; four were good; and three were satisfactory. Teachers planned lessons in detail with well-focused learning objectives. Tasks were well organised and matched thoughtfully to the age and ability of the pupils. In the best lessons, the teacher's energy and enthusiasm interested and engaged the pupils. Occasionally, the inappropriate behaviour of a small number of boys slowed the pace of teaching and learning. Overall the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 was good.
- 51 ***Overall teaching in English is satisfactory with some good and very good features. In the five lessons observed the overall quality of teaching ranged from very good to satisfactory. The school has implemented successfully the National Literacy Strategy and literacy skills are taught well.***
- 52 All teaching observed followed the guidance set out in the national programme for teaching literacy and the use of the strategy is raising standards, particularly in writing. Teachers generally had good subject knowledge and understanding of terminology used to teach literacy. Lessons were carefully planned, with sound objectives that were usually shared with pupils to good effect. When teaching was less effective, the behaviour of some boys was not well managed. This slowed the pace of lessons and prevented other pupils making a contribution. On other occasions, higher attaining pupils were not always challenged appropriately to enable them to progress at a faster rate. At the end of some lessons teachers encouraged pupils to share what they had done, but did not discuss what had been learned. Consequently, there were missed opportunities to reinforce key teaching points and assess pupils' learning.
- 53 ***Overall, numeracy skills are taught well. The school has implemented effectively the National Numeracy Strategy and the quality of teaching in mathematics has improved significantly since the last inspection. Teaching in all the five lessons observed was at least satisfactory, with many positive features; and it was good in two lessons.***
- 54 In both key stages lessons followed the structure of the numeracy strategy and commenced with well-paced mental and oral sessions. At best these sessions were directed at the whole class and contained questions or tasks pitched at the level of the different ages and abilities of the class. In the Key Stage 1 class, the teacher made

good use of the counting stick to encourage counting within 10 and 100 and all pupils were engaged in the activity. On less successful occasions, the activities were directed at individuals and the majority of pupils were not engaged in trying to answer the task. In one lesson with Year 5 and 6 pupils the mental oral work, involving counting in 3s and 9s, linked very well with the main focus of the lesson on ratio.

- 55 ***The quality of teaching in science is at least satisfactory overall. Evidence from lesson observations and pupils' work indicates that teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and in Key Stage 2 it is good and sometimes very good.***
- 56 During the inspection two science lessons were observed, one in each key stage. In Key Stage 1 the teaching was satisfactory and in Key Stage 2 it was very good. Both lessons were planned in detail with clear objectives which were explained to the pupils. Lessons began with an introduction which reviewed effectively previous learning and reinforced key vocabulary. In Key Stage 2 particularly good use was made of well-focused questions to develop pupils' understanding of the term 'habitat' and of the distinction between 'physical location' and 'physical conditions'. In both lessons the teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge relating to plants and animals and made appropriate reference to health and safety issues – for example washing hands after working with plants.
- 57 ***During the inspection two lessons in information and communication technology were observed. The teaching in Key Stage 1 was satisfactory with some good features. In Key Stage 2 the teaching was good.***
- 58 Teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and were confident in the use of technical language and demonstration. Clear objectives focused the learning and encouraged pupils to pay attention. Good relationships, firm management and clear expectations about careful listening helped keep pupils on task. Good questioning and encouragement for pupils to predict ahead, by asking 'Guess what will happen next?', enabled pupils to draw on their previous learning and offer sensible suggestions. Unfortunately, in Key Stage 1 the learning potential of the activity modelled by the teacher was not fully realised because the computer screen was too small for all pupils to see clearly. In both lessons, there was limited opportunity for pupils to use and apply the teaching with only one computer available for use.
- 59 ***During the inspection two religious education lessons were observed; one in either key stage. The quality of teaching was good in both lessons.***
- 60 Teachers had good subject knowledge and good knowledge of pupils, which enabled them to move the learning beyond factual knowledge into an exploration of feelings and values. Clear learning objectives provided a good focus for discussions which ensured that the purpose of the lesson was achieved. Good quality questioning engaged less confident, older pupils in Key Stage 2 and helped pupils in Key Stage 1 to listen respectfully as each of them took turns to make a contribution to the lesson. Strong relationships ensured that pupils were comfortable and confident talking about personal views and feelings. In Key Stage 1 forward planning of homework was used very effectively as a foundation for discussion in the lesson. Consequently, pupils were well prepared to talk about whom they admire and why. In Key Stage 2 good story reading interested and focused pupils' attention, especially boys. There were some

missed opportunities to stretch the more able with more challenging questions. A very small number of boys did not apply themselves well to the independent tasks and did not achieve as much as they should have done.

- 61 ***During the inspection no lessons were observed in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. It is not possible to make judgements on the quality of teaching in these subjects.***
- 62 Across the school ***the best lessons*** were characterised by the teachers' good subject knowledge and appropriate use of subject vocabulary. These lessons were planned in detail with clear and well-focused learning objectives that were communicated to the whole class or groups of pupils, as appropriate. Teachers had high expectations for the quality and quantity of work to be produced. Lessons were well-structured to the frameworks of national strategies and included clear introductions; focused direct teaching; group and independent work; and plenary sessions which drew the learning experiences together, reinforced key objectives and identified the next steps in learning. Tasks and activities were matched well to the range of age and ability within the class and resources were well organised. Pupils with special educational needs were given well-planned tasks and benefited from focused teaching by the class teacher or specific support from an additional adult. Relationships between teachers and pupils were good and behaviour was well managed. Lessons were conducted at a good pace and effective use was made of teaching time. Occasionally, homework was well used to support learning within the lesson.
- 63 When ***teaching was less effective***, the behaviour of a few boys was not well managed and they were either allowed to dominate oral work by calling out or did not listen to instructions and explanations. Sometimes their unsatisfactory behaviour resulted from inappropriate seating arrangements. For example, in Key Stage 1 some of the focused teaching took place on the carpet where pupils had to clamber over each other to access the whiteboard or other resources. This gave opportunities for immature behaviour and slowed the pace of teaching and learning. In some lessons, plenary sessions were too short or simply invited pupils to 'show and tell' what they had done rather than focusing on key objectives and assessing learning. Sometimes activities lacked sufficient challenge and did not extend the learning of higher attaining pupils.
- 64 ***In lessons, all pupils show generally positive attitudes to learning and make satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and the early years of Key Stage 2. They often make good progress in lessons in Years 5 and 6. Pupils are helped by the positive feedback that they receive from teachers. The work that they are given does not always take enough account of what they have already learned.***
- 65 Across the school lessons are planned well and draw upon national guidance. This helps to ensure that teaching builds effectively upon previous learning. In the best lessons, teachers reviewed what pupils already knew and made clear connections with the work that they were about to undertake. The planned tasks either consolidated effectively or introduced new skills and knowledge. It was not always clear, in pupils' work and lessons in subjects other than English and mathematics, how activities took account of pupils' previous learning. Few assessments are made in these other subjects and little information about pupils' attainment and progress is recorded. In most

lessons, pupils of all abilities had to work with sustained concentration to complete tasks successfully. They were able to work independently when required to but also worked well together in pairs or groups when tasks demanded this.

- 66 During lessons teachers, through focused group teaching or individual support, gave pupils appropriate feedback on the quality of their work and how it might be improved. On occasions, teachers did not reinforce sufficiently their expectations for behaviour or inform boys clearly enough when their behaviour was inappropriate. The best plenary sessions included good reviews of the learning that had taken place and linked to future learning. While books are marked up-to-date and teachers' written comments are positive in tone, these comments often do not include sufficient subject related advice about the next steps in learning. Some teachers have started to use successfully a 'box and bubble' approach to marking in English and mathematics, in particular. This technique enables teachers to tell pupils how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. Its use was evident where teaching was most effective.

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

- 67 *The school provides a satisfactory range of worthwhile learning opportunities for pupils. All aspects of the National Curriculum are taught along with religious education, personal, social and health education, sex education and drugs education. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced; however, music does not feature strongly in the life of the school. The school has rightly focused on raising standards in the skills of English and mathematics.*
- 68 Teachers have worked hard to improve the curriculum since the last inspection. The planning for English and mathematics takes account of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. This is having a good impact on the quality of teaching and learning. In Key Stages 1 and 2, curricular opportunities are planned carefully so that pupils progress in learning year-on-year. The rolling programme of teaching topics provides a two-year or four-year cycle, depending on the subject, for teaching all subjects, except literacy and numeracy, to mixed-age classes. The national schemes of work, provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), are used to produce detailed plans relating to sequences of lessons. However, teachers' plans often do not identify assessment opportunities relating to the key learning objectives of specific lessons. The relationship between assessment and planning the next steps in learning is not securely developed in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- 69 In keeping with most schools nationally, the school allocates a large proportion of teaching time to literacy and numeracy. Within this constraint, the time allocated to other subjects is appropriate and reflects national trends, although additional time is spent on physical education in order to allow for travelling time to and from the swimming pool in Newark. Altogether, nearly 23 hours per week is designated as teaching time across the whole school. This is above the national average in Key Stage 1 but below average and below national guidance for Key Stage 2.
- 70 In the Foundation Stage, the national guidance is used effectively to plan realistic, manageable and appropriate learning opportunities across most areas of learning in



mixed-age class. At present the school has given priority to implementing the Foundation Stage Curriculum and has adapted sensibly the national programmes for literacy and numeracy to meet the needs of children in the Reception Year. A similar approach is used in other subjects to plan appropriate learning experiences for children in the Foundation Stage, while planning subject specific learning for older pupils in the class.

- 71 The school's strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are effective. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented and adapted thoughtfully to meet the ages and abilities of pupils in the two mixed-age classes. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 and in Years 5 and 6 are split into two smaller groups for literacy and numeracy lessons and this is proving successful in meeting pupils' needs and raising standards. Good links are made with other subjects, so pupils use and apply the skills they learn, for example in history and science.
- 72 Given the number of staff and the responsibilities they share between them, the school, supported by members of the local community, provides a sound range of learning opportunities outside the classroom. These include: history workshops; regular visits to St Matthew's Church; 'Bikeability'; visits to Southwell Minster, a Sikh temple and a synagogue; and football, when there is an available coach. There are some inconsistencies in the way in which homework is set and used to support pupils' learning across the school. Some parents are not clear about the school's expectations for pupils in different year groups. Although there is a statement regarding homework in the school's prospectus, this is not backed up by detailed guidelines for staff, parents and pupils.
- 73 All pupils are able to access all areas of the curriculum and use appropriate resources regardless of their age, ability or gender. Staff know their pupils well, though this knowledge is often not recorded in a form that could be used by other teachers. Appropriate steps in learning are planned and taught, especially in English, mathematics and science. Good support from outside agencies, in particular the Outreach Service, ensures that pupils with special educational needs have good individual programmes with specific targets to support their learning. On occasions, the level of questioning, discussion and tasks set in lessons does not provide sufficient challenge for the higher attaining pupils.
- 74 Practice is satisfactory in personal, social and health education and a review of provision and a new policy are planned in the school's development plan. There is a sound sex education policy which is implemented satisfactorily. Appropriate drugs education is provided in partnership with the local police education service. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy eating and the need for a balanced diet.
- 75 The local community makes a useful contribution to pupils' learning. Parents have worked together to redecorate parts of the school and thus supported the staff in providing a high quality learning environment for pupils. The local vicar contributes significantly to pupils' learning experiences by visiting and working with the school to host services in the parish church for Harvest, Christmas and Year 6 leavers. A governor runs 'Bikeability' courses for pupils after school, and other adults in the community have coached football in the past. The school participates in community

events such as the Millennium event in the village hall. The friends of the school are very supportive and raise money to enhance resources and accommodation within the school.

- 76 The school has good links with its local family of schools. Together they have looked at pupils' writing; shared judgements about individual performance; and begun school portfolios of pupils' work. History workshops and opportunities for communication by e-mail are other benefits gained through the partnership. The school hosts a Mother and Toddler group and has informal links with another local nursery. Effective relationships with the local secondary school, and good communication between the local primary schools, support pupils' transfer between schools. The school has also hosted a successful visit by another school, comparing and contrasting their different physical localities.
- 77 ***The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good.***
- 78 Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their experiences and the values that underpin the Christian way of life. This reflects the Christian foundation of the school. The use of music and candles to create a suitable atmosphere in assemblies; very good story telling; time for reflection; sharing thoughts and feelings; and prayer, all enhance effectively the spiritual development of pupils. Other subjects, for example English, provide good opportunities to explore, discuss and reflect on the beliefs of others. However, there are some missed opportunities, for example to reflect on the wonder of seeds and their potential for growth, and then to raise questions about the miracle of life.
- 79 Acts of collective worship are well planned and develop a sense of community with shared values. The headteacher takes care to include the youngest and oldest pupils and makes efforts to ensure that the experience of coming together to start the day strengthens the ethos of the school.
- 80 The provision for pupils' moral development is good. Staff and pupils have produced a good policy for managing behaviour, based on sound principles with appropriate rewards and sanctions. Governors have approved the policy. The school's code of conduct is expressed clearly in positive language, which pupils can readily understand, and displayed in classrooms. The school celebrates and rewards good behaviour and work with merit stickers and special merit assembly on Fridays. Good work is displayed on the 'special work' notice board. A theatre workshop visit emphasised the school's commitment to no bullying.
- 81 Provision for social development is good. Pupils of all ages share playtimes and lunchtimes and generally get on well together. Pupils who demonstrate good behaviour are rewarded by being monitors for half a term, and are diligent in carrying out their duties in assembly and around the school. Year 6 pupils participate in the police drugs education project and develop personal skills relating to self-esteem and making life-choices. Pupils have been involved in raising money to purchase

playground equipment and to support charities. Educational visits offer opportunities for first-hand experiences, and a planned visit for the oldest pupils to a residential centre in the autumn term is timed to build good relationships at the start of the school year. Links with another school afforded pupils the opportunity to act as hosts when they visited the school.

- 82 Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school is effective in teaching pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions. The local vicar visits the school regularly and the school participates in Harvest and Christmas celebrations. Pupils have also visited a gurdwara, a synagogue and Southwell Minster. The display of artefacts, photographs and information about aspects of Sikhism gives value to the religious beliefs of other ethnic groups. Subjects, such as English and geography, provide good opportunities for pupils to explore other cultural beliefs and ways of life. For example, during literacy lessons in Years 5 and 6, the teacher made good use of a story about a Muslim child to extend the pupils' understanding of life and values in another culture. Pupils also develop an appreciation of cultural achievement through exploring the work of artists such as Mondrian. Pupils sing satisfactorily in assembly but there is limited evidence of music in the wider life of the school. However, some pupils have enjoyed a trip to hear live music.

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

- 83 ***Overall, the school provides a very good level of care for the well being of its pupils. Teachers and other staff use their very good knowledge of individuals sensitively in their care of pupils. The school provides a good framework to guide the personal development of its pupils and enables them to contribute to the life of the school community.***
- 84 The arrangements for ensuring the welfare of pupils are very good. The good quality of relationships throughout the school helps to ensure that all adults in school know the pupils well. This makes a positive contribution to the individual care they receive.
- 85 Procedures for Child Protection are in place and take full account of the locally agreed procedures. The headteacher has responsibility for child protection and has received appropriate training. Good attention is paid to issues of health, safety and hygiene in lessons, for example when pupils were pond dipping in science. The school has a well-established system of recorded health and safety audits, in addition to regular, informal checks. Procedures for first aid are very good. A noteworthy feature is that younger pupils who bump their heads are issued with a sticker as well as a letter home; this alerts parents should the child forget to hand the letter over.
- 86 The school provides good support for pupils with special educational needs and complies fully with the Code of Practice for special educational needs. Pupils' needs are identified at an early stage and their progress is monitored effectively. The support of the local education authority's Outreach Service contributes significantly to the provision. Individual education plans are well prepared with specific targets to support learning. In common with all pupils, they have target books and individual targets relating to English and mathematics are recorded each term. These help pupils to understand better what they need to do to improve their attainment.

- 87 The school has good procedures in place to follow up any unexplained absences but almost all parents comply with the school's expectations and telephone or write to give the reason for absence. Parents are reminded regularly of the importance of consistent and punctual attendance. Despite this, however, lateness does occur in the mornings, some of which is due to transport difficulties. Parents are also asked to consider the impact of removing their children from school to go on holiday, but holidays represent a large proportion of the reasons for absence.
- 88 Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good overall. The behaviour policy provides a good framework for achieving good behaviour but there remain inconsistencies in its implementation. In particular, the inappropriate behaviour of a small number of boys is not always dealt with in such a way that they are enabled to regulate their own behaviour better. This hinders their learning, and at times the learning of other pupils in lessons. The school has recently introduced the 'Playground Peacemakers' scheme in an effort to improve further the behaviour out of lessons. Pupils were involved actively in formulating a code of conduct - the rules for their classrooms and for outside. This ensures that they all know and understand what is expected of them. Almost all pupils are well motivated by the merit system. The good relationships and the mutual respect shown by teachers, staff and pupils help to ensure good behaviour. Parents are appropriately involved in cases of poor or persistent unacceptable behaviour.
- 89 Pupils report that there is some name-calling and physical bullying but they are confident that teachers deal with it quickly and effectively as soon as it is reported. There is no evidence of sexist behaviour and attitudes, despite the imbalance in the numbers of boys and girls. There have been no exclusions in recent years and the governors do have a clear policy on exclusions based on guidance from the local education authority.
- 90 Opportunities for pupils to share in each other's success are good. The school puts a strong emphasis on celebrating pupils' achievements and the high quality of display of outstanding work adds to its value. Assemblies are used well to praise good work and effort. Pupils are also provided with a good range of opportunities to take responsibility, for example by taking charge of the playground equipment or operating the tape recorder in assembly. They were actively involved in discussions to choose the playground equipment and helped to raise funds for its purchase.
- 91 ***Generally, the school has satisfactory procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' attainment and progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, but not in other subjects of the curriculum. The use of assessment to guide teachers' planning of work for pupils is under-developed.***
- 92 The school uses the Nottinghamshire baseline assessment materials and assessment of children's attainment on entry is sound. Assessment arrangements to carry out the national testing at the ages of seven and eleven are secure and meet statutory requirements. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science, carried out as part of the national testing programme, are sound. However, processes for using the information from tests and other assessments to identify targets

for each pupil's learning by the end of each key stage, related to national standards, are not yet well established. Targets are discussed with pupils and parents and set for literacy and numeracy once a term, together with a personal development target. This is a successful development but some targets are not linked closely enough to national standards to ensure that pupils' learning progresses to the next level of achievement.

- 93 Pupils' record files contain copies of baseline assessment, standardised testing and annual reports to parents. Teachers' planning files record assessments of pupils' progress in learning keywords; comments on group reading tasks; some observations regarding the outcomes of topics in subjects such as history and geography; and information related to target setting for older pupils. Teachers spend a day at the end of each term reviewing and discussing the work completed and planning for the next term. The lack of assessment against national standards in foundation subjects is recognised as a weakness that needs to be tackled, and is recorded as such in the school's assessment policy and development plan. Generally, teachers know their pupils well and use their knowledge gained informally through questioning and observation in day-to-day contact in lessons to inform their view of pupils' strengths and weaknesses. In lessons, the final plenary session is not always well planned and its potential for assessing pupils' attainment and progress is not realised. Sometimes more emphasis is placed on sharing what pupils have done rather than using the opportunity to establish what has been learned.
- 94 The school has begun reviewing the results of National Curriculum testing to monitor and evaluate the achievements of different year groups by ability and gender. This information is shared with governors and has raised the school's awareness of the need to improve standards. The school has organised smaller teaching groups and separate teaching for literacy and numeracy in Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6. This action has reduced the pupil-teacher ratio in those year groups and enabled the teachers to provide more effectively for pupils' needs and abilities. This has had a positive impact on improving pupils' achievements.

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

- 95 *Relationships with parents are a strength of the school. Parents are satisfied with the standards achieved and the encouragement the school and its teachers give to their children. Parents are kept well informed about the daily life of the school. However, a significant number of parents do not feel that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons and some state that homework is set inconsistently.*
- 96 The responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and the parents' meeting, and discussions with parents during the inspection week, indicate that almost all parents are very supportive of the school. Parents particularly appreciate that the school works closely with them and that they are well informed about their children's progress. They are pleased that their children are expected to work hard to achieve their best and are helped to become mature and responsible individuals. They consider that the teaching is good and enables their children to make good progress. Parents are aware that the period of instability in leadership and management had a negative effect on the school's performance but they have great confidence in the present headteacher.

Almost all parents would be happy to approach staff about any matters of concern and are confident that their views would be taken seriously. Inspection evidence supports the parents' positive views of the school.

- 97 A considerable number of parents are concerned that the school does not provide a range of interesting activities outside lessons. However, they appreciate the demands that this places on staff in a small school. Inspection evidence indicates that the school provides a good range of activities, with the exception of music, and tries hard to ensure that pupils broaden their experiences, for example through visits to the theatre, Southwell Minster and other places of worship. The school also stages a Nativity play.
- 98 Some parents feel that there is insufficient homework and others are unclear about the nature, extent and frequency of homework. Inspection evidence confirms that while appropriate homework is set at least weekly in Years 5 and 6, the school does not have a homework policy and homework is used inconsistently across the rest of the school. However, when it is set it makes an effective contribution to pupils' learning. For example, for homework younger pupils were asked to identify and think about people who they admired. This preparatory discussion with parents really helped the pupils to articulate and develop their reasons and feelings during the lesson. As a result good progress was made.
- 99 The school has established very effective links with parents. An appropriate home-school agreement is in place. The prospectus and annual report of governors are well-produced documents and contain all the required information. All parents have a chance to visit the school with their children prior to admission. The school holds a wide range of well-supported meetings for parents, for example about the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies, sex education and the target setting process. Parents are kept informed about school events and achievements through the newsletter. This is also used effectively to remind parents about the school's expectations and procedures.
- 100 Parents are well informed about the progress their children are making. They are aware of the targets that all children are set each term. The curriculum meetings enable them to understand the work their children are doing. Consultation meetings have increased in frequency to one a term. The annual progress report gives a clear picture of the pupil's strengths, although weaknesses are not so consistently well identified. However, the target books provide a clear picture of the areas identified for improvement and these are updated each term. Parents state that they have sufficient information to enable them to support their child's work at home. However, not all choose to do so and reading records indicate that some parents do not routinely listen to their children read. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed and involved in decisions affecting their children.
- 101 A small number of parents help in school on a regular basis; others offer help on educational visits; and support for school events is very good. The school benefits from the active friends association, which organises a range of fundraising and social activities. The money raised is used to support the work of the school in a variety of ways, such as providing additional information technology hardware and supplying curtains throughout the school.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 102 ***The very good leadership and management of the headteacher, effectively supported by staff and governors, are strengths of the school.***
- 103 Following the last inspection the school experienced a period of great instability including the prolonged absence of the former headteacher and the appointment of four different acting headteachers. Standards of attainment declined and pupils' behaviour deteriorated significantly. Key issues arising from the last inspection were not addressed systematically. Since the appointment of the current headteacher in 1999, substantial improvements have been made. She has brought great energy, enthusiasm and vision to the role and has led by example in the classroom.
- 104 The headteacher has built a team of hardworking and committed staff and has led them successfully through a period of change and improvement. She has inspired and motivated staff, governors, parents and pupils and her personal contribution to the school's improvement is greatly appreciated by the school community. Under her guidance clear educational priorities have been established and good progress is being made towards achieving them.
- 105 Through staff changes and the effective implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, the quality of teaching has improved significantly and this is having a positive impact upon standards of attainment in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. All permanent teaching staff have responsibility for core curriculum areas and they have clear job descriptions and action plans for their subjects. They have been effective in introducing new policies and schemes of work in the last two years. Responsibility for co-ordinating subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology is shared between the staff on a collegiate basis. The focus on improving the core subjects has meant that less has been done to develop policy and practice in these other subjects.
- 106 The school has established a clear statement of intent and key aims. It seeks " *to create a secure, attractive and positive learning environment. Everyone will be treated equally and with respect, caring for themselves and others.*" The headteacher and staff are largely successful in realising the essential aims relating to the ethos of the school and understand that there is still work to be done in raising standards. The commitment of all staff – teaching and non-teaching – indicates that the school has the capacity to improve even further.
- 107 ***The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well and provides the headteacher and staff with good support for the process of improving the school.***
- 108 Governors are active and involved in the life of the school. They are ably led by the Chair who knows the school and pupils well and even runs a weekly out-of-hours 'Bikeability' class. The governors work through three key committees and individual governors have subject link roles for English, mathematics, science, information and

communication technology, religious education and special educational needs. These governors have met with subject co-ordinators to discuss policy; to consider results of statutory tests; and in some cases to audit resources. The governors are generally aware of the school's strengths and key areas for development. For example, the headteacher and governors have already identified weaknesses in systems for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress; and for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance. Governors are well informed through the headteacher's reports to governing body meetings.

- 109 The headteacher, staff and governors have produced a clear three-year development plan including detailed action plans for the last financial year. These plans identify a manageable number of appropriate priorities for development, some of which relate to the previous post-inspection action plan. Development priorities are linked to the school's aims and costed in terms of time and financial resources. Success criteria are identified clearly but these do not always relate to precise improvements in pupils' attainment. Although evaluation methods and monitoring are included as headings in the plans, there is little detail to indicate what monitoring strategies will be used and how progress towards key targets will be evaluated.
- 110 ***Although the headteacher and governors have a sound understanding of the strengths and key areas for development, the school lacks a systematic and structured programme for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the curriculum.***
- 111 The headteacher and staff do monitor the results of statutory tests and other standardised and optional tests. They report the outcomes to governors who are aware of key performance issues. Recently, the school has introduced a process for setting targets for individual pupils in mathematics and English and monitoring pupils' progress towards these. Individual targets also form the basis for setting statutory targets for the performance of different year groups in national tests but, because of the small numbers of pupils in each year group, the latter are of limited value.
- 112 Currently, the headteacher and core curriculum co-ordinators do not have a systematic programme for monitoring the quality of teaching through, for example, observing lessons or examining samples of pupils' work. This is recognised by the school as a key area for development. The close working proximity of staff enables them all to have informal knowledge of work across the whole school. However, they lack precise knowledge about the quality of teaching and specific areas for improvement which would make satisfactory teaching good or very good. The school has benefited from classroom observations by a local education authority inspector.
- 113 The headteacher and governors have made appropriate arrangements for the performance management of staff, except for the lack of a structured programme of lesson observations. Recently, the school has gained the Investors in People award which, the headteacher believes, celebrates the fundamental ethos of the school and the importance it places on self-review and reflection. The school's handbook provides good information for newly appointed staff or supply teachers and there is a strong culture of mutual support in the school. For example, currently, a part-time teacher is covering the role of support assistant pending a new appointment. On other occasions,



the part-time kitchen assistant, who is also a parent, provided support in lessons in both key stages.

- 114 ***The school makes effective use of its resources including its excellent accommodation and hardworking and committed staff. Financial planning and administration are good. The day-to-day administration is good and the school is a well-organised and orderly environment.***
- 115 The headteacher and governors plan the budget carefully and funds are targeted well towards specific priorities. For example, a part-time teacher has been employed to enable the more effective teaching of literacy and numeracy in smaller groups in Key Stage 2. The school benefits from the commitment and expertise of the secretary who administers the internal financial processes, monitors expenditure and prepares budget reports for the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Specific grants, for example those for special educational needs, are targeted appropriately at classroom support and the small schools' grant has been used effectively to maintain the productive links with the local family of schools. The school also benefits from the active support and fundraising efforts of the Friends of Normanton School. This parents' association targets activities at raising funds for specific projects – for example playground equipment.
- 116 The governors apply the principles of best value in relation to the school's use of resources and are conscientious in seeking the best combination of cost and quality when making major spending decisions. The small size of the school makes comparative performance data unreliable and the governors use this with appropriate caution when considering the school's performance.
- 117 The very small number of teachers are appropriately qualified but lack the range of subject expertise that is possible in larger schools. While staff have specialist expertise in English, science, art and design, physical education and humanities, none have qualifications in mathematics or information and communication technology. However, all teachers engage in school-based professional development activities and most have attended courses provided by the local education authority, especially those relating to recently implemented national strategies. Some governors have also attended recent and relevant training including an induction course for two newly appointed governors.
- 118 The school has excellent accommodation for its size and this has been improved in recent years through a programme of refurbishment and redecoration. This has involved staff and parents working together to decorate classrooms. The headteacher has led the transformation of teaching areas and corridors which are now well-organised and attractive areas. Pupils' work is displayed carefully and really valued. Resources are well stored and accessible. The school grounds provide good opportunities for physical education as well as environmental science. A pond and environmental area are developing well and attract interest from pupils and parents. The school is very clean and well cared for which is a tribute to the attitude of staff and pupils and the work of the current relief caretaker.
- 119 Resources for learning are generally adequate for the needs of the National Curriculum. In recent years the school has made significant investment in resources

for the literacy and numeracy strategies. These resources are used well in lessons. The school has a limited number of computers and has plans to increase this in line with national guidance.

- 120 ***The school has made good improvements in the last two years and addressed successfully the key issues identified at the time of the last inspection.*** The leadership and management of the headteacher and governors provide a very clear sense of direction. The school is now very well managed. The learning environment is well organised and attractive. National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented successfully. The re-organisation of teaching groups in Key Stage 2 is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' attainment. An effective curriculum framework and schemes of work have been introduced. More opportunities have been provided for spiritual and cultural development. Strategies for assessment, target setting and monitoring and evaluating school performance have been introduced but these need developing further. The hard work and commitment of the headteacher, staff and governors indicate that the school has good capacity to improve further.

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

- 121 In order to improve further the quality of education and standards of attainment, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- Implement a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the curriculum, involving the headteacher, subject leaders and governors;  
[109, 110, 112, 150, 153, 174, 190, 197]
  - Develop and implement procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in all areas of the curriculum and use this information to plan future learning opportunities;  
[63, 65, 66, 68, 86, 91-94, 148, 149, 172, 189, 196, 203, 210, 215, 220, 226, 227, 228]
  - Use existing good practice to raise expectations for the behaviour of some boys in classrooms, and at lunchtimes and playtimes; to improve their listening skills; and to ensure consistent approaches to the management of behaviour by all staff.  
[10, 16, 20, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42, 44, 50, 60, 63, 66, 88, 89, 127, 128, 137, 138, 143, 147, 148, 167, 186, 202]

### ***Minor issues***

- Produce and implement consistently a homework policy;  
[62, 72, 95, 98, 173, 189]
- Improve expectations for the presentation of work and the quality of handwriting across the school.  
[23, 35, 141, 142, 162]

*The numbers in brackets relate to the main paragraphs of this report where these issues are mentioned.*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	13

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	15	35	50	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	51
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	10

#### **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	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

***Attendance***

<b>Authorised absence</b>	<b>%</b>
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.2

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	<b>%</b>
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

***Details of statutory assessments are not published for reasons of confidentiality because of the small number of pupils within the year group.***

***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	40
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)	2.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Average class size	24

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	20

***Financial information***

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	166,332
Total expenditure	167,140
Expenditure per pupil	3,482
Balance brought forward from previous year	5,257
Balance carried forward to next year	4,449

## *Results of the survey of parents and carers*

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	48
Number of questionnaires returned	29

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	24	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	45	52	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	41	7	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	46	11	0	0
The teaching is good.	62	38	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	66	31	3	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	17	7	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	86	14	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	66	34	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	76	24	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	41	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	10	41	45	0	3

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

- 122 *The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. Children make sound progress in all areas of learning throughout the Foundation Stage. By the end of the Reception Year, most children reach the level of attainment expected nationally in Early Learning Goals for communications, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. Children's personal, social and emotional development is generally above that expected nationally.*
- 123 The eleven children in the current Reception Year, including the three under five years of age, are taught together with all the pupils in Key Stage 1, in one mixed-age class. Children are admitted to the school at the beginning of the term in which they become five, having attended on a part-time basis during the previous term. Appropriate provision is made for children starting school. Parents are invited to school and have good opportunities to share information with staff and become partners in their children's learning, including the completion of 'My Special School Book'. Staff know children well.
- 124 Taking account of the numbers of children in the Foundation Stage at any time in the school year, the accommodation is excellent. Although there is no outdoor classroom provision, the covered courtyard area and planned physical activities outdoors ensure a sound range of experiences for physical development. The classroom layout affords children access to an appropriate range of resources and learning experiences.
- 125 The Nottinghamshire baseline assessment process is used to establish attainment on entry to school. Children enter school with a broad range of ability, including high-attaining children and those with special educational needs. There are significant variations between year groups from one year to the next. Overall, based on the combined results of recent years' assessments, children's social and physical development is above average; their language and literacy development is broadly average; and their mathematical development is below average. Girls' average scores are higher than boys in literacy, mathematics, social and physical development.
- 126 Teaching observed in the Foundation Stage was satisfactory with some good features. Some of the best teaching related to developing children's reading, numeracy and speaking skills; encouraging them to reflect on their own experiences and views; and developing their personal and social skills. Altogether five lessons were observed and the quality of teaching was good in two and satisfactory in three lessons. Children are encouraged to feel safe, secure and confident in their early months in school. The curriculum is broad and balanced; it covers the areas of learning children should experience; and it offers children an appropriate range of interesting learning opportunities. Since the last inspection, elements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy have been introduced successfully and the teacher's planning of work for the children draws appropriately on recent national guidance for the Foundation Stage. The incidence of unsatisfactory teaching, reported at the time of



the last inspection, has been eliminated.

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

127 Children enter school with good personal and social skills. They adapt well to school routines and are keen to learn. Generally they develop the ability to sustain concentration and effort for longer periods. Progress during the Reception Year is sound. Children are encouraged 'to have a go' and feel confident and pleased with their achievements. Good relationships with teachers, and the older pupils in the school, develop an atmosphere of security and trust. This nurtures children's confidence and their desire to share talk and reflection. For example, during a good religious education lesson, children shared confidently their reasons for admiring a special person. Generally, they co-operate with each other, take turns and share resources. Occasionally, one or two boys fidget and play when they should be sitting and listening. Nevertheless, increasingly, children take responsibility for their own learning and show initiative, for example, in tidying away at the end of a session and putting flowers in water. Where appropriate, children help each other at work and they are courteous and polite to visitors. They know the difference between right and wrong. By the time most children reach the end of the Reception Year, their personal, social and emotional development is better than that expected for their age.

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

128 Children enter school with sound speaking and listening skills; girls' attainment is higher than boys. Through opportunities for play-based learning and the use of some elements of the national guidance for teaching literacy, children make sound progress, particularly in listening to stories and poems and learning the sounds that letters make. They are gaining confidence in recognising and matching simple three letter words, and building them with plastic letters. Children imitate the teacher's expression when reading aloud as a group. High attaining children are confident and capable in their use of language, initiate discussion and share their news, observations and opinions. However, on occasions boys find it hard to listen carefully and sustain effort, and sometimes distract their neighbour's attention away from the work in hand. Sometimes the class teacher deals appropriately with such behaviour but, on other occasions, she does not make it sufficiently clear to these boys that their behaviour is unacceptable.

129 Children write their names and simple words, and form sentences with support from the teacher. High attaining children draw detailed illustrations of their writing. In handwriting, they show increasing control and letters are becoming well formed. By the time most children leave the Reception class, they have attained the language and literacy skills expected in Early Goals for Learning.

### **Mathematical development**

130 On entry to school children's mathematical development is generally below that expected for children of this age, although girls' attainment is higher than boys. Children make at least sound and sometimes good progress in acquiring the language needed to talk about numbers, shape and measure. They can use terms such as 'more

than' and 'less than' and are familiar with the names of common two-dimensional shapes. They can sort and classify objects. Carefully planned activities and the use of guidance from the National Numeracy Strategy, help to ensure that children make steady progress in counting reliably to ten and some move on to larger numbers. Higher attaining children can order and add numbers within ten. By the time they reach the end of the Reception Year, children are on line to achieve the standards expected nationally in Early Goals for Learning.

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

- 131 Children's general knowledge on entry to school is broadly in line with that expected of their age group. A carefully planned curriculum and purposeful activities enable children to build progressively on their previous learning. They learn to explore the world around them, both within the school environment and further afield, including visits to the local church. They begin to observe carefully. They handle objects in everyday life. In an interesting science lesson, appropriate adult support helped children to explore and describe a range of seeds, but there were some missed opportunities for reflection and wonder about the capacity for growth. Children care for living things such as insects. Some share the events in their daily lives with a growing awareness of the passage of time. They reflect on their feelings about significant members of their family, friends and teachers. When working with information and communication technology, children use a mouse, some technical vocabulary and a screen menu; and enjoy simple computer programs. By the end of the Reception Year children's knowledge and understanding of the world is typical of that expected for their age.

### **Physical development**

- 132 Children's physical development on entry to school is above that typically expected for their age. The opportunity to play and work on the playground and field, and the use of the courtyard, hall and equipment enable children to experience a good range of physical activities. They also attend swimming lessons with the rest of the school. Children develop confidence and skill in running, jumping, catching and throwing. Schemes of work and planning documents indicate that they learn to move about with increasing awareness of space and the safety of themselves and others. In lessons, they make steady progress in manipulating and controlling simple tools such as pencils, knives and rolling pins, and in painting and drawing. No games, dance or gymnastics lessons were observed during the inspection. However, evidence of observing pupils in other lessons and in the playground indicates that their physical development by the end of the Reception Year is at least in line with that described in the Early Goals for Learning.

### **Creative development**

- 133 On entry to school, children's creative development is broadly typical of that expected for their age. Children explore and use a range of materials such as crayons, paint, dough, fabric, thread and decorative objects such as sequins. Children differentiate primary colours; recognise difference in textures; draw to illustrate their writing and paint from imagination. They introduce first-hand experiences into role-play, for

example going to the garden centre. By the end of the Reception Year children's attainment is broadly reflects the expectations described in Early Learning Goals.

## ENGLISH

- 134 ***Overall, standards in English are broadly average when compared with those found in primary schools nationally. There is evidence of higher levels of attainment, particularly in Years 2, 4 and 5. However, in the current Year 6 standards are below average. In the 2000 tests for eleven-year-olds, the school's results were above average for all schools nationally and broadly average for similar schools. The small number of pupils in each of the year groups requires data to be treated with cautions. Evidence gathered during the inspection from lesson observations, scrutiny of work in pupils' books and discussion with pupils and staff indicates that standards are improving across the school and are broadly average.***
- 135 The results of statutory assessment for seven-year-olds in 2000 indicate that overall attainment was below the national average in reading and broadly average in writing. When compared with similar schools, results in reading and writing were well below average. The percentage of pupils (100%) achieving the expected Level 2 in writing was very high. However, no pupils attained the highest level (Level 3) in reading or writing which was respectively very low and well below average when compared with all schools. In reading, 80% attained Level 2 which was below the national average. However, had one more pupil attained Level 2, the school's results would have been very high when compared with schools nationally. In the last two years, boys have attained better than boys nationally in writing but worse in reading. Girls have attained better standards than girls nationally and significantly better than boys within the school in the last two years. Again, the very small numbers of pupils means that these statistics have to be treated with caution.
- 136 The results of the statutory tests for eleven-year-olds in English in 2000 indicate that attainment was above average when compared with all schools and broadly in line with similar schools. The number achieving the higher level (Level 5) was well above average when compared with all schools and broadly average in comparison with similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000, unusually there were more girls than boys. Over the last three years the performance of boys and girls has fluctuated and there are no significant gender trends.
- 137 ***By the age of seven, pupils attainment in speaking and listening is broadly average.*** In the Key Stage 1 class, the teacher encourages pupils to talk about matters that interest them, explaining their ideas and using a growing vocabulary. Pupils show confidence in talking with adults and sharing ideas in small groups and with the class. They use sentences and descriptive language to share their experiences and feelings. The higher attaining pupils are confident speakers, exploring ideas with mature vocabulary and good attention to detail. Most pupils listen carefully, but a minority of the boys finds it hard to pay attention to the teacher and sustain concentration, consequently they miss some teaching points and opportunities to learn effectively. Progress in speaking and listening through Key Stage 1 is sound overall.
- 138 ***In Key Stage 2 attainment in speaking and listening is broadly average.*** Pupils

speak with increasing confidence, in lessons, and most listen carefully to explanations and instructions. A few adapt their talking to respond well to their classmates, teachers, and visitors to school. The higher attaining pupils express their views clearly and are confident about asking questions of adults, and raising matters for discussion. Progress overall in Key Stage 2 is sound but when teaching is good or very good - for example, at the end of the key stage - pupils pay very careful attention to the teacher and listen well to each other when carrying out group tasks. Consequently, they make better gains in their learning.

- 139 ***Attainment of seven-year-olds in reading is average when compared with that expected nationally.*** Pupils read simple sentences in their reading books with increasing accuracy and understanding. The higher attaining pupils read with fluency and expression; and pass opinions about what they have read, including their favourite stories read at home. Pupils can work out unknown words using sounds, illustrations and meaning. They enjoy imitating the teacher's style of reading with expression during literacy lessons. Pupils explain the difference between fiction and non-fiction. Overall, progress is satisfactory. Some pupils benefit from good support in sharing reading at home and regular visits to the library.
- 140 ***In Year 6, attainment in reading is below average.*** Proportionally there are more pupils with special educational needs in this year group. Some pupils often halt their reading to attempt unknown words using strategies they have been taught, such as breaking words into syllables and reading on for meaning. Some are more fluent, but less confident in understanding and recalling significant aspects of the story or characters. In other junior year groups, attainment in reading is average overall. Higher attaining pupils in Years 4 and 5 read with expression; infer and deduce meaning; and support their views with reference to the text. Pupils use dictionaries and reference books effectively to find information. Overall progress is satisfactory, including Year 6 where the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs makes good progress.
- 141 ***Attainment of seven-year-olds in writing is average when compared with seven-year-olds nationally.*** Year 2 pupils began the year with a wide range of ability. The higher attaining pupils could write some extended sentences using capital letters and full stops. Now writing is better-structured, with more complex sentences and interesting vocabulary. The lower attaining pupils began the year writing simple sentences with limited punctuation. Now they are more confident in writing familiar stories using simple sentences and some basic punctuation. Generally, written work shows some characteristics of different forms, for example story openings are used appropriately. Punctuation of sentences is increasingly accurate and spellings are accurate or reflect pupils' knowledge of letter sounds. Handwriting is not always well formed and sometimes presentation is untidy. During the year, pupils write for a range of purposes, including stories, accounts, instructions and labels, and practise skills such as spellings and handwriting. Progress in writing, over time, across the key stage, is satisfactory.
- 142 ***Standards of writing in Year 6 are below average.*** At the beginning of the year lower attaining pupils wrote in an interesting way but they found it hard to sustain quality,

and inaccuracy in spelling and punctuation restricted the meaning. Now writing is better organised and words are well chosen for effect so the quality of communication is better. Punctuation of sentences and spelling has improved. Other Year 6 pupils produce writing of an average standard. They are able to sustain the organisation of their ideas with an awareness of audience and a sense of purpose - for example when writing letters, using more punctuation within sentences and more complex sentences. During the year, pupils write for a good range of purposes including stories, poems, plays, speeches, letters and arguments. They practise handwriting, skills and techniques, such as using metaphors and synonyms. Handwriting is increasingly joined but often lacks good control and sometimes work in books is untidy. Writing in other year groups in Key Stage 2 is broadly in line with standards nationally and there is evidence that some pupils are achieving above average levels of performance. Progress over time is satisfactory and pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They receive well-focused support in lessons and writing tasks are matched well to the targets identified in individual education plans.

- 143 Overall, the progress made by pupils, in all aspects of English, as they move through the school, is satisfactory. Pupils have a positive attitude to their work and the majority show increasing levels of concentration and perseverance, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2. A small number of boys in Key Stage 1, and in the earlier years of Key Stage 2, find it hard to listen, but at the end of the Key Stage, where there are significantly more boys than girls, pupils listen attentively and stay on task. Some work is completed on undated worksheets and this makes it difficult to track progress in this respect. Standards of presentation are variable but often lower than should be expected.
- 144 Teachers are implementing effectively the National Literacy Strategy and generally draw on its guidance to plan activities that are appropriate to pupils' age and ability. In Key Stage 2, the school has organised teaching so pupils are separated into two groups for literacy, comprising pupils in Years 3 and 4 and those in Years 5 and 6. This arrangement, which also ensures smaller teaching groups, is having a beneficial effect, particularly in raising standards at the end of the key stage.
- 145 ***Overall teaching in English is satisfactory with some good and very good features.*** In the five lessons observed the overall quality of teaching ranged from very good to satisfactory. It was satisfactory overall. In Key Stage 1 one lesson was observed. It was satisfactory with some good features. In Key Stage 2 four lessons were observed. Two were very good and two were satisfactory. Overall the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 was judged to be good.
- 146 All teaching observed followed the guidance set out in the national programme for teaching literacy and the use of the strategy is raising standards, particularly in writing. Teachers generally demonstrated good subject knowledge and understanding of the terminology used to teach literacy. Lessons were planned carefully, with sound objectives that were usually shared with pupils to good effect. Reading was well demonstrated by the teachers and this helped to improve pupils' skill in reading with expression and meaning. Teachers know their pupils well and relationships were generally good, so pupils enjoyed working to show their teachers what they could do. In most lessons, pupils were well behaved and attentive, and keen to listen and respond

to questions.

- 147 In the best lessons teachers set high expectations of pupils' listening and effort. Teachers planned clear learning objectives, wrote them on the board and shared them with pupils to sharpen the focus for learning. Skilful questioning steered the discussion to develop pupils' thinking and reflection on what they had read. Use of technical language such as 'narrative perspective' and 'infer' deepened pupils' understanding of how text works and enabled them to answer questions perceptively. Very sensitive exploration of cultural differences and high quality narration of text captured pupils' interest and kept boys, in particular, totally focused on listening to the teacher. Well-chosen resources such as idiom dictionaries supported pupils' acquisition of skills and collaborative practical tasks interested pupils during guided and independent group work, especially boys. Excellent relationships, humour and a firm but caring approach to managing behaviour ensured that pupils behaved very well and gained in confidence and self-esteem.
- 148 When teaching was less effective, teachers did not clarify their expectations of behaviour nor did they follow them through, so some boys called out or did not listen respectfully to the teacher or each other. This slowed the pace of lessons and prevented other pupils making a contribution. Younger pupils were seated on the carpet and a few found it difficult to sit still and listen. The close proximity enabled a minority to plait hair and talk, and some flopped on the floor or leaned on each other, which led to minor silliness. This reduced their attention to new learning and distracted others. Sometimes, there were missed opportunities to draw pupils' attention to specific features of types of text so they made guesses rather than looked carefully for clues to answer questions. The higher attaining pupils were not always challenged appropriately to enable them to progress at a faster rate. At the end of lessons, teachers encouraged pupils to share what they had done but did not discuss what had been learned. Consequently, there were missed opportunities to assess pupils' progress and to plan the next stages of learning.
- 149 The school is in the early stages of using the results of statutory tests and other assessments to set targets and monitor progress in terms of the levels to be attained by individual pupils, by the end of Key Stage 2. The school is also developing a coherent and manageable system of recording progress that can be used to inform planning. Pupils' work is marked up-to-date and teachers' use of the marking policy is evident in pupils' work. The use of 'box and bubble' is developing as a useful means of offering advice to improve attainment, although some teachers use it more effectively than others.
- 150 ***The subject is managed effectively but there is no systematic monitoring of planning, teaching and learning in English.***
- 151 Across the school an appropriate amount of time is allocated to English. Teachers have implemented the National Literacy Strategy effectively. Pupils increasingly use computers to write and present work, such as letters and stories. They use and apply their language and literacy skills to good effect in other areas of the curriculum such as history and religious education.

- 152 The English subject co-ordinator, with support from other staff, has led the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, which has been well received by staff. She has produced the English policy statement and attended appropriate training and led professional development activities in the school. The co-ordinator works with the headteacher to analyse data and is aware of the need to raise standards of attainment. She recognises where improvements have been made and is conscious of the impact of small year groups on the validity of data.
- 153 There is a collegiate approach on the part of the staff to informal sharing of what is taught and information about pupils' progress. However, as yet there is no structured programme for monitoring. Work has begun on a portfolio of pupils' writing in partnership with the local family of schools. The co-ordinator has led literacy sessions for parents and governors. The co-ordinator does not manage a budget but has identified where resources are needed. The headteacher and governors have approved the expenditure and resources for English are adequate, particularly big books and guided reading books.
- 154 *Overall, the subject has maintained the strengths since the last inspection and improved significantly to raise standards across the school.*

## MATHEMATICS

- 155 *Overall, standards in mathematics are broadly average in relation to those found in primary schools nationally. In the 2000 tests for eleven-year-olds, the school's results were well below average when compared with all schools nationally and similar schools. The results have to be treated with caution because of the small numbers of pupils in each year group. Evidence gathered during the inspection from five lesson observations, scrutiny of work in pupils' books and discussions with pupils and staff indicates that, while attainment in the current Year 6 is below average, standards across the rest of the school are in line with national averages. Some pupils, in Years 2, 4 and 5 particularly, achieve above average standards of attainment.*
- 156 The results of statutory assessments for seven-year-olds in 2000 indicate that overall attainment was average when compared with schools nationally, but well below that of similar schools. Attainment at the expected Level 2 (100%) was very high in comparison with schools nationally and similar schools, but it was very low (0%) at the higher Level 3. Nevertheless, results have improved significantly since 1998. Boys have performed significantly worse than boys nationally for the last three years whereas girls have performed better than girls nationally, and significantly better than the boys in school for the last two years.
- 157 Evidence from lesson observations and pupils' books indicates that most pupils in the current Year 2 are working at the expected Level 2 and some are achieving the higher Level 3. Pupils have a sound understanding of the relative values of hundreds, tens and units up to 1000. Some pupils are confident in recognising numbers above 1000. Many are confident in mental additions and subtractions within 20 and are beginning to recall accurately simple multiplication facts involving multiples of 2, 3, 4, 5 and 10.

They can recognise simple fractions such as halves and quarters and they can identify common two and three-dimensional shapes. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have experienced measuring length using non-standard measures (for example, hands or cubes) and some are able to use standard measures such as metres and centimetres.

- 158 In Key Stage 1, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and work is often well matched to their needs. Higher attaining pupils make generally satisfactory progress but, on occasions, they are given tasks which are too easy and which do not extend their learning sufficiently. The attainment of a small number of boys in mathematics is sometimes constrained by poor listening skills and low levels of concentration.
- 159 At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000, the results of statutory tests for eleven-year-olds in mathematics indicate that performance was well below that of schools nationally and similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 (60%) was well below average whereas the proportion attaining the higher Level 5 (20%) was close to the national average. The small number of pupils in each year group has led to overall results fluctuating from year-to-year. While attainment remains below the national average, there has been a trend of improvement since 1997. Girls tend to perform worse than girls nationally, although their rate of improvement has been better than the national rate.
- 160 Evidence from lesson observations, pupils' work and discussions with pupils indicates that standards of attainment in the current Year 6 are generally below the national average. These pupils are not confident when using mental computations, especially multiplication and division, to solve number problems. However, some Year 5 pupils use mental computations confidently and their attainment is above average. These pupils also demonstrate a secure understanding of fractions, decimals, simple percentages and ratios. They can calculate the perimeters of shapes and have developed formulae for calculating the area of squares and rectangles.
- 161 In Key Stage 2, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and are well supported in lessons. Higher attaining pupils make generally satisfactory progress and attain standards above the national average. Progress in Years 5 and 6 is often good for pupils of all abilities. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls at the end of the key stage.
- 162 In both key stages there are examples of carefully presented work. However, standards of presentation are variable and in general expectations for the quality of presentation are too low.
- 163 ***The school has implemented effectively the National Numeracy Strategy and the quality of teaching in mathematics has improved significantly since the last inspection. Teaching in all the five lessons observed was at least satisfactory, with many positive features; and it was good in two lessons. Overall, numeracy skills are taught well. Pupils respond well in numeracy lessons and they particularly enjoy the mental and oral work at the start of lessons.***
- 164 In both key stages lessons followed the structure of the numeracy strategy and



commenced with well-paced mental and oral sessions. At best, these sessions were directed at the whole class and contained questions or tasks pitched at the level of the different ages and abilities of the class. In the Key Stage 1 class, the teacher made good use of the counting stick to encourage counting within 10 and 100 and all pupils were engaged in the activity. On less successful occasions, activities were directed at individuals and the majority of pupils were not engaged in trying to answer the task. In one lesson with Year 5 and 6 pupils the mental oral work, involving counting in 3s and 9s, linked very well with the main focus of the lesson on ratio.

- 165 All lessons concluded with planned whole-class sessions which sought to review and reinforce what had been learned during individual and group work. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson, this time was used well to review learning about ratios and to predict future outcomes using pupils' knowledge of multiples. In another lesson with the same group of pupils, insufficient time was left for the planned review and links to future work were not developed effectively.
- 166 In both key stages, lessons were planned conscientiously and in detail with clear and appropriate learning objectives relating to different groups of pupils. These objectives and the purpose of the lesson were generally made clear to the pupils. Individual and group activities were planned carefully and organised well to meet the needs of the range of age and ability in the class. In a good lesson with Years 5 and 6, the least able group had to work hard to complete a chart recording simple ratios and then used this information to solve related problems. The highest attaining pupils had to concentrate hard to solve much more complex problems involving ratio and predicting forward. Here all pupils made good progress in their learning. In general, less able pupils were supported well in lessons and made satisfactory progress. In most lessons the highest attaining pupils were set tasks that made them think and they had to work hard to succeed. This was particularly evident in Years 5 and 6. In a lesson with Years 1 and 2, high attaining pupils spent too long completing a relatively easy task and did not get on to the planned more difficult work.
- 167 Generally, pupils respond well to work in mathematics and behave well in lessons, particularly in Years 5 and 6. They are attentive and eager to respond during mental work. They react well to the enthusiasm of the teachers and the energy of the teaching, and relationships between teachers and pupils are good. In Key Stage 1, some Year 2 boys did not listen carefully to instructions and distracted each other while working. The class teacher recognised this, separated the boys and explained the key teaching points again. In a lesson in Years 3 and 4, some immature boys dominated interaction with the teacher by sitting together at the front and calling out. This limited the opportunities for girls to respond during whole-class teaching and high attaining girls did not contribute as much to the session as they could have done.
- 168 Although none of the teachers has a specialist qualification in mathematics, the subject co-ordinator has attended regular training and all teachers have received school-based training relating to the National Numeracy Strategy. In all lessons teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and used appropriate mathematical vocabulary. For example, in one lesson a pupil describing a graph referred to the 'side' and was rightly reminded that the correct term was 'axis'. In the Key Stage 2 class, key vocabulary relating to the current work in mathematics is displayed prominently and

teachers made appropriate reference to this during lessons.

- 169 A feature of lessons in both key stages was how well the majority of pupils worked together when required to. This was most apparent in Years 5 and 6 where two boys trying to solve difficult ratio questions talked through the meaning of the questions carefully and then applied their mathematical knowledge to solve the problems. In two of the lessons, effective use was made of information and communication technology to support learning. Again pupils worked co-operatively when using the computers, but the potential for learning is sometimes restricted by the small number of computers available in classrooms.
- 170 ***The teaching of mathematics is planned carefully across all key stages. The school has introduced appropriate methods for assessing pupils' attainment but makes more limited use of this information to plan what pupils need to learn next.***
- 171 Teachers plan together on a termly basis and useful support has been received from the local education authority's numeracy consultants. The headteacher monitors medium and short-term plans which draw upon the national numeracy framework. This ensures that pupils within mixed-age classes experience an appropriate range of mathematical concepts and skills over a two-year period. The organisation of Key Stage 2 into two teaching groups (Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6) enables teachers to match the level of work more effectively to the pupils' needs and abilities. Pupils' work in science and design and technology provides opportunities for the practical application of mathematics' skills. For example, pupils' develop their work on angles when measuring the angles of reflection in a science topic on light. They also measure temperature and record information on simple graphs. These opportunities are planned by class teachers in relation to particular topics. There is no systematic long-term planning for teaching mathematics and numeracy across the curriculum.
- 172 The school's assessment policy has been implemented in the last twelve months. Teachers use commercial standardised tests and optional test material from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to assess pupils' attainment and progress and to set individual targets for the next year. Teachers have also designed and used end-of-module tests to assess and record learning against the key planned objectives. Pupils' work is marked up-to-date and teachers' comments are generally positive in tone but rarely refer to mathematical knowledge and understanding. There is only limited evidence of the way in which day-to-day assessment is used to plan next steps in learning.
- 173 Mathematics homework is set at least weekly in Years 5 and 6 and makes an appropriate contribution to pupils' learning. It is used less consistently and less effectively across the rest of the school.
- 174 ***Mathematics is led and managed effectively by the headteacher but there is no systematic programme for monitoring the quality of teaching.*** The subject co-ordinator has introduced a new policy for mathematics and ensured that the National Numeracy Strategy is implemented across the school. Although she monitors teachers' planning, she has not yet undertaken a systematic programme of observing

lessons and identifying strengths and weaknesses in teaching. A numeracy governor has been appointed; has discussed performance with the headteacher; and has reported back to other governors. The school has made a significant investment in interactive resources such as number fans and digit cards for mental work. Overall, resources for mathematics are adequate and generally well organised and accessible. Classrooms are bright and attractive and support teaching and learning in mathematics well. Since the last inspection significant improvements have been made to the quality of teaching and attainment, while varying from year group to year group, has risen across the school.

## SCIENCE

- 175 ***Overall, standards in science are average when compared with those found in primary schools nationally. In the 2000 tests for eleven-year-olds, the school's results were below the national average and well below average when compared with similar schools. These results must be treated with caution because of the small number of pupils in the year group. Evidence gathered during the inspection from lesson observations, scrutiny of work in pupils' books and discussions with pupils and staff indicates that standards are broadly in line with national averages across the school. Although attainment in the current Year 6 is average, elsewhere in Key Stage 2 there are examples of above average attainment.***
- 176 The results of teacher assessments for seven-year-olds in 2000 indicate that attainment was very high at the expected Level 2 (100%) but well below average at the higher Level 3 when compared with schools nationally and similar schools. Attainment in experimental and investigative science was particularly low.
- 177 Evidence from lesson observations and pupils' work this year indicates that attainment across Key Stage 1 is average, with some examples of work at the higher level 3. In Years 1 and 2, pupils can sort and classify materials such as plastic, metal, wood and glass. Year 2 pupils have learned to make a distinction between natural and not natural materials. All pupils have investigated magnetic attraction and recorded results using a simple table. They understand the differences between magnetic and non-magnetic materials. When investigating an ice cube melting, they have been encouraged to predict in which of three different locations it would melt first. Pupils have also recorded changes in plant growth through observational drawings and simple labels. Year 2 pupils have used simple measures of length to record increased growth.
- 178 At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000, the results of statutory tests for eleven-year-olds in science indicate that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 (70%) was well below average whereas the proportion attaining the higher Level 5 (30%) was close to the national average. Overall results have improved significantly since 1997. The performance of girls has improved markedly since 1997 at a much better rate than that seen nationally, whereas there has been little change in the overall performance of boys since 1997 against a national trend of improvement.
- 179 Evidence from lesson observations, pupils' work and discussions with pupils indicates that attainment in Key Stage 2 is broadly average and that some pupils are now attaining above the expected level for their age. In Year 6 most of the pupils are working at Level 4 and some Year 5 pupils are already achieving this. For example, in

conversation with an inspector, Year 5 and 6 pupils could describe accurately the main functions of a leaf and were aware of the term 'photosynthesis'; they understood the processes of filtration and evaporation and could identify situations when these would be appropriate; they talked knowledgeably about the significance of light reflecting and sound vibrating; and they were able to describe the key principles of fair testing. Pupils' work includes clearly written reports of investigations with appropriate conclusions. Sometimes opportunities are not provided to record predictions or hypotheses.

