

INSPECTION REPORT

Buckminster Primary School

Buckminster, Grantham

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 119910

Headteacher: Mrs J. Fionda

Reporting inspector: Mr R. W. Burgess
Rgl's OIN 20950

Dates of inspection: 12th – 14th November 2001

Inspection number: 194112

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Lane Buckminster Grantham Lincolnshire
Postcode:	NG33 5RZ
Telephone number:	01476 860315
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs L. Shutie
Date of previous inspection:	29 th April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20950	Roger Burgess	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Geography History Music Religious education Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9942	Susanna Stevens	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?
20281	Gill Dunkling	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology Physical education Foundation stage Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Buckminster Community Primary School is situated to the east of Melton Mowbray in eastern Leicestershire. Most pupils come from the surrounding villages with a significant number from outside its catchment area. On entry to the school, levels of attainment are broadly similar to those expected nationally. There are 57 pupils aged between four and 11 years and it is smaller than other schools. There are a similar number of boys and girls in the school. Children start school at the beginning of the school year after their fourth birthday. The pupils come from a range of social backgrounds. English is the first language of all the pupils. At the time of the inspection, 11 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is below the national average. The school has recognised four pupils as having special educational needs, which is well below the national average for a school of this size and type, none of whom have a Statement of Special Educational Need, which is below the national average. The number of pupils on roll has increased by 50 per cent since the last inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school. There is excellent leadership from the headteacher and governors who share a strong commitment to continued improvement. Teaching is very good. The impact of the teaching is boosted by the pupils' eagerness to work hard. The school is very successful in developing very good attitudes in the pupils and looks after them very well. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good in all areas of learning. Throughout the school the achievement of pupils is good. Standards, particularly in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, art and design and music are good. There has been careful analysis and monitoring of pupils' performance to inform planning with the intention of raising standards. Targets have been met well. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- ◆ Excellent leadership and management by the headteacher and governors, supported very well by the staff.
- ◆ Pupils' excellent personal development and the excellent relationships within the school.
- ◆ The excellent use of resources.
- ◆ The good standards achieved in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, art and design and music.
- ◆ The high quality of teaching and learning.
- ◆ Very good provision for children in the Foundation Stage.
- ◆ The very good monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and plans for development.
- ◆ Very good procedures for assessment of pupils' attainment and progress.
- ◆ There are very good links with parents and the school plays an active part in the community.

What could be improved

- ◆ No areas of the school's work were judged to be less than good during the inspection.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made a very good improvement since the last inspection in April 1997. The headteacher, staff and governors have made improvements in many aspects. There is a very strong commitment to improve the quality of education through a programme of review and development. There is a very good and effective partnership with parents. The school has successfully developed and implemented plans to tackle all the areas for development identified in the last report. The implementation of these, for example, the development of the curriculum for design and technology and developing the work of co-ordinators has been very well addressed. The standards of teaching during the inspection represent a significant improvement since the last inspection and this is reflected in the improved standards attained by pupils. The curriculum is planned imaginatively. It is monitored and evaluated effectively by the headteacher, governors and curriculum co-ordinators. The school has identified clear and realistic targets which have been met well. It is very well placed to continue to build on its recent improvements. It enjoys the confidence of parents as reflected in the significant increase in pupil numbers since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

As the number of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 in 2001 was less than 10 it is not appropriate to compare the performance of pupils in the school with the performance of pupils nationally or with the performance of pupils in similar schools. The number in each year group varies considerably, also the number of pupils with special educational needs. In this small school this has a significant impact when comparing performance from year to year. The performance in recent years reflects the school's commitment to high standards with the majority of pupils attaining above levels expected nationally for pupils aged 7 and 11. This is a positive indication of the school's success in ensuring all pupils attain their potential.

Levels of attainment upon admission to the school are broadly average. By the end of the Reception Year the children achieve well and many exceed the early learning goals in all areas of learning. During the inspection standards for the majority of pupils were good and above national expectations for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, art and design and music. Standards in religious education are good and meet and often exceed the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. In the lessons observed achievement was good throughout the curriculum for the majority of pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs and gifted pupils. The school has set sensible targets to raise standards and results indicate these have been met well with a continued strengthening in the school's overall performance.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They are very enthusiastic and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in lessons and at play. Behaviour is of a consistently high standard throughout the school. