

INSPECTION REPORT

HENRY BRADLEY INFANT SCHOOL

Brimington, Chesterfield

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112519

Headteacher: Mrs I. Birkin

Reporting inspector: Brian Aldridge
17454

Dates of inspection: 19th to 22nd November 2001

Inspection number: 193434

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Princess Street Brimington Chesterfield
Postcode:	S43 1HR
Telephone number:	01246 273857
Fax number:	N/A
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr N.Sumner
Date of previous inspection:	14 th April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17454	Brian Aldridge	Registered inspector	Science Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs	What should the school do to improve further The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed
14178	Patricia Willman	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
18143	Bernice Magson	Team inspector	English Art and design Geography History Foundation stage	
20911	Judy Dawson	Team inspector	Equal opportunities English as an additional language Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils

The inspection contractor was:

SES
132 Whitaker Road
Derby
DE23 6AP

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Henry Bradley Infant School caters for children from three to seven drawn from a wide range of social backgrounds. Many families in the area experience social and economic stress. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average; however, some families choose not to take up their entitlement to school meals. The number on roll, which fluctuates a great deal, has fallen since the last inspection and is now 183 boys and girls in approximately equal numbers, including 52 nursery-aged children who attend part-time. There are 80 children in the foundation stage, including those in the nursery. Children enter the reception classes in September and January each year after spending two and four terms in the nursery. There are very few pupils of minority ethnic heritage and all pupils speak English as their first language. Seventeen pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs, which is broadly in line with the national average. This number includes a below average proportion of pupils who have a statement. When children enter the school their attainment is well below average; deficits are most marked in communication and literacy skills. There are now more children entering the school with low levels of experience and skills in talking and listening than at the time of the last inspection. Major building work was taking place during the inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that is very well led by the headteacher. Children and pupils learn well in lessons and achieve well because teaching is good. Very good assessment methods have a positive effect on standards. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good and consequently pupils achieve well.
- The school is very well led and managed.
- Pupils are very well cared for.
- Assessment procedures are very good.

What could be improved

- There are too few opportunities for pupils to make choices, select materials and conduct their own investigations.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in April 1997 the headteacher, the management team and the teachers have successfully concentrated on improving achievement. Progress was judged to be sound at the time of the last inspection. Starting from a lower base, pupils now make good progress. The school has effectively addressed the five key issues identified by the last inspection and this has helped to achieve a very good rate of improvement. The quality of teaching has improved significantly and now teachers base their plans on very good assessments of pupils' work. The study of all of the subjects of the National Curriculum, including design and technology, highlighted in the last inspection, are now based on national guidelines. Pupils start using joined handwriting earlier than at the last inspection and the amount of time they spend in school each day is now in line with recommendations. The curriculum and pupils' personal development has improved and assessment systems and the use of assessment results to adapt the curriculum and teaching is now much better. Pupils are better cared for and the relationships with parents have improved a great deal.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
Reading	C	D	D	C
Writing	D	D	D	C
Mathematics	B	B	C	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Comparisons with similar schools have been recalculated to take account of the above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs, the substantial proportion of pupils who change school each year and the significant number of pupils who are known to have an entitlement to a free school but who do not take it. Overall, the school's results have risen at about the same rate as the national trend. The school sets itself challenging targets and has achieved and exceeded these targets. On entry to the school, boys' attainment is below that of girls and this narrows as the school deals effectively with boys' learning needs. As pupils enter the school attaining levels well below those expected, pupils achieve well and make good progress in their learning.

Inspectors found that in Year 2 standards in mathematics are average and those in speaking, listening, reading and writing are below average. Pupils achieve standards in line with the levels expected of pupils of this age in all the other subjects except music in which standards are above average. Pupils achieve well in the infant classes. Children learn well in the nursery and reception classes but they do not reach the early learning goals¹ by the end of the foundation stage.² Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Pupils with the most severe educational needs are given excellent support and this helps them learn very well in their sessions.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils are very happy and really enjoy their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; pupils work and play together very well.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good and relationships are very good.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory, although the school tries very hard attendance remains below national levels.

¹ Early Learning Goals – these final stepping stones set out what children are expected to know by the time they start Year 1 of the National Curriculum.

² The Foundation Stage – the key stage of learning for children aged from three up to the time they join Year 1 and begin the National Curriculum.

Behaviour is excellent in assemblies. The very good behaviour shown by pupils is a result of the excellent models adults give pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Good	Good

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

Teaching is good overall and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. High quality teaching was observed in both stages of the school. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is very good. Teachers are very skilled at teaching how letter sounds make up words and how to use numbers. Teachers manage their classes very well; pupils' very good behaviour is an outcome of the excellent relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils learn well in lessons because teachers use very high quality day-to-day assessment and this means that they know their pupils very well indeed. Pupils with special educational needs learn very well. Teachers plan work that is suited to the different needs of pupils. Pupils work hard, are interested in their tasks and really enjoy their learning. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is good; teachers are particularly skilled at making links between subjects. The school has very effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills. Design and technology now meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and has improved since the last inspection.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and the provision for pupils with statements is excellent.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good; staff members provide excellent examples for pupils to follow. Pupils are taught to think of themselves as being important members of their local and wider communities.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good; the school tracks pupils' progress very well and assessment procedures have improved a great deal since the last inspection.

Links with the community and other schools are very good. The school has effective relationships with parents and they think very highly of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads the school very effectively; she is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and well supported by curriculum coordinators.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The work of the governors is satisfactory. They know what the school has to do to improve and are very supportive of the headteacher and staff.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses results and checks on teachers' work very well.
The strategic use of resources	The headteacher is very successful when applying for funds and the school uses the resources available to good effect.

The school is well staffed and resources and accommodation are satisfactory. The school applies the principles of best value very well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children like coming to school and their behaviour is good. Children receive the right amount of work, are expected to work hard and are helped to become mature. Teaching is good, children make good progress and they feel well informed about their children's progress. The school works closely with parents and they feel comfortable about approaching the school. The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were no significant issues raised by parents.

At the pre-inspection meeting and in the questionnaires there were no significant concerns expressed about the school's work. The inspection team agree with parents; the school takes very good care of children and works hard to raise standards.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Since the last inspection, the attainment levels of children entering the nursery have fallen in successive years, especially in the learning areas of communication, language and literacy. Overall, children enter the nursery with standards that are well below average for their age. Although children learn well in the foundation stage they do not reach the statutorily defined early learning goals by the time they have finished the reception year and are ready to enter Year 1. However, thanks largely to the good quality of teaching their levels of attainment are higher in relation to nationally expected standards at the end of the reception year that they were when they entered the nursery.
2. Inspectors found that by the end of Year 2 standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing are below average. In all of the other subjects, including mathematics, pupils achieve standards in line with the levels expected of pupils of this age. This represents a creditable achievement; overall progress is good through Years 1 and 2.
3. The level at which inspectors saw seven-year-olds working confirms the results of the 2001 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1. Compared to all schools standards were below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. The results of the statutory teachers' assessments in science were above average. Compared to schools with a similar intake, the results were average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. Overall, the school's results have risen at about the same rate as the national trend although there were dips in all three areas in the last year. Girls' attainment is considerably higher than boys when children enter the school but this gap narrows as pupils move through the school. The proportions of pupils attaining the higher levels of the National Curriculum are low. The school sets itself challenging targets and has achieved and exceeded these targets. Overall, taking into account that children enter the school attaining levels well below those expected, by the time they leave the school pupils achieve well and make good progress in their learning, especially in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Pupils with the most severe learning difficulties are given very good support and this helps them learn very well in their lessons and support sessions.
4. A growing number entering the nursery class have difficulty talking clearly and many have skills in this and other areas that are well below average. Children spend between two and four terms of part-time learning in the nursery and then move to the reception class of the foundation stage where some pupils have three terms and some two. They make good progress in all areas of their learning with the exception of creative development in the reception class where they do not have enough opportunities to work independently. Only in the area of personal and social development do they reach the early learning goals set for children as they enter Year 1 of the National Curriculum.
5. In communication, language and literacy they gain in confidence, due partly to tasks that combine elements of learning in a number of areas. For example, pupils are asked to explain about dressing and the layout of their bedrooms. This helps them learn words and reinforces learning about how to look after themselves. Children are keen to listen to stories and join in well with regularly repeated lines such as those in the Three Little Pigs. Again good links are formed as children in the reception class build houses from straw, wood and bricks and test the strength of their models. Children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children also learn well in

their mathematical development, with a very small group of children in the reception class counting back and forward from and to 10. Most children are near to the early learning goals for mathematical development by the time they begin the first year of the National Curriculum. Physical skills are well developed with lots of opportunities to use the outside play area and large toys in the nursery and the hall for children in the reception class. In the area of personal, social and emotional development children are given plenty of opportunities to play and work together in class and this is reinforced well for children in the reception class at playtimes and lunchtimes. Lunchtime supervisors are particularly skilled at encouraging children to play games.

6. Throughout the school pupils now benefit from much improved assessment systems that help teachers to track pupils' learning and ensure that teaching and curriculum planning are based on a high quality analysis of standards. Pupils' learning in lessons is good overall and develops well as they move through the school. Because the quality of teaching, the curriculum and assessment procedures have improved, pupils now learn more effectively in lessons and are growing in confidence.
7. Pupils achieve well in English. Speaking, listening, reading and writing are below the average seen in other schools but pupils learn well in lessons. Reading, spelling and writing are taught daily and teachers are skilled at planning opportunities for pupils to practice their English skills in other subjects. There are plenty of books around the school and ample opportunities to learn the letter sounds that make up words. Pupils enjoy listening to traditional stories and nursery rhymes and, though some may have difficulty in talking about what they hear, this is not because of lack of attention. Pupils often cannot recall the correct word to complete their sentences. However, teachers recognise this and correct speech and errors in vocabulary. Because of this some pupils find it difficult to recognise the different sounds they need to read words successfully and again teachers work hard so that, by the end of Year 2, most are reading and enjoying books. Pupils benefit from a number of projects to help them develop their reading skills. A successful attempt is being made to involve more boys in reading and the help and support of the local community is key area in this development.
8. Year 2 pupils work with numbers up to 100 in their mathematics work. Most have a good understanding of how the position of numbers affects their value. Pupils round numbers up and down to the nearest 10 and know which are odd and even. They explain the properties of solid shapes and in some classes use graphs and charts to record their findings in other subjects. Achievement in mathematics is particularly good in number although pupils need more opportunities to solve problems and carry out investigations. In their science work pupils achieve average standards in their knowledge of plants, animals, forces and materials. They know, for instance, the conditions needed for healthy growth and explain how the earth spinning brings about day and night. However, pupils do not experience enough opportunities to make up their own investigations to design their own experiments.
9. The standards achieved in information and communication technology (ICT) have been maintained since the last inspection. The school has invested heavily in new equipment and staff training. These developments have increased teachers' confidence and in turn this has helped pupils achieve well particularly as very few pupils have computers at home to reinforce their learning in school. Standards in music are higher than in other subjects due to some very good specialist teaching by the music coordinator combined with secure class teaching. A notable improvement has been made in standards in design and technology, which were below average at the time of the last inspection and

are now average. The improvement is due to improved curriculum and strong subject leadership.

10. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Teachers and learning support assistants work well together and support pupils well to ensure their full inclusion in all aspects of the curriculum. Pupils' individual education plans are of satisfactory quality; they do not give enough details of programmes but teachers have a very good knowledge of all pupils which means that these pupils work at appropriate levels. At every opportunity pupils are taught letter sounds and repeat and practise sounds and letters to improve spelling and reading. The organisation of support effectively enables pupils to follow the literacy and numeracy strategies with their friends and, because the work is well matched to their abilities, they make valuable contributions to lessons and self-esteem is raised.
11. There are more pupils entering the school with the language and literacy skills at a lower level than those seen during the first inspection. Because of the improvements in teaching, the curriculum and assessment arrangements, pupils learn well in lessons and achieve well as they grow older.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. All pupils, including the children in the foundation stage and those with special educational needs, enjoy their time in school and have very positive attitudes. They respond very well to the excellent values promoted by the school and the relationships they have with each other and with the adults who work with them. Their behaviour in and around the school is also very good. These aspects of pupils' development have improved since the last inspection. Pupils' good personal development has been maintained well. Most pupils respond with enthusiasm when given opportunities to make choices and show initiative in their work and around the school. These very positive features are a significant element in the good progress that pupils make during their time in school. The level of attendance has been consistently below the national average since the last inspection and is unsatisfactory.
13. The children in the foundation stage in the nursery and reception class enjoy their time at school and have very good relationships with their teachers, with each other and with other adults who work with them. Most children arrive at school in good time and settle happily into the day. They take part in the many varied and interesting activities with enthusiasm, responding well to instructions and listening carefully to each other and to their teacher. A small number of children, however, do not always understand the instructions and rely too heavily on adult support. When this is not available, they do not learn as much as they could. This was evident in a reception numeracy lesson, for example, when some children had difficulty in carrying out their tasks without specific direction. They understand the routines of the classroom and tidy up carefully and sensibly. They help each other and clearly understand how the school expects them to behave. Although their attendance at school is not statutory, most of the children attend regularly.
14. The very good attitudes of the pupils contribute well to the happy life of the school community. They are keen to learn and enthusiastic about many aspects of their lives in school. Almost all the parents who expressed an opinion prior to and during the inspection feel that their children like coming to school and this was confirmed by many of the pupils. The school is committed to inclusion and the good support provided for pupils with special educational needs enables them to take a full part in all the activities offered in school and they do so with enthusiasm. Pupils respond well to the structure

of the literacy and numeracy sessions. Many are keen to offer their own ideas about their work and, because teachers value all these ideas, pupils' self-esteem grows. In a religious education lesson examining the special nature of celebrations, for example, Year 2 pupils confidently volunteered answers and set to work quickly and enthusiastically. Pupils are inquisitive and particularly enjoy the opportunities for practical work, often becoming excited by the outcome of their experiments. Because the rewards system in school is applied consistently, pupils understand that they have to try really hard to achieve the rewards. Their pride when their efforts are celebrated in assembly is obvious to all.

15. Because teachers manage classes very well, the behaviour of the pupils in lessons is very good overall and this has a significant impact on the good progress they make in their learning. The majority of parents who expressed a view consider that behaviour in the school is good and inspection evidence strongly supports this view. As a result of the building work, the outside play area is restricted. This has not, however, had a significant impact on the good standards of behaviour during playtimes and lunchtimes due to very good management by the staff on duty. Pupils' enthusiastically participate in the organised games and their immediate response to instructions indicates a level of control over natural exuberance that is necessary to ensure the safety of the pupils in the current circumstances. No unkind behaviour between the pupils was observed during the inspection. Pupils' behaviour in assemblies is usually excellent. They sit quietly, listen carefully and respond appropriately. They respond very well to the consistently, kind, firm and fair management by all members of staff and they quickly understand how they are expected to behave. During the last year, one pupil was excluded permanently after a period of fixed term exclusion. This was as a result of aggressive and violent behaviour towards other pupils and staff.
16. The very good relationships that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have with each other and their often excellent relationships with their teachers and with other adults in the school is an important element in the development of their personal and social skills. Most pupils co-operate well together in their lessons, sharing resources and taking turns with good humour. In a design and technology lesson in Year 1, for example, a small group of pupils persevered over a long period designing a marble run, carefully adjusting their design to improve the overall effect. When given opportunities to make choices in their learning, most pupils do so sensibly and enthusiastically. There are, however, a small number who need constant adult direction and support and, when this is not available, they do not make as much progress as they could. For example, in a Year 1 numeracy lesson working on two digit numbers, some pupils were unable to work effectively on their own and this inhibited their learning. Pupils learn to respect and value each other's opinions and feelings during their class discussions and gain an insight into the different lives and values of those in other parts of the world. They take part in fund raising for charity and learn about others less fortunate than themselves. Pupils have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and are aware that sometimes their actions may make their friends unhappy. They respect other's property and treat the school's resources with appropriate care, tidying up quickly and making sure that they replace the lids of the felt tip pens. Many pupils have limited conversational skills, but they are open and very friendly individuals who smile readily and greet visitors politely.
17. Although attendance at the school compares favourably with that of other local schools, it has been consistently below the national average since the last inspection and is unsatisfactory. Most parents advise the school of the reasons for their child's absence, there are a small number who do not. The school's analysis of absence for the year ending in July 2001 shows that a quarter of the pupils account for over half the absence.

These pupils are missing important elements of their learning. The majority of pupils, however, attend regularly and mostly on time. Whilst most of the authorised absence relates to childhood illness, there are a significant number of parents who take their children on holiday during term time. Registration time is used well for the exchange of information and quickly settles the pupils into the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT

18. The quality of teaching is good. Inspectors observed 38 lessons; in three per cent the quality of teaching was excellent, in 29 per cent teaching was very good, in 47 per cent teaching was good and in 21 per cent teaching was satisfactory. There were no observations of unsatisfactory teaching. All teachers demonstrate high quality teaching. Children and pupils in both stages learn well; from low starting points when they enter the foundation stage they achieve well as they move through the school. The rate of learning is noticeably faster in one Year 1 class where the quantity and quality of pupils' work is very good. In this and all classes, pupils' learning matches the quality of teaching.
19. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. This is because the headteacher has monitored teaching and she has ensured that teachers are well equipped to teach the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. It is also because assessment methods have improved substantially which means that teachers have very good levels of knowledge about how well pupils are doing with their work and in their personal development. In turn, because teachers know pupils well they can set challenging targets and the headteacher can use these targets to keep an eye on how well each class is doing. As a consequence of this careful monitoring the headteacher is aware of the differences in the quality of teaching and has matched teachers to take account of these differences.
20. Teaching in the foundation stage is good and children learn well from a low base. Teachers and nursery nurse concentrate on improving children's speaking, listening and thinking skills. Often teachers ask children to close their eyes and imagine. They use stories and play situations, such as a building site office, to encourage children to speak to each other and learn how to get along with each other. Learning is particularly effective in social and personal development.
21. There are strengths of teaching which are common to all teachers. Of most importance is the teaching of basic skills such as reading, writing and number. Teachers are very capable in this area of their work and the national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been introduced and are used well. They have good subject knowledge. Inspectors observed many examples of pupils improving their skills in these important areas. Teachers took very good care to encourage pupils to speak properly and to use the correct words to express their ideas. They ensure that pupils pronounce words correctly and are not satisfied when pupils use the word *thing* or *point*; they wait and offer reminders so that pupils use the correct word. Teachers are particularly skilled at making sure pupils learn letter sounds. In their individual and group reading, teachers keep track of how well pupils are doing and every opportunity is taken to practise these sounds. For example, new words are spelled aloud, helpful lists are provided and the school is generally well provided with books. Displays are used very effectively to help pupils spell and read words that they will use frequently in their current theme. Teachers effectively encourage pupils to join their handwriting earlier than when the school was last inspected. Consequently, pupils learn how to write neatly and work is well presented. Pupils learn their numbers and arithmetic rules well, especially in the first part of the numeracy lessons.

22. Teachers set up a very good learning environment in each classroom. The often excellent relationships with children and pupils, caring yet demanding, mean that pupils' very good behaviour and concentration is a natural outcome. Pupils listen carefully, work very hard and learn well. Teachers are particularly good at giving information to pupils in interesting ways, so that they remember these facts well. In a design and technology lesson models of wheeled vehicles provided an exciting focus. Music from different parts of the world was used very effectively to grab pupils' attention. In a science lesson in Year 1 the teacher could not find the colours she would like to use for Joseph's Dreamcoat. The music introduced the lesson and a large painting of Joseph could clearly be seen with lots of his coat showing white rather than a variety of colours. Teachers have a very close working knowledge of pupils' backgrounds, their learning and their personal development. This knowledge is based on the high quality assessments kept by teachers. The way in which teachers assess learning and then plan the next lessons based on these assessments has improved a great deal since the last inspection. Now teachers use regular tests and assessments to develop targets for each pupil.
23. Learning support assistants are well briefed about lessons. They keep records about each pupil's progress and use these records to keep the teacher up-to-date with the how well pupils have been learning. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and those with a statement of special educational needs receive very good support from the support service. Teachers and support assistants show great patience and persistence. They are good natured and kind, yet keep up the pace of learning so that children and pupils are occupied to good effect. Where it is helpful, teachers tell pupils how much time they have left to complete their work and this increases the pace of learning.
24. Teachers use homework well to support learning. Books are always available for pupils to take home, 'key words' are regularly used to support pupils reading and spelling and pupils are avid collectors of certificates which mark how well they are doing in their learning. There are some parents who find difficulty in supporting their children at home which means that pupils do not practise their reading and spelling skills as often as they should. This limits their learning.
25. All members of staff work very hard in this school. They are keen to see children and pupils do well and combine high expectations of behaviour and work with active, highly effective personal support.

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

26. The school's curricular provision has improved since the last inspection and is now good. The provision for design and technology that was unsatisfactory now meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. All subjects are well planned and the school uses nationally approved schemes of work for all subjects and the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus for religious education. For most subjects, these plans have been carefully adapted to meet the specific nature and ethos of the school and there is a programme of review for all subjects. The curriculum for the nursery and reception children is good and is securely based on the curriculum for the foundation stage. Teachers are skilled at planning learning opportunities which link the development of several of the early learning goals. The curriculum builds well day after day on the 'six areas of learning' and provides the children with broad and balanced experiences. The school provides a

wide range of stimulating, challenging and focussed practical first hand experiences. Policies, although brief, are updated each year.

27. A strength of the curriculum is the way teachers foster links between the subjects, making the curriculum particularly relevant and logical for pupils from the nursery through to Year 2. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) throughout the curriculum enhances pupils' computer skills as well as their work in other subjects. There is a breadth and balance within the curriculum with personal, social and health education interwoven within the topics when appropriate or taught as a separate subject where integration is more difficult. The personal, social and health education programme is closely linked to the scheme of work for religious education and reflects the ethos of care and consideration that is so much a part of the life of the school.
28. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The teachers plan work that is appropriate for these pupils and they are given very good support in the classroom. Pupils with special educational needs are included fully in all aspects of the curriculum. Through very good assessments, activities are planned to match precisely the stages of learning. Learning support assistants know how teachers plan and deliver the curriculum and model their practice on that of the teachers to ensure the delivery of the curriculum is consistent and all pupils receive their full subject entitlement. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are met in full.
29. The school is aware of the difference in the attainment of boys and girls, especially in reading, and has adapted the curriculum by providing more non-fiction books and, wherever possible, male reading partners for boys. The "Reading Partners" scheme is designed especially to address this issue. The school makes every effort to ensure that pupils have equal access to all the school offers by actively including pupils of all abilities and both sexes in all aspects of the curriculum.
30. The school has been very effective in implementing the national literacy and numeracy strategies. The planning is good and the lessons follow the guidelines for literacy and numeracy. Additional extended writing sessions with pupils of similar abilities working together help pupils to apply the skills they have acquired in their literacy lessons. The consistent practice of numeracy skills both in mathematics lessons and other times during the day has been very effective in raising standards in mathematics.
31. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. As well as the reading partner initiative pupils are involved in short tennis and football activities. A strength of the provision is the way the lunchtime supervisors play games with the pupils at lunchtime. The school supports the after school club and pays for pupils in need to attend. It is the founder member of the "Learning Community" of the schools in the locality. There are strong curricular and social links between the schools and the organisation makes a significant contribution to the continuity of learning as pupils move towards their secondary education. The transfer of pupils to the junior school, including pupil visits and the exchange of records as well as teacher visits between the schools, is managed well. This school has been very active in setting up the cluster ICT initiative. It is the fund holder for the additional grants that are the result of a successful bid. The sharing of expertise, ideas and technicians has made a major contribution to ICT in school. Parents collect supermarket tokens for ICT equipment and there are regular fundraising events to enhance school funds and to purchase equipment for the nursery. Local religious leaders regularly take assemblies, and the school visits the supermarket bakery, amongst other places of interest.

32. The weakness in learning opportunities is the lack of opportunities for pupils to make choices, select their own materials and conduct their own investigations to enable pupils to extend their learning and to apply their skills independently.
33. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. In all classes, and throughout the life of the school, pupils are valued and teachers ensure that pupils are aware of their own worth and their place within the community. Pupils are encouraged to respond to the things they see and hear and to express their feelings and views. In music lessons they discuss how music makes them feel and why the music is the way it is. In one assembly, for example, pupils listened to Hungarian music and compared it with a hymn they had learnt. They identified that it was fast but "a bit sad". The teacher linked this to the plight of the Jews who were far from home. Pupils celebrate their achievements and are encouraged to feel very special as their names are entered in the Golden Book "for ever". When appropriate, there is a candle and other artefacts as a focal point in the act of worship. Pupils pray before lunch and before leaving school and learn to respect non-Christian beliefs through their religious education lessons and in the music and art they study. Assemblies are carefully planned throughout the school year and themes are echoed within the classes during the week. There is a very strong sense of belonging and community in school as well as a shared delight in the natural world and a respect for all. In a delightful assembly the headteacher read out a letter from Incy the Spider who lives in the corner of a classroom. Incy could not understand some of the things the pupils did. He wanted to know what the children do and wrote to the headteacher. The headteacher used the letter to introduce the fact that just because Incy was different, it did not matter. It is good to be different and they should be glad to be different and special.
34. Teachers are consistent in their promotion of the concept of right and wrong. They set high standards in the way they treat each other and the pupils in their care. Pupils are encouraged to think of the effect of their actions on others. As a result, the behaviour is very good throughout the school. The school has appropriate policies to promote acceptable behaviour but pupils are not governed by rewards or sanctions. Their behaviour results from their own understanding of the correct way to behave which is based on the example of adults and their religious and personal, social and health education. They have a strong sense of what is fair and appropriate. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is very good.
35. Pupils have a good understanding that there are people who are less fortunate than themselves and have made impressive contributions to local and national charities, including Weston Park Hospital and Guide Dogs for the Blind. The school promotes care for the environment and there are annual "walk to school" and recycling events. Pupils are encouraged to work together in groups. Year 2 pupils help the reception children return to their classroom after assembly. While provision for pupils' social development is good overall, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning or for organising their own resources.
36. The teachers are very aware that their pupils live in a predominately monocultural area and make every effort to ensure that pupils learn about other cultures as well as their own. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. In addition to Christianity pupils learn about Judaism, Sikhism, Hinduism and Islam and are aware of some of the similarities and differences in beliefs and cultures. Pupils visit Elvaston Castle and take part in a Victorian Day. There are examples of pupils' work in the style of Van Gogh and Rangoli patterns. The provision for music is good and pupils have very focused listening skills. They identify different types of music and are exposed to a

rich diet of music from around the world. During the inspection pupils listened to North American Tribal Music, Hungarian music and music from Mexico. It was apparent from the pupils' reaction that they were used to this diversity. Pupils sing well and the teachers promote a love of singing. The library and classrooms are well stocked with poetry and storybooks as well as non-fiction books about our world and its past. The lively displays and very good cross-curricular links help pupils to understand the rich diversity of cultures across the world.

37. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection. It is now very good and a strength of the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS

38. The welfare of all pupils is a fundamental priority for the school and the quality of the care is very good. The kindness and commitment of all the adults who work with and care for the pupils ensures that the educational and personal support and care for individual pupils is very good. The often excellent relationships that the pupils have with their teachers and helpers and the close communication and consistency between all members of staff is an important element in the quality and continuity of the care provided. This represents an overall improvement since the last inspection with particular improvement achieved in the systems for assessing pupils' achievement and the very good use made of this information in raising standards.
39. The children in the foundation stage are very well cared for in a happy and well-ordered atmosphere. There are very good induction procedures for both children and parents and the children settle quickly and happily into the routines of the classroom. Parents of nursery children have very good opportunities to speak informally to staff about any small matters of concern. The children quickly learn what is expected of them and staff consistently reinforce good work and behaviour with praise.
40. The policies and procedures established by the school to ensure the health, safety and protection of the pupils are very good. Extra care has been taken to minimise any risk associated with the building work and both the staff and the pupils have a high awareness of the particular hazards associated with this activity. The programme of formal risk assessment is effective and the caretaker maintains a clean and safe environment. The school makes very good provision for first aid and emergency evacuation and appropriate records are kept. As the child protection co-ordinator, the headteacher has a very good awareness of the particular needs of pupils identified as at risk of harm, and liaises effectively with external agencies. Training is kept up-to-date and staff are vigilant in their approach to this aspect of care. Teachers ensure that pupils understand how to use resources safely and the importance of good hygiene and diet. Pupils receive appropriate information about sex and drugs and visitors come to school to talk to them about issues of personal safety.
41. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. The systems for tracking attendance and following up absence are good and the school is currently involved in the early stages of a new initiative to improve attendance in conjunction with other local schools. Parents are contacted if the attendance of their child is causing concern and all parents are regularly reminded of the importance of regular attendance in raising individual achievement. A small number of parents, however, do not respond to the school's efforts to improve attendance. Pupils are rewarded for good attendance at the end of each year and parents are thanked for their part in bringing their children to school regularly and on time. Despite these measures, however, attendance has remained consistently below the national

average since the last inspection. Morning and afternoon registration procedures comply with legal requirements. The school has excellent formal and informal procedures for recording and monitoring instances of unacceptable behaviour. There are very good systems for rewarding good behaviour and sanctions for those who misbehave and these are applied consistently by all staff. The communication between mid-day staff, class teachers and the headteacher is excellent and this ensures that all are aware of each pupil's day-to-day needs. Parents comment that staff are easy to talk to and are confident that they would be told if any concerns arise during the school day. The excellent relationships between the pupils and their teachers promote a secure level of communication and pupils know that their teachers will try to help them.

42. There has been a considerable improvement in the way the school assesses pupils' attainment and progress in the use of these assessments since the last inspection. Assessment procedures are now very good and the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and appropriate for the other subjects. Teachers assess pupils' achievements in the other subjects at the end of the year or at the end of a module of work.
43. Pupils In Year 1 and Year 2 have half termly tests that measure their achievements in reading, spelling, mathematics and science against National Curriculum levels. The assessment coordinator analyses each pupils' progress since the last test and from the baseline assessments carried out at the end of the reception year. The results are used to set targets for the end of Year 2. These are adjusted from test to test. Any pupils who have not made appropriate progress are identified and discussed with the class teacher to ensure that the pupil has appropriate support. The assessment coordinator also identifies any trends and patterns; for example, different rates of progress in girls and boys or questions in mathematics that are most frequently answered incorrectly. This information is used to help plan the curriculum and, in particular, to address any gaps in the provision. It is also used to sort pupils into ability groups for creative writing. The coordinator has also identified that there is a need to extend the more able pupils to help them achieve the higher levels and plans to lead a series of staff meetings to help teachers understand the criteria for the higher levels of attainment.
44. The educational and personal support and guidance provided for the pupil with a statement of special educational need is excellent. There are very good links with outside agencies that provide professional guidance and help.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

45. Parents who expressed a view prior to and during the inspection are very positive about all aspects of school life. They value the care the school takes of their children and the range of educational opportunities provided. The school encourages parents to become involved in the work of the school and the learning of their children and the majority of parents welcome this. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection and now the overall effectiveness of the school's partnership with parents is good.
46. The information provided for parents about the school is good. The school brochure is practical and informative and the governors' annual report for parents contains useful information about the school and its achievements. There are three opportunities during the year for individual consultation with staff about their children's progress, and teachers make extensive efforts to ensure all parents are able to attend. The annual reports on pupils' progress are good. They clearly show parents how well their children are doing and there is a good balance between strengths and weaknesses in the text.

The format for the reception reports, however, does not cover the foundation stage curriculum. The school is aware of this and plans are in hand to redesign these reports. Parents are kept up-to-date with activities taking place in school through regular letters and newsletters which often contain simple tips on how parents can help their children at home. Parents are invited to attend presentations about what their children are learning and the headteacher and all staff place a high priority on establishing a friendly and welcoming atmosphere in the school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the decision making process and are kept well informed about the needs of their children.

47. The school recognises the positive impact of parental involvement on raising pupils' attainment and improving school life. A small number of parents are actively involved within the school and their help and that of the parent governors is valued. Those parents involved in the Better Reading Partnership have a very positive impact on their children's reading skills and parents' interest and desire to help their children is reflected in the significant number who attend the curriculum presentations. Parents comment that they feel welcome in the school. Their views expressed both formally and informally are taken seriously and, if appropriate, acted upon. For example, the design of the governors' annual report for parents has recently been changed as a result of parents' suggestions. Although all parents have signed the home/school contract, there is a small number who do not fulfil their responsibilities under this agreement. For example, they fail to ensure that their children attend school regularly and some do not help their children with their homework. This places these children at a significant disadvantage. Parents enjoy watching their children perform and support their sporting activities. In the absence of an active parents' association, the mid-day supervisors organise social events from time to time and these are enjoyed by both parents and children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED

48. The headteacher is a very good leader. She provides a strong driving force behind the push to raise standards and has overseen the improvements made in all areas of the school's work. There have been some notable developments, not least the concentration on methods to track how well pupils are doing and the substantial improvement in the relationship with parents. However, by far the most important improvement has been in teaching. Teachers are now far better geared to teach the National Curriculum and to assess pupils' learning in each lesson and over time. This has happened because the headteacher checks on teachers' work from planning to assessments and the progress pupils make. For example, targets are set for each class to achieve and if these are not met then investigations take place to track down the reasons. The headteacher has a clear vision of how and what pupils should learn. She provided an unambiguous lead to ensure that the school's efforts on behalf of the pupils are translated into good progress through the curriculum. The school's aims are reflected exceptionally well in the school's atmosphere of learning.
49. The headteacher is keen to see the school as the centre of the local community and to that end she has successfully managed to forge strong and growing links with local schools, public services and community members. She has adopted comprehensive and very useful systems to check on how much progress pupils make each term. There is a proper emphasis on improving the standards of literacy and numeracy and on providing high quality resources, such as books and computers, to ensure that teachers, pupils and parents have the correct materials to hand. Assessment information has been used effectively to highlight the need to concentrate on raising standards in writing and the school has taken useful steps to bring this about. The

headteacher is very well supported by the deputy headteacher who shares the high expectations of the head. Together they conduct a careful analysis of the school's results and ensure that coordinators, whose work is of good quality, make the appropriate changes to teaching and curriculum plans.

50. The work of the governors is satisfactory. They support the headteacher and members of staff very well. From their very good knowledge of the local community and its needs, they offer advice to the staff and act as strong advocates for the school and its work. Governors are very well supported by the headteacher and they ask searching questions about the use of resources. The quality of information they receive is very good and enables the governing body to keep a check on the standards pupils achieve and the quality of teaching, and helps them set targets for the headteacher and for the further development of the school.
51. The headteacher is adept at securing funds for new projects and manages these financial resources carefully and to good effect. These funds, alongside the usual school budget, are very capably handled by the school. The school has a very common sense approach to spending; governors and staff make sure they get the best value they can and spend all they can on the pupils. The school clerk and the headteacher track the school budget and prepare reports for the governing body so that governors can keep a check on spending. Governors are involved in all spending decisions above a few hundred pounds and this means that they have a very good idea about what and how the budget is spent.
52. The school is well staffed with teachers, a nursery nurse, learning support workers and plenty of well-motivated supervisory staff for lunchtimes. Staff training is tied in very well to the school's priorities and members of staff give reports on the main messages of their training. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by school staff and pupils with statements are very well supported; the work of support agencies is very good. The school has lots of high quality books in each room as well as a very well stocked library. There is an Internet equipped computer in the library to help pupils in their research. Resources in history are limited. The hall is small and gymnastics lessons are difficult to organise although teachers are very skilled and pay close attention to the health and safety of pupils in these lessons.
53. There have been many improvements made in the school's work since the last inspection. The careful work of the headteacher and subject coordinators has ensured that the curriculum is improving, that teaching has improved and parents now feel far more involved and valued. The school has noted that when pupils are assessed as they enter the school there is a growing distance between those children who are well prepared for school and those who need more support, particularly in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Despite this the school has increased standards in line with schools nationally and continues to set itself challenging targets. The headteacher, governors and key members of staff are keen to see children and pupils make better rates of progress.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

54. In order to improve standards and the quality of the school's work, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

Add to the medium term curriculum plans to provide more opportunities for pupils to extend their skills in subjects by:

- working without direct teacher supervision;
- working with, and selecting from, a range of materials and tools;
- recording their work in a number of ways, for example, using tables charts and graphs;
- making their own choices in the way they work, and
- designing their own tests and investigations.

(see paragraphs 8, 32, 63, 72, 74, 77, 81, 86, 89)

Other issues governors should consider for inclusion in their action plan:

*Continue the school's work on improving attendance.

(See paragraphs 12, 17, 41, 47)

***signifies that the school is aware of the issue and has included reference to it in its school development plan.**

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	38
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	11	18	8	0	0	0
Percentage	3%	29%	47%	21%	0%	0%	0%

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YN-Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		157
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		25

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YN-Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		17

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	27
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	26

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.8

National comparative data	5.2
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	26	30	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	21	45
	Girls	27	26	34
	Total	47	47	79
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (83)	84 (88)	98 (98)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	24	25
	Girls	27	27	30
	Total	47	51	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (89)	91 (95)	98 (94)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	98 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	100
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y3

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.9
Average class size	24.6

Education support staff: YN-Y3

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	59

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White		1
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	380,992
Total expenditure	377,788
Expenditure per pupil	1,808
Balance brought forward from previous year	2,328
Balance carried forward to next year	5,532

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	183
Number of questionnaires returned	70

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	23	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	37	1	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	41	3	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	40	7	3	11
The teaching is good.	66	31	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	33	4	4	7
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	26	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	31	0	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	43	44	4	0	9
The school is well led and managed.	66	33	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	39	0	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	36	11	4	27

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

55. There is good provision for the children in the foundation stage in both the nursery and reception classes. Most children have two terms of part-time provision in the nursery class, and then complete two or three terms full-time in one of the two reception classes. Induction visits take place in the nursery, and parents and carers are welcomed into the classroom so that regular links can develop between home and school. As a result the children settle happily in the nursery environment. The class notice board with photographs, children's pictures and letters provides a good on-going record of nursery activities and is of particular interest to the parents. Parents are invited to support the nursery curriculum and many appreciate this opportunity. On transfer to the reception class parents meet the teachers to strengthen home and school links and provide parents with the opportunity to participate in homework tasks.
56. The new curriculum for the foundation stage has been introduced successfully and children work effectively through the Stepping Stones³ towards achieving the early learning goals expected for their age in the six areas of learning. When children enter the nursery class they are achieving well below expected levels for four-year-olds in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world around them and creative and physical development. They are below expected levels in their personal and social development. They make good progress as they move to the reception classes. Although this good progress is continued throughout their full-time terms in the foundation stage, the achievements of the children are still below expected levels for their age by the time they start the National Curriculum in Year 1. This progress is measured initially with baseline assessments, which take place as children start in the nursery or reception classes. Continual assessment of their progress is maintained and this ensures that the activities that teachers plan are designed to overcome any learning difficulties. Children with special educational needs have their progress monitored carefully, and if necessary additional specialised support is provided.

Personal, social and emotional development

57. Children make good progress in developing their personal and social skills throughout the foundation stage as teaching is good in this area of learning. They are close to expected levels for their age by the time they start the National Curriculum in Year 1. Classrooms are friendly and inviting places and children gain in confidence as they establish good relationships with their teachers. In the nursery, the teacher and nursery nurse work well together to ensure that the children are introduced to new situations in a happy and relaxed environment encouraging their curiosity to develop as they discover and understand the world around them, and guiding them towards good appreciation and respect for the needs of others. Adults provide very good role models for the children in behaviour, attitudes and relationships. They persist in their determination that each child can express their needs and ask for advice. By the time the children move into the reception classes most of the children are increasing their skills of self-reliance. The teachers maintain sensitive encouragement and their good progress is sustained. Some children begin to work cooperatively with a partner to share crayons, and others will help each other when playing games on the computer. Most can now

³ The Stepping Stones – the learning steps before the Early Learning Goals

change their shoes and put on coats unaided, and are beginning to respond to instruction or tidy away equipment when asked.

Communication, language and literacy

58. Children make good progress in communication, language and literacy in the foundation stage. When they start school many children have speech and language problems, with some children receiving speech therapy support to help them improve their skills of pronunciation and overcome general language delay. The teacher and nursery nurse are aware of these difficulties and try to improve the children's vocabulary. For example, in one activity children and the teacher discussed together the daily actions involved in getting dressed, so that they could learn the names of the various items of clothing they wear. They repeated these new words as they described to their friends the activities involved in getting ready for school each day. Children enjoy listening to stories and will join in some nursery rhymes. They will share a book with an adult but have very limited early reading skills of their own. During the inspection they enjoyed the surprise and excitement of *The Three Bears* and showed that they are beginning to remember key phrases. They happily repeated the questions of the bears as they discovered that Goldilocks was eating and sleeping in the bears' home.
59. Overall, children's skills of recall of a story plot are limited but are improving, and by the time they are in the reception classes they can remember some key events in a small selection of stories. For example, they describe the actions of the wolf and the three little pigs from an earlier reading of the traditional tale, and are beginning to consider the feelings of the pigs when the wolf arrives at their homes. The reception teacher skilfully links several curriculum activities to encourage the development of their skills of recall, for example, in art they make houses to represent straw, sticks and bricks, and in science they look at the different shapes of house roofs to learn the vocabulary associated with a house, and judge which house was strongest. There is a satisfactory supply of appropriate picture books and reading books available in the reception classrooms to interest and encourage the children to read. These books are available for the children to access freely during the school day, although at present only a small number of them will choose to look at books unless an adult is working with them. Most children now know how to turn the pages in a book and a few have made a start on early reading activities and can identify a small number of key words. In writing activities progress is slow but steady. In the nursery only a small minority of children can make marks on paper or recognize that writing conveys a message. Regular practice is encouraged in writing activities. By the end of the nursery most can recognize their name and will use pencils and crayons more readily. In the reception classes the steady progress is maintained and some will write their name independently. They enjoy the opportunity to write in books or on whiteboards and write strings of letters unaided. By the time they are introduced to the National Curriculum a few children can write a sentence independently and the majority will attempt to write their ideas with adult help. There is good teaching of communication, language and literacy in all foundation stage classes. The teachers understand the achievements and set appropriate challenges for each child. The children read and write regularly in planned activities and in less formal situations. Letter sounds are taught very successfully. There is a satisfactory range of good quality resources to develop this area of the curriculum.

Mathematical development

60. Teaching is good and children, despite being well below expected levels when they enter the nursery, show an interest in number and enjoy the practical experiences introduced to them. They quickly learn to sort by colour making good progress at learning the names of primary colours. With practical examples they make good progress but find it difficult to order events in their own lives as they have limited skills of recall. By the time they transfer to the reception classes most can recognize numbers to five and many name numbers to ten, with a very small group of higher attaining pupils able to count back to zero. The majority has some understanding of numbers to three. They are beginning to recognize circles and triangles and attempt to draw them. Although good progress has been achieved they are still well below the expected level when they enter the reception class. They continue to have daily access to number activities and again, as in language work, the teachers make good links between subjects. In a gymnastic lesson, for example, the children consolidated their understanding of shapes by creating circles, triangles, squares and rectangles with their bodies. They improve their skills of observation and knowledge of mathematical words and higher attaining children begin to use words such as diamond and oblong to describe shapes. They talk about bigger and smaller sizes to distinguish between different shapes. Their number skills also improve and by the time they enter the National Curriculum most children have achievements closer to expected levels for their age in the early learning goals. They can count accurately to ten and many have a good understanding of the concept of numbers to 8. They are beginning to count on and count back as they learn the terms *more* and *less*. Lessons are well planned and teachers have a good understanding of the stages of development of each child. Activities are carefully structured to introduce and reinforce new concepts. Regular assessment ensures that weaknesses in the children's learning are identified quickly and teachers plan further work in these areas.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

61. The children come into school with only a limited understanding of the world around them and skills of observation developing slowly. Only a small number of children in the nursery can speak with confidence about their homes or places they have visited. Regularly throughout the nursery day, activities are introduced to develop an understanding of school and home activities. Some children quickly learn school routines and will ask "Are we going to assembly?" or "Are we playing with balls today in the hall?" Most enjoy dressing up and are thrilled when their helpers dress up with them to make the play more realistic. However, many children in the nursery do not recognize if activities or instructions will include them. Planning shows that they are taken on walks around school and into the school grounds to improve their skills of observation and introduce a wider vocabulary. This focus on events in and around the school remains a strong element of the curriculum for children when they move into the reception classes. For example, at the moment, very good attention is given to the building work, which is taking place all around the nursery and reception class. The role play *Bradley's Builders* is popular; photographs of the visit to the site office are used and described to visitors, and children peer at building plans and talk knowledgeably about the roof and windows. Most children still play alone or alongside others in the reception classes but they show some improvement in overcoming their language delay and in increasing their skills of observation.

Physical development

62. Teaching is good in the nursery and reception class and in the nursery they have the good opportunities for outdoor play using trikes, scooters and prams, or play on large equipment to improve their skills of climbing and balancing. They have timetabled sessions in the school hall, where they undertake more structured activities to improve their understanding and skill as they hop, skip, jump and run. They begin to appreciate the need for their own personal space. They particularly enjoy playing with large balls and show good improvement in controlling the direction of balls. Some children learn to bat a ball showing good improvement in hand and eye co-ordination. In the reception classes the children continue to make good progress through experiences of a wide range of activities, which develop their skills with larger and smaller play equipment. They practice and improve their manipulative skills when joining small bricks together, or fitting pieces into a jigsaw and use terms such as “push” or “pull” to describe their actions. In other play sessions they show good progress when playing individually with bats and balls and some are able to pass a ball successfully to a partner. They have a developing understanding of playing together as they practise running and skipping skills and are increasingly enjoying these activities so that even at lunchtime they can be seen joining in ring games along with the older children. The teachers provide a good range of activities that enable the children to be successful and lessons are developmental. Resources are of good quality and attractive and encourage the children to explore and improve their physical skills.

Creative development

63. When children enter the nursery class they have limited experience of using materials, tools and equipment and many have poorly developed skills of imagination. In the nursery the teaching is good and children make good progress. They enjoy practical activities, which include a mixture of teacher led and free play activities using a range of media, and generally linked to other activities in the nursery curriculum. For example, they have made moulded and painted diva lamps from play dough when talking about festivals and created firework pictures using many collage materials. All the children’s work is valued by the teachers, and the children are developing a good sense of pride over their creations, proudly showing them to their parents at the end of each nursery session. In the reception classrooms the opportunities for practical activities are also usually linked to other curriculum areas. Children have made drawings of the building machinery for their role-play area. They have painted houses of bricks and are making good progress in understanding printmaking and patterns. In dance they use their imagination to move to music about giants, at the same time learning the story of *Jack and the Beanstalk*. Overall progress in the reception classes is satisfactory. The teaching of creative development in the reception classes is satisfactory overall, as often the teacher directs the activities and opportunities for independent exploration with colour materials and tools is lost.

ENGLISH

64. Standards in English are improving in line with improvements nationally in this subject. In the 2001 national tests for seven-year-olds the pupils exceeded the expected targets set for them by the school and the local authority. In reading and writing standards are in line with the average of similar schools, although still below national averages. Standards in both reading and writing match the results of pupils taking national tests at the time of the last inspection although attainment on intake has fallen. Boys enter the school with lower attainment than girls; the school addresses this shortfall and the gap narrows as pupils move through the school. Since the last inspection report the school

has worked extensively to improve teaching and learning in this subject and has addressed all the issues raised in the report. Standards in English are lower than mathematics because of the particularly low starting point when pupils enter the school.

65. The strengths in English are:
- Strong leadership provided by the headteacher and English co-ordinator;
 - A good structure to literacy lessons with very good teaching of basic skills;
 - Increased opportunities for writing in English lessons and other curriculum subjects, and
 - A book rich environment, which increases and enhances the reading programme.
66. When the pupils start the National Curriculum in Year 1 most are achieving well below expected levels in speaking and listening. Good progress is achieved and by the age of seven most pupils are eager to speak with other pupils and adults, and are nearing nationally expected levels for their age. Some of the more confident seven year olds are willing to share their ideas or join in whole school discussions or drama in assemblies. Teachers have recognized that pupils start school with limited vocabularies and they introduce and explain new words and technical terms. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to share their thoughts and observations with teachers, classroom assistants and other adult helpers in smaller group situations and gradually over the key stage pupils gain in confidence. They work hard in lessons to express themselves and are often frustrated by their own inability to describe their ideas.
67. In the recent national tests for reading a third of the pupils achieved above expected levels for their age. Although many pupils find it hard to listen and identify letter sounds they work hard on word building and many are reading successfully at their appropriate reading levels. Assessment when pupils read individually and in groups ensures that pupils are challenged appropriately and any difficulties in comprehension are corrected. Pupils enjoy listening to stories told by the teachers and are thrilled and excited by the story plot and activities of some story characters. They have a limited knowledge of traditional tales or fairy stories and many younger pupils in the key stage are still developing their initial knowledge about books and authors. Teachers choose books skilfully and share their own love of literature successfully encouraging the pupils to read widely from the wide selection of reading material. By the age of seven most have story preferences and some higher attaining pupils are choosing non-fiction books or poetry as preferred reading material.
68. Standards in handwriting have improved since the last inspection. The school now introduces the pupils to a joined style and by the age of seven many are developing a good fluency and accuracy. The presentation of work is usually good overall with most pupils understanding the requirements of well-presented work. Spelling skills are taught systematically to all pupils. The new spelling scheme is very successful and pupils are eager to gain the certificates and awards associated with their successful achievement with the "Spelling Keys." Gradually through the key stage the pupils improve their skill in story writing. In Year 1 only a small number of pupils are able to construct and write a sentence unaided and many are restricted by limited vocabulary choices. Through consistent practice both in writing lessons and when writing in other curriculum areas the pupils improve their ability to write in a range of styles. They construct recipes, describe techniques of creating a jam sandwich and retell nursery rhymes and simple stories. By Year 2 the higher attaining pupils are writing and sequencing a story accurately and incorporating some expressive vocabulary in their work taken from the story content. Imaginative writing is evident in a recent holiday diary and in a witches spell. Average pupils write several sentences with good attention given to the use of full

stops and capital letters. They find it difficult to spell accurately unaided and need help with some vocabulary choices. Low attaining pupils are able to build a story sequence on a storyboard but are limited in their writing skills by poor speech patterns and limited understanding of punctuation rules.

69. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and in most lessons is good or very good. The teachers have a very good understanding of the needs of pupils in all aspects of the English curriculum based on the very good assessments, which take place. Good use is made of these assessments in the planning of lessons to provide the pupils with a good range of interesting and appropriate tasks. Lessons are effective in that they incorporate the requirements of the literacy strategy and are adapted suitably for the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The teachers have good subject knowledge and are committed to ensuring that the pupils achieve well in lessons. Lesson objectives and individual work targets are explained clearly to the pupils. In most lessons there is a good number of adults available to work alongside the pupils. There is good management and organisation in all lessons, and as a result the pupils are confident and happy working well to succeed and please their teachers. Good attention is given to the needs of the pupils with special educational needs so that they achieve well and work towards their own individually identified targets.
70. The headteacher and co-ordinator have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in this subject and have established an action plan to raise standards in speaking and listening, reading, and writing. They frequently analyse the achievements of pupils each term, and have a very good system of recording results in school based and national tests. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the progress of all pupils in both reading and writing. Each day pupils are taught appropriately with work matched to their needs and taken from the literacy strategy, which is fully established. There is also a weekly opportunity for pupils to work in groups on writing tasks, when pupils of similar abilities and interests are taught together. The headteacher and co-ordinator have undertaken a good review of teaching and learning in both reading and writing and have recently introduced several new initiatives in an effort to raise standards further. *The Better Reading Partnership*, for example, has given some pupils the opportunity for additional help with reading, and in writing additional focused teaching time is being provided in small group teaching sessions to encourage more pupils to become independent writers.

MATHEMATICS

71. Pupils' achievements in mathematics have improved since the last inspection. The number of pupils who achieve the expected levels in tests has been above the national average over the last three years. This is because of the effective way the school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and the improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. The number of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 was well above that of pupils from similar schools. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was below other schools nationally. Although excellent teaching in a Year 1 class enables pupils to apply their learning in a variety of ways, in the majority of classes, teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to select their own equipment or methods of working. Pupils have too few opportunities to extend their learning by applying their skills to solve problems or to carry out their own investigations.
72. There are no marked differences in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and make very good progress. The majority of pupils have a lower than average mathematical understanding when they start school. Pupils achieve well throughout the school and particularly well in a Year 1

class where they already achieve standards that are at least in line with other pupils of the same age. In this class pupils count forwards and backwards confidently. They count in 2s, 5s and 10s. Most already know the value of each digit in a two-digit number while some work with three digit numbers. They apply their knowledge to “help” the teacher find missing numbers in a 10 x 10 number square, automatically arrange themselves in numerical order when holding number cards and explore patterns in numbers. They estimate and compare length, capacity and quantity, understand the properties of flat shapes like circles, triangles and rectangles and solve simple shopping problems.

73. In this class, pupils of all abilities are challenged, working at the limits of their understanding. The teacher’s expertise, enthusiasm and skills make lessons fun and enable each pupil to make the maximum progress. She ensures that each pupil has a chance to contribute to the whole class sessions by carefully asking individual pupils questions matched to their understanding. All her questions require a response that makes the pupil think. Pupils “discovered” how to use the 10 x 10 square to add 10 to numbers and were thrilled that they could now do this very quickly without counting the number in between. Pupils in the other Year 1 class make satisfactory progress although their understanding of place value and knowledge of larger numbers is not yet secure. The teaching is satisfactory but pupils consolidate their knowledge through practicing rather than applying their skills and they tend to forget what they have learnt.
74. Pupils learn well in Year 2 and the teaching is good in both classes. Pupils with special educational needs are very carefully taught and a pupil with a statement of special needs achieves as well as he is able with the very good support from his teacher and the support staff. Pupils work with numbers within 100 and add and subtract within 20. Less able pupils order numbers to 10. Most have a good understanding of place value. They round up or down to the nearest 10 and identify odd and even numbers. Pupils know the properties of solid shapes. In both classes the good, step-by-step teaching is particularly effective for pupils with average or below average abilities. However, more able pupils in one lesson spent too long listening to explanations of a task they already understood, while in the other lesson they were given more of the same work when they had easily completed their task. These pupils could have achieved more if the teachers had planned ways for them to apply their skills.
75. All teachers apply the National Numeracy Strategy very effectively. The first part of each lesson in which pupils practise number skills is particularly well implemented. The teachers question pupils effectively and the regular use of number skills has been very effective in raising standards. The end of the lesson, while extremely effective in one lesson where the teacher built on the work of the lesson and generated enthusiasm for the next step in learning, usually consists of going over the work of the day to see if pupils have achieved the objectives of the lesson. This is an effective way of checking pupils’ learning but even more would be achieved if pupils were given a taste of what is to come. Most books contain work that is well presented. Teachers mark the work carefully although the quality of the written comments varies. In lessons the quality of the teachers’ evaluation of what the pupils achieve and the comments they make are very good.
76. The subject is managed very well. Teachers use information and communication technology very effectively to consolidate the work in the lessons, using a commercial program that is directly linked to the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils work out totals at registration and estimate and count at every opportunity. Procedures for measuring what pupils have achieved and the progress they have made are very good. Every half term pupils’ achievements are measured against national levels. Individual progress is

tracked and any concerns are followed up. These results are used to set targets for each pupil and are adjusted as pupils move through the school. The coordinator has already identified the need to raise the attainment of the more able pupils and to plan more opportunities for pupils to apply and extend their skills throughout the school. The provision for mathematics has improved since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

77. In 2001 teachers assessed pupils as achieving above average standards compared to those of other schools nationally. At the last inspection standards were judged to be average and inspectors found that these standards have been maintained. The difference is due to teachers assessing pupils' knowledge very well but the assessment of pupils' skills in making their own investigations is not as well developed. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Good quality teaching and planning in science makes sure that pupils learn facts about the work they have covered but they do not have enough experience of thinking up their own experiments and investigations.
78. Standards in the current Year 2 are average and learning in one Year 1 class is particularly advanced. Pupils in Year 1 know that it is the earth spinning that gives us day and night. They know that the stars are like the sun, balls of burning gas, and that it is the sun's light that stops the stars being seen during the day. Pupils know that the sun is a powerful source of light and that it cannot be switched off like the sources of light people make. In Year 2 pupils know that electricity makes light, heat and sound and they construct circuits to light small bulbs. In this work pupils used computers well to explore how these and other components could be used to make working circuits. Pupils use their information and communication technology skills well in science. Teachers plan opportunities to use computers in lesson; for example in Year 2 pupils completed animated electrical circuits gaining success by placing the components in the correct places.
79. The analysis of work shows pupils make good progress, from a low base, in both year groups. Pupils write and draw about the topics they are covering in lessons and in one class in Year 1 use graphs to record their practical investigations. In Year 2 pupils use computers to chart the foods that are good for them and those that are unhealthy. Learning in the lessons observed was never less than good as teachers give pupils lots of facts and make the lessons exciting and interesting. Pupils cannot wait to get on to the practical work of mixing primary colours to see what colours they make and how they can make electrical circuits. Pupils do not learn quickly enough how to set up their own experiments or how to select the item they will need to test their ideas. Pupils with special educational needs learn well and are supported very well by teachers and learning support assistants.
80. The quality of teaching is good overall and has some strengths which are seen in all classes. Teachers make sure that pupils learn the basic skills of reading, writing and number. In lessons teachers ask pupils to repeat the correct pronunciation of the words used in science. In Year 2 pupils were given the correct spelling of their resources in the same box as the wires, batteries and bulbs. This meant that pupils did not waste time looking for correct spelling and connected the equipment they were using to the spelling cards. This resulted in good quality diagrams that were labelled and spelled correctly. Teachers have good levels of subject knowledge and they ask pupils very good questions to encourage pupils to think about what they are doing. Teachers have high expectations of pupils so that they understand what they have to do to. Teachers

also plan work that is well linked to other subjects. This means that pupils understand what they are learning and see the importance of their learning.

81. Teachers assess pupils each half term and use this information to guide their planning and teaching. They track pupils' progress in gaining knowledge about living things, forces and materials but do not look at the progress in setting up investigations. Planning and the curriculum have improved since the last inspection and now teachers should feel confident about planning more opportunities for pupils to manage their own investigations and experiments.

ART AND DESIGN

82. Pupils achieve standards in line with the expected levels for Year 2. They make satisfactory progress through both years. They develop their understanding of the use of colour, pattern and texture. They are shown the work of famous artists and are taught to identify their skills and admire some of their famous pictures. They have looked at the work of Matisse, Van Gogh and Monet and some pupils in Year 2 can describe their methods and use of colour.
83. Pupils' own artwork is valued both by the teachers and the pupils. The pupils are happy to talk about their pictures and describe the techniques they have used. There are many displays around the school to celebrate pupils' work. These displays show that the pupils undertake a satisfactory range of tasks to improve their skills in drawing, painting, printing, collage, textiles and clay work. Pupils enjoy art and concentrate well. Since the last inspection standards have been maintained and improvements in teaching have been achieved. There is now no evidence of unsatisfactory achievement or inappropriate behaviour in lessons.
84. During Years 1 and 2 pupils have opportunities to improve their skills in specialist art lessons and also as part of other curriculum activities. The teachers frequently use art as a means of recording for pupils and as a visual method of explanation of new concepts in their discussions with the pupils. Satisfactory progress can be identified between the early drawings of the pupils in Year 1 who place objects on a paper indiscriminately with little attention to size and proportion and the work of older pupils in Year 2 who are beginning to consider the size and shape of houses and people and place them more purposefully and accurately to create a composite picture. The more able pupils in art in Year 2 are developing good skills of observation and can draw still life pictures of fruit and toys with some accuracy. Other pupils in the same year group will paint a picture in which attention to perspective is developing. However, some pupils in this year group still draw and paint from memory and choose colours indiscriminately. Most pupils have satisfactory skills with tools although some good work has been achieved in the style of Van Gogh where pupils have used wooden sticks to apply colour creating good texture to their pictures of vase of flowers.
85. Teaching of art is satisfactory. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge. Computer graphics are used to teach pattern, shape and colour. Lessons are well planned and include a variety of activities and skills to interest and excite the pupils. Resources for art are suitable and sufficient for pupils' own work. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in this subject and is seeking to develop the subject further in line with nationally recommended guidance.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

86. At the last inspection standards were found to be below average because the curriculum for the subject was unsatisfactory. Standards are now average and the school has used national guidance to develop the curriculum. Pupils now have opportunities to plan their work and to make models and products well linked to their work in other subjects. The strengths of the curriculum ensure that all pupils learn new skills and practise their skills regularly. However, too often pupils make the same model or product and do not come to their own solutions. Pupils learn well in lessons and achieve well over the two years of the key stage.
87. Pupils in Year 1 thought about how to make paper hinges for the doors and windows of their advent calendars. The teacher made good links to other subjects and themes in this lesson and taught skills well but there were not enough opportunities for pupils to design their own solutions with most of the work being directed by the teacher. In the same year group pupils worked well together making marble runs in which they made choices and corrected their work by recognizing their errors. In the same class pupils made owls to experiment with pivots for the wings of the bird. Pupils had more opportunities for individual learning in a lesson in Year 2. Pupils selected from a range of construction kits to make a model of a wheeled vehicle. They showed imagination in combing the pieces of the kits to produce well-constructed models. They explained how different types of axels worked. A small group of pupils drew examples of vehicles on display. Again, selecting their own methods pupils chose to draw the car as they saw it in elevation of moved the cars to provide a plan view. Some of these drawings were very good quality and pupils explained that they could see more of the controls in these plans.
88. Teaching is good and teachers ensure that pupils learn knowledge and skills well. Lessons begin with a round up of what has been covered before and end with a good quality final session as pupils talk about their work and show their classmates what they have achieved. In a Year 2 lesson this aspect of the lesson was covered particularly well as the teacher asked pupils to explain their thinking and why they had chosen their solutions. As in all lessons, teachers managed the classroom very well and pupils behaved and learned well in the good natured and positive atmosphere. These well-structured sessions also encourage pupils to share their kits and materials. There were no observations of unkindness and lots of instances of pupils helping each other and talking with interest about what each was doing. Teachers make sure that pupils use the correct words and do not think sloppily. So that, for instance, when a pupil in Year 2 talked of the 'thing' that a tanker carries, the teacher kept prompting the pupil until the correct word, liquid, was called to mind.
89. The subject has been well managed since the last inspection and much of the improvement in teaching and learning is the result of the coordinator's advice to teachers and ensuring that the curriculum is planned in line with National Curriculum guidance and includes opportunities to use information and communication technology. Now teachers have gained a satisfactory level of subject knowledge and feel comfortable with the requirements set out in their schemes. Pupils now need more opportunities to plan their own work and come to their own solutions rather than base their work on teachers' ideas.

GEOGRAPHY

90. There were no geography lessons taught during the inspection. However, an analysis of pupils' books and displays and discussions with pupils and teachers confirms that standards are in line with expected levels and have been maintained since the last inspection. Geography is taught through a topic approach in conjunction with history and often involves other curriculum areas so that geographical skills can be reinforced in practical applications of knowledge. Pupils achieve steadily in this subject both within the classroom and in fieldwork activities undertaken in the school grounds and local area. Pupils with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress as activities are prepared which are matched to their own needs and suitably develop their own identified targets.

91. By the age of seven pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of their local area. In Year 1 they learn their own address and look at the distinguishing features of their own neighbourhood. They study the local area and make satisfactory progress in identification of the main amenities in Brimington, visiting some of them to gain a better understanding of environmental change. The building work on the school site has provided them with the opportunity to address the changing needs of the neighbourhood since the school was built 100 years ago, and makes a good link between history and geography over the last century. In Year 2 pupils are encouraged to look in more detail at maps and photographs of the local area and also at maps of other countries in the world. Whenever possible the teachers maximize on the opportunity to point out to children various countries and continents on a world map. For example, during the daily assembly the children are shown the position of Mexico, America and Africa as they listen to stories of these countries. Frequently the teachers use opportunities to discuss journeys and distances, so that the pupils increase their understanding of the vastness of some countries, and recognize the best means of transport, which are necessary for the inhabitants. A good start is made in school to developing mapping skills. In Year 1 pupils look at a map of the school and neighbourhood and in Year 2 pupils have made maps and diagrams of their own. In some good work in Year 2 the pupils have created their own plan of a park and have discussed the best position for some of the features in the park. After studying local maps all the pupils have introduced a key to identify the main geographical symbols they have used, and some have provided further numerical ordering to assist in the process of identification. These higher attaining pupils are beginning to understand the concept of an aerial photograph and have introduced a "bird's eye view" to their work.

92. The curriculum is organized using guidance notes to ensure that skills, including those for information and communication technology, are taught progressively and the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Good attention is given by the teachers to ensuring that tasks are appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils. The teacher sets much of the work but the pupils do have some opportunity to include their own ideas. There are some books available in the library and classrooms so that the pupils can read about other countries of the world. The school is constantly working to improve their stock of non-fiction materials for discovery and research about peoples of the world for pupils who are working at various reading levels. The subject leader is keen to promote geography and plans are in place to review the curriculum to match the recently published national recommendations. This review of present procedures is to include an audit of maps and globes as it is recognized that a wider range of relevant updated materials are needed.

HISTORY

93. Standards in history are at the levels expected for pupils of this age and are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in both Year 1 and 2. The curriculum is planned satisfactorily using the guidance notes for teachers to ensure that pupils' learning builds from year to year. They achieve best when the activities involve the use of objects, which they can see and handle, and contrast with the tools and equipment that they use themselves. Good assessment arrangements ensure that pupils are challenged appropriately in all lessons. During this school year it is planned that a review of the present curriculum will be undertaken in order to match the recently published recommendations for history teaching and ensure that sufficient resources are available for the successful delivery of this subject.
94. By the age of seven the pupils are developing their understanding of chronology. They are improving their skills of observation and are aware that differences have taken place both in their own lifetime and during the lifetime of their parents and grandparents, which have brought changes in their dress, in transport, working lives and speed of communication. They are fascinated by history and especially of their own local heritage. Pupils in Year 1, for instance, listened fascinated to stories of the miners going down the local mines without electric lights and needing hand held miners' lamps to help them. Older pupils are fascinated about the lives of the pupils who attended their school 100 years ago, and describe the different practices of a Victorian schoolroom. There show a growing awareness of events beyond their own personal experience and have a little understanding of national events which are shaping our history. They accurately recount the lives of some famous people such as Guy Fawkes and explain the reasons we still celebrate events such as Remembrance Day today.
95. Pupils often learn history alongside other subjects such as science and this makes it easier to understand. For instance, in Year 1 they study "light" and develop their understanding of chronology as they look at different light sources and examine old and more recently made lamps and binoculars. They understand that these tools and equipment can sometimes help in determining age or types of manufacture.
96. Teaching is satisfactory. A feature of the good lessons observed and of the planning scrutinized is the good use made of sources of information to answer questions. In most lessons the teachers pose questions skilfully to enable the pupils to extend their vocabulary and to make new insights into the past. Activities are chosen to match the ability levels of the pupils and written tasks are provided with good attention to the different reading and recording skills of the pupils. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to work with computers during history lesson. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported enabling them to make good progress. The subject frequently relies on teachers' own resources of artefacts and books, which in some topics is limiting the rates of progress.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

97. Standards in ICT have improved since the last inspection. Although standards were satisfactory in 1996, the expectations of what pupils should achieve have risen since then. The quality of the teaching, the resources and the application of computer skills across other subjects have all improved.
98. Because of the very careful way children are taught to use computers in the reception class, by the time they are in Year 1 pupils are confident when learning how to use new

programs to support, for example, their mathematics work. They combine different aspects of their graphics program to create lively pictures, drawing, filling with colour and adding shapes. They “tile” patterns and compare these with the work they have been doing about reflections. By the time they are in Year 2, pupils type their work accurately, using the space bar, deleting their mistakes, changing the case and colour of their text. Pupils “drag” and “drop” images. They use programs to support their literacy and numeracy lessons, often carrying out two or three steps to complete their task. They combine writing and pictures. Year 2 pupils create bar charts, block graphs and even pie charts to display and compare data. Pupils use programs from the Internet to support their learning. *Bob the Builder*, for example, has been a relevant source of material throughout the school as the building work continues.

99. The teaching observed during the inspection was never less than satisfactory and in half the lessons it was very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and, if they need it, have additional support from the coordinator, ex-coordinator or the technician. Teachers are very good at explaining new skills carefully, using pupils to demonstrate them. These skills are used to support pupils’ learning during the week. There is a point to all the skills the pupils are taught, so pupils see ICT as a tool and a natural part of their school day. Pupils with special educational needs use the computers regularly to support their learning as well as to complete class tasks. They often have greater success freed from the difficulties of writing things down. All pupils enjoy using the computers and now look upon them as an integral part of their learning in literacy and numeracy. They support each other and are very proud of their efforts.
100. The subject is very well managed. Each class has two up-to-date computers with Internet access. These are networked so that teachers’ and pupils’ folders are available from any computer. The school has a good range of software, carefully selected to support learning in other subjects. The headteacher has been responsible for setting up the ICT link group among the cluster schools, successfully bidding for funding so that each school has the support of a technician for two days a week. The schools pool ideas and expertise and have developed common aims and development plans. The school takes every opportunity to improve the provision, for example, by collecting supermarket tokens. There is a digital camera and each year group shares a scanner. The coordinator keeps a portfolio of work throughout the school and the other teachers are beginning to build up folders for individual pupils in order to track the progress they make. The subject coordinators for English, mathematics and science have planned opportunities for the use of computers within the schemes of work. These have been monitored by ICT coordinator and used to ensure that the software supports the learning. Few pupils have computers at home but they make good progress throughout the school because of the regular access throughout the curriculum, the good teaching and relevant resources.

MUSIC

101. By the time they are in Year 2, pupils are achieving standards in music that are above average for their age. This improvement since the last inspection is due to secure class teaching and some very good specialist teaching by the music coordinator. Pupils have a good repertoire of hymns and songs for assemblies, often with challenging melodies and rhythms. Enthusiastic and good quality singing, combined with discussions about the music being played at the beginning and end of assemblies is also improving pupils’ knowledge and understanding of music from around the world as well as their performance skills.

102. Each week pupils have class music lessons, usually following a commercial recorded scheme. This forms part of the scheme of work for music developed for the National Curriculum by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority adapted by the school. The music coordinator takes each year group for an additional lesson in the hall. The teaching in the class lesson observed during the inspection was satisfactory. The teacher has high expectations of what the pupils could achieve and she used the commercial lesson notes to extend the lesson. Pupils had just finished an exciting science lesson and she had to work hard to maintain their interest so they only made satisfactory progress in this lesson. Even so, the singing was tuneful and confident and pupils followed a rhythmic pattern successfully.
103. The teaching was very good in both the lessons in the hall. The teacher has high expectations of the pupils' understanding, especially their ability to interpret what they hear and to identify different sounds within recorded music. Pupils listened to music from the Plains Indian Tribes. From their reaction it was obvious that they were used to experiencing different types of music from around the world. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to use standard notation to record rhythm and differentiate between "pulse" and "rhythm". Pupils in both classes listen with absolute concentration while the music is playing. Pupils with special educational needs especially enjoy their lessons and respond very well to the music. A pupils with a statement of special needs moves very rhythmically to the music he hears and his achievements are greatly valued by the teacher. Younger pupils discuss how the music makes them feel and understand that the tribes remember their music through the generations. The older pupils attempted to represent what they hear on paper although they tended to try to use crotchets rather than symbols.
104. The whole school enjoys listening to music and music making. During the week of the inspection pupils listened to music from the American Tribes, Mexico and Hungary in assemblies and were shown where the countries are on the world map. The music coordinator discussed the similarities between the Hungarian music and the hymn the pupils had learnt, both in a minor key, and likened the music to the sadness of the exiled Jews.
105. The pupils perform for parents at the Harvest Festival and at Christmas. The Year 2 pupils give a concert before they leave school and have the opportunity to sing with other schools. There is a good range of instruments and recorded music. The subject is well managed and the use of the specialist teaching is very effective. Music makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

106. One lesson of gymnastics was observed during the inspection. Standards in gymnastics are about right for children of this age and this maintains the position seen at the last inspection.
107. Pupils know why they should warm up before the main part of their lesson and explain well that their heart should work hard so that it pumps blood to the muscles and that their muscles are prepared for the exercise to follow. Pupils work with obvious enjoyment as they combine stretching and travelling movements to produce sequences on the floor and apparatus. They work hard and when teachers stop them to watch other pupils work, they take up ideas that they have seen. They co-ordinate their movements well, extending hands and feet when stretching and finishing their work on apparatus with good quality dismounts. Boys and girls improve their poise as the lessons move on. Pupils in Year 2 have learned how to set out their equipment

themselves and show a good understanding of safety procedures. They co-operate well to move apparatus about the hall. Once set up, they being work quickly and show inventiveness in developing different ways of moving across the equipment.

108. Teaching was good in the lesson observed. The lesson was well managed and controlled as pupils were encouraged to develop their sequences of movements. The teacher had high expectations of how pupils would finish their work and promoted pupils by keeping a watchful eye for good sequences so that they could be demonstrated to the rest of the class.
109. The school hall is small and teachers are very aware of the need for care when pupils are moving. The size of the hall does not stop pupils from learning effectively but restricts the layout of the apparatus and the combinations which can be designed. It also means that at times some pupils are standing waiting because there is no room to move around freely between the sets of equipment. The school has a good sized field and sufficient playground space for games and athletics. The curriculum is of good quality the coordinator ensures that pupils have lots of opportunities to involve themselves in a range of out of school sporting activities. For example, there are links to a professional football team, community short tennis programmes and football initiatives. This helps pupils see the importance of keeping fit and how much fun can be found in physical activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

110. Pupils' attainment is appropriate for their age and in line with the expectations of the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. The pupils have maintained the standards seen in the last inspection.
111. Pupils know many of the familiar stories from the Bible. In a lesson in Year 1, for example, the teacher told the story of the Good Shepherd very well. Pupils listened avidly and were quick to spot the link with their literacy text *The Snow Lambs*. This very good lesson reinforced the pupils' understanding that everyone is special and cared for. They are very secure in the knowledge that they are very safe in school. Year 2 pupils are following the theme of celebrations. They understand that people celebrate in different ways but that all celebrations are important to the people concerned. They have identified their own celebrations and know some of the important religious celebrations from other religions, for example, Hinduism. They have learnt about Diwali and made diwas and rangoli patterns. Religious education is linked to pupils' literacy work, the personal, social and health education curriculum and the themes for assemblies throughout the year. Art and music reflect the themes in the lessons. Pupils listen to the music of the cultures they are studying. In every lesson and in their written work, pupils are encouraged to express their feelings about what they have learnt and to empathise with the characters in the story.
112. In the two lessons observed during the inspection the teaching was good or very good. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject and encourage discussion and reflection during the lessons. The ethos of care, self worth and respect for others' views is an integral part of the lessons and reflects the ethos of the school. Pupils have little contact with people of other cultures and faiths but the school is very successful in compensating for this with a rich, multicultural religious education programme. There is a good range of books and artefacts are available either through school resources or the Matlock lending service. As a result, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, enjoy their lessons, listen attentively and join in with discussions, respecting each other's views.

113. Religious education, while taught as a separate subject, is successfully linked to other aspects of the curriculum and collective worship. Prayers are said before lunch and at the end of the day and spirituality is a natural part of the life of the school. The subject makes a major contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.