- 180 Across the school pupils of all abilities make generally satisfactory, and sometimes good progress in science. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively and higher attaining pupils are given appropriately challenging tasks. No significant difference is evident in pupils' work between the relative attainment of boys and girls.
- 181 Work in science makes a positive contribution to the development of skills in literacy and numeracy. Pupils' work shows evidence of a range of writing including labels, instructions and report writing under given headings. Some investigations in both key stages include the use of measurement, for example, the growth of plants, temperature and the angles of reflection of rays of light. More limited use is made of information and communication technology but there is evidence of its use in relation to data handling and for researching information about science topics.
- 182 ***The quality of teaching in science is at least satisfactory overall. Evidence from lesson observations and pupils' work indicates that teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and in Key Stage 2 it is good and sometimes very good.***
- 183 During the inspection two science lessons were observed, one in each key stage. In Key Stage 1 the teaching was satisfactory and in Key Stage 2 it was very good. Both lessons were planned in detail with clear objectives which were explained to the pupils. Lessons began with an introduction which reviewed effectively previous learning and reinforced key vocabulary. In Key Stage 2 particularly good use was made of well-focused questions to develop pupils' understanding of the term 'habitat' and of the distinction between 'physical location' and 'physical conditions'. In both lessons the teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge relating to plants and animals and made appropriate reference to health and safety issues – for example washing hands after working with plants.
- 184 In Key Stage 1, the teacher had prepared a good range of seeds and plants to allow pupils to explore seed types and to understand the seed growth cycle. Activities were well prepared and were particularly appropriate for both younger pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils made some really good observational drawings and labelled these; others created a sequence of pictures to demonstrate the 'seed cycle'; and others sorted and classified seeds. Higher attaining pupils coped quite easily with the tasks and were not sufficiently challenged by the activities.
- 185 The Key Stage 2 lesson benefited from the additional support of two adults and the teacher made very good use of a parent's interest and expertise to explore the habitat of the pond with a group of pupils. Both adults were given detailed briefing sheets

relating to the planned activities. Tasks were very well organised for all age groups and abilities. Well-prepared frames and texts were provided to help pupils to research information about habitats and two pupils used a computer programme to investigate riverside habitats. These were really good opportunities to use non-fiction text and extract key information. During the lesson the teacher maintained a good pace and kept reminding the pupils of the purpose of the lesson and expectations for completion. All pupils demonstrated clear gains in knowledge and understanding of habitats.

- 186 In both lessons the pupils were interested and engaged by the subject and the planned activities. Older pupils worked with sustained concentration and good levels of co-operation. Even when not directly supervised, two pupils worked well together using the computer programme to extract information. In Key Stage 1, one or two boys lost interest in the recording task and became fidgety and inattentive.
- 187 Both lessons offered the opportunity for spiritual development when exploring the mystery and complexity of the living world. In Key Stage 2, pupils were encouraged to reflect on how it would feel to live in certain habitats and they made some perceptive responses. In Key Stage 1, although pupils were able to link the poppy seed to a flowering poppy plant, more could have been done to reflect on the incredible life potential contained within such a small seed.
- 188 Since the last inspection the school has introduced more detailed curriculum guidelines and taken account of the science scheme of work provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The quality of teaching has improved significantly in Key Stage 2 where pupils now make better progress. Science is well planned across the school and pupils undertake an appropriate range of work in all expected areas of the science curriculum. The class teacher has provided the pupils with a good range of different ways of recording their investigations in a logical and structured way. This has helped them to develop skills relating to scientific enquiry and to understand the components of a 'fair test'.
- 189 Teachers mark pupils' work up-to-date and written comments are usually positive in tone. Occasionally, comments relate to scientific knowledge and understanding – for example, 'Could you collect the gas?' – but such comments are rare. Teachers assess pupils' attainment and progress in scientific enquiry once each year and conduct end-of-topic assessments to discover what pupils know and understand. There is less evidence of this information being used systematically to plan what pupils need to learn next. Teachers rarely record day-to-day assessments of pupils' work or use this information to evaluate how successful a particular lesson has been in achieving its key objectives. Science is rarely recorded as a homework activity.
- 190 ***The science co-ordinator leads and manages the subject effectively but has not undertaken any systematic monitoring of performance across the school.*** She has produced both a policy statement and curriculum guidelines. Although not a science specialist, she has undertaken appropriate in-service training organised by the local education authority. She has completed an audit of resources and discussed curriculum policy and the school's results with a nominated governor. She has not yet had an opportunity to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching or the effectiveness of the curriculum across the school, for example through a programme of lesson

observations and a scrutiny of work.

- 191 Overall, resources for science have improved since the last inspection and are now of sufficient quality and quantity to meet the needs of the National Curriculum. The school supplements its own resources through book loans from the local schools' library service. The school grounds offer excellent opportunities and are well used for developing environmental science and studying plants and animals.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 192 ***Overall, standards in information and communication technology are average when compared with those found in primary schools nationally. Evidence gathered during the inspection from lesson observations, scrutiny of work in pupils' books and discussion with pupils and staff indicates that by the age of seven pupils attain standards that are generally average for pupils of this age group. In Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in the current Year 6 is below the national average. However, standards are improving across the rest of the key stage and are average in Years 3, 4 and 5.***
- 193 At the age of seven pupils' attainment is broadly average. At an early age most pupils become confident users of a mouse and have some technical vocabulary to talk and ask questions about their work. Pupils are taught an appropriate range of word processing, graphics, data handling, control and modelling skills in line with their age and ability. They know that information and communication technology can be used to help them access and communicate information, record their writing, create pictures, and present tables of results. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1.
- 194 At the age of eleven pupils' attainment is slightly below average but standards in other year groups are broadly in line with the national average for their ages. Part of the explanation is that the scheme of work was introduced relatively recently so older pupils have not benefited from a planned approach to teaching that built progressively on their previous learning. Pupils use word processing and graphics to present their writing. They practise using the scanner to copy and print their drawings. Pupils use a CD multimedia encyclopaedia to access information, for example, about castles and are developing increasing awareness that the internet, e-mail, television and video can support research purposes. They learn about simple spreadsheets and find, sort and print out a list using an appropriate program. They re-present data about bread choices as a graph and explore decision trees. They have some experience of communicating by e-mail with a local school. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2.
- 195 ***During the inspection two lessons were observed. The teaching in Key Stage 1 was satisfactory with some good features. In Key Stage 2 the teaching was good.*** Teachers' subject knowledge was good and they were confident in the use of technical language and demonstration. Clear objectives focused the learning and encouraged pupils to pay attention. Good relationships, firm management and clear expectations about careful listening helped keep pupils on task. Good questioning and encouragement for pupils to predict ahead, by asking 'Guess what will happen next?', enabled pupils to generalise from their previous experience and offer sensible

suggestions. Unfortunately, in Key Stage 1 the learning potential of the activity demonstrated by the teacher was not fully realised because the computer screen was too small for all pupils to see clearly. In both lessons, there was limited opportunity for pupils to use and apply the teaching with only one computer available for use.

- 196 ***Information and communication technology is led and managed effectively across the school.*** The subject co-ordinator has produced a sound policy and the school has adopted the national scheme of work produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Specific teaching of information and communication technology skills is timetabled for each class and is also used in lessons to support learning in other subjects. Careful planning ensures that pupils make progress as they move through the school. There is a series of helpful 'I can do' sheets to help pupils assess and record their own learning. Parents receive an annual written report which includes statements about their child's attainment and progress in information and communication technology.
- 197 The headteacher and co-ordinator for information and communication technology have drawn up a strategic plan, which is realistic and manageable. There is a helpful summary portfolio of pupils' work that exemplifies what pupils can do. Staff are developing their personal skills in preparation for New Opportunities Funding training during the next year. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, together with some governors, are pursuing the European Computer Driving Licence course with enthusiasm. Teachers use information and communication technology for their own planning and to produce classroom resources, thereby setting a good model for pupils. The co-ordinator monitors performance in the subject through informal contacts with colleagues. At present there is no systematic approach to monitoring the quality of teaching or the progress made by pupils. However, good examples of pupils' work are celebrated on the 'special work' board.
- 198 Although there is access to at least one computer in each classroom, there are insufficient computers for all pupils to follow up purposeful teaching in whole-class lessons. This makes it more difficult to practise skills frequently and regularly in order to improve further the standards of attainment. There are plans to improve the ratio of computers to pupils. Nevertheless, the provision for information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection and there is evidence that standards have improved as a result of the more structured approach to teaching and learning in the subject.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 199 ***By the age of seven and eleven pupils attain average standards for their age group and make at least satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Good links are made with some other subjects, such as English.***
- 200 By the age of seven pupils know some key features of stories about Jesus and from the Old Testament. They can recall some key facts about Christian and Jewish festivals and are beginning to understand the religious symbolism of light. They respond sensitively to the experiences and feelings of others, for example, when talking about whom they admire and why. Pupils are making links between values, including those which underpin the Christian faith, and their own attitudes and behaviour.

- 201 By the age of eleven pupils can describe the key beliefs and teachings of Christianity and Sikhism. They know the main events of Holy Week and the Christmas story. They appreciate the importance of the '5 Ks' to practising Sikhs. Pupils are able to reflect on treasured objects in their own lives and they understand the importance of the Bible and the Guru Granth Sahib within differing religious traditions.
- 202 ***During the inspection two lessons were observed; one in either key stage. The quality of teaching was good in both lessons.*** Teachers had good subject knowledge and good knowledge of pupils, which enabled them to move the learning beyond factual knowledge into an exploration of feelings and values. Clear learning objectives ensured that discussions focused well on the purpose of the lesson. Good quality questioning engaged less confident, older pupils in Key Stage 2, and helped pupils in Key Stage 1 to listen respectfully as each of them took turns to make a contribution to the lesson. Strong relationships ensured that pupils were comfortable and confident when talking about personal views and feelings. In Key Stage 1 forward planning of homework was used very effectively as a foundation for discussion in the lesson. Consequently, pupils were well prepared to talk about whom they admire and why. In Key Stage 2 good story reading interested and focused pupils' attention, especially boys. There were some missed opportunities to stretch the higher attaining pupils with more challenging questions. A very small number of boys did not concentrate sufficiently on independent work and did not apply enough effort to their tasks. They lacked self-discipline and motivation and were not given clear enough direction by the teacher of what was expected of them in terms of behaviour and output.
- 203 Since the last inspection the school has moved from using a commercial scheme of work to using the nationally recommended scheme of work for religious education. Work is soundly planned as a sequence of lessons but learning objectives, skills and opportunities for assessment are not linked clearly within each lesson. There is no assessment and recording of individual pupil progress in religious education but parents receive an appropriate comment in the annual written report.
- 204 The subject is managed in a collegiate manner, by teaching staff, through shared review and planning at the end of each term. The headteacher has made a sensible decision to resource each of the units of work on world faiths as they occur in the long-term planning cycle. Resources for Sikhism are of good quality and well used to provide an informative display in the school hall. Resources for teaching Christianity are adequate. The vicar's contribution and the use of the local church enhance the provision for religious education.
- 205 Monitoring of planning, teaching and learning is largely informal and arises out of shared discussion between staff at the end of each term.
- 206 Overall, the subject has maintained the strengths reported in the last inspection. There have been improvements in relating the subject more firmly in pupils' own experiences and ensuring it contributes effectively to pupils' spiritual development.



## OTHER SUBJECTS OF THE CURRICULUM

- 207 *The limited time allocated to the inspection and the organisation of the school's timetable resulted in no lessons being observed in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. Other evidence indicates that pupils achieve average standards of attainment, in both key stages, in art and design, design and technology, geography and history. There was insufficient evidence upon which to make sound judgements about attainment and progress in music and physical education. No judgements could be made about the quality of teaching in the above subjects.*
- 208 Examples of pupils' work together with several pieces on display around the school indicate that attainment in **art and design** is average at the ages of seven and eleven years. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in both classes.
- 209 Pupils often investigate and produce similar outcomes within classes, working at individual levels and responding in line with their age and ability. Pupils in Key Stage 1 investigate simple printing techniques. Pupils in Key Stage 2 use polystyrene to produce some pleasing prints. They execute careful observational drawing, for example of a musical instrument or a loaf of bread with developing awareness of size and proportion. Pupils master a variety of skills and learn to express themselves using a range of different techniques. For example, work using a range of media and collage techniques enabled pupils to develop ideas about a sea view. Younger pupils paint self-portraits and older pupils paint Tudor monarchs.
- 210 The school has not recently given priority to developing this subject and there is no up-to-date policy to describe expectations for the range and quality of teaching and learning. However, the school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme of work for art. At the end of each term staff review the work covered and plan for the next part of the programme. A review is planned for the future in the school development plan. There are no arrangements for assessing and recording progress in art but parents do receive a written report, once a year, which gives details of their child's attainment and progress.
- 211 The subject is managed in a collegiate manner through informal shared discussion and planning. Resources are adequate and stored carefully, which helps pupils learn to take care of other people's property.
- 212 In **design and technology**, examples of pupils' work from Key Stage 2 indicate that attainment is in line with the national average and that some pupils produce work of an above average standard.
- 213 Pupils have investigated toys, linked to work in history on the theme of 'Evacuation', and created a design to fit the context. One pupil indicated that he chose his toy because "it was small, light and had no batteries". Pupils have also worked with cams and cranks; used electrical circuits; and investigated winches in a topic on 'Fairgrounds'. In food technology, they have considered diet and nutrition and healthy lifestyle. This work has made an important contribution to personal, social and health

education as well as extending pupils' cultural development through raising their awareness of food from other cultures – for example, Mediterranean village bread and Peshawari naan bread. In other topics pupils have designed toys using a pneumatic system and also made a box to hold six sweets.

- 214 Overall, the various topics in design and technology have enabled pupils to generate product ideas and the requirements of a design; plan work; communicate their ideas through drawings, plans and text; consider materials and their properties; make up their designs using a range of cutting and sticking techniques and tools; and evaluate their work.
- 215 The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme of work for design and technology and an appropriate amount of time is allocated to the subject. At the end of each term staff review the work covered and plan for the next part of the programme. There is no curriculum policy which describes expectations for teaching and learning in design and technology. Nor are there any arrangements for assessing and recording progress in the subject. However, parents do receive a written report once a year which includes a statement relating to pupils' attainment and progress in design and technology.
- 216 The subject is managed in a collegiate manner through informal shared discussion and planning. Resources are adequate and stored carefully. The spacious accommodation provides good opportunities for designing and making.
- 217 Examples of pupils' work from Key Stages 1 and 2 indicate that by the ages of seven and eleven pupils attain standards in *geography* that are average for their age and they make satisfactory progress in their learning.
- 218 In Key Stage 1 pupils develop knowledge of different places and locations through the imaginary travels of Barnaby Bear. They are able to compare the island of Struay with life in Normanton-on-Trent and to describe and contrast physical and human features of the different localities. They have also produced simple concept maps of the journey from their home to school.
- 219 In Key Stage 2, pupils have extended their knowledge of other localities through studying Chembakoli. This topic has enabled them to use maps of the World and to create local land use sketch maps. They can use pictures and non-fiction text to explore similarities and differences in landscape and climate and are beginning to understand how these features affect human activity. There is less evidence of developing skills in using maps, atlases, globes and scales.
- 220 The school has adopted the national scheme of work for geography and an appropriate amount of time is allocated to teaching the subject. At the end of each term staff review the work covered and plan for the next part of the programme. The organisation of the curriculum into in-depth one-term topics means that a year can pass between geography topics. As a result, pupils sometimes find it difficult to recall previous learning in the subject. There is no up-to-date curriculum policy for geography and no arrangements for assessing and recording progress in the subject.

However, parents do receive a written report once a year which includes a statement relating to pupils' attainment and progress in geography. The subject is managed in a collegiate manner through informal shared discussion and planning.

- 221 Examples of pupils' work from Key Stages 1 and 2 indicate that by the ages of seven and eleven pupils attain standards in *history* that are average for their age and they make satisfactory progress in their learning.
- 222 In Key Stage 1 pupils have learned the key features of the story of the Fire of London. They have retold the story in sequence and illustrated it showing a basic knowledge of the type of buildings and the fierceness of the fire. They have used the story to compare the housing of the time with modern houses and have considered the conditions that led to the fire spreading so quickly. Through the topic they have been able to compare some of the basic features of fire fighting in the seventeenth century with modern day fire fighters. In other topics they have used artefacts – for example, flat irons and stone hot water bottles - as sources of information about life in past times.
- 223 In Key Stage 2, pupils have undertaken an in-depth topic on the Tudors. They have studied the Tudor dynasty and its family tree and know about the Royal Court and its lifestyle. They have considered the critical issues relating to Henry VIII's divorces. Older pupils have used a portrait of Henry VIII as a source of evidence about his appearance and character. They have also researched information about each of his wives from texts and other sources.
- 224 Pupils have made satisfactory progress in developing historical knowledge, understanding and skills. They have used appropriate vocabulary relating to the past; begun to understand how people lived in various periods of history; developed an awareness of significant differences between the past and present; demonstrated understanding and factual knowledge of key events of the past; and begun to explain and understand the consequences of past events and changes.
- 225 Work in history and geography has made an effective contribution to developing pupils' literacy skills through sequencing stories; compiling lists of features, writing labels; producing pieces of descriptive, factual writing about buildings and artefacts; writing letters from a character's point of view; and extracting key information from texts and other sources.
- 226 The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme of work for history and an appropriate amount of time is allocated to the subject. At the end of each term staff review the work covered and plan for the next part of the programme. The organisation of the curriculum into in-depth one-term topics means that a year can pass between history topics. This makes it more difficult for pupils to develop an understanding of chronology and the relationships between different periods and events in history. There is no up-to-date curriculum policy for history and no arrangements for assessing and recording progress in the subject. However, parents do receive a written report once a year which includes a statement relating to pupils' attainment and progress in history. The subject is managed in a collegiate manner through informal shared discussion and planning.

- 227 During the inspection, there was little evidence of *music* permeating the general life of the school. However, pupils have regular, timetabled music lessons and they sing satisfactorily in assembly. The school has adopted the national scheme of work and teachers plan together. The subject is managed informally and reviewed by staff together at the end of each term as they plan the next units of work. There is no assessment and recording of individual pupils' progress in music but parents receive an appropriate comment in the annual written report. Resources are adequate and stored carefully so pupils can access them easily.
- 228 The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme of work for *physical education* and allocates an above average amount of time to teaching the subject. This reflects additional time spent in travelling to Newark for swimming lessons. Teachers plan together to cover appropriate elements of games, athletics, gymnastics, dance and swimming. The school grounds afford good facilities for outdoor games on the field and the hard play area. A school of this size is fortunate to have a hall and this provides a good area for dance and gymnastics for younger pupils. The size of the hall constrains the range of such activities for older pupils.
- 229 The subject is managed informally and reviewed by staff together at the end of each term as they plan the next units of work. There is no assessment and recording of individual pupils' progress in physical education but parents receive a comment in the annual written report.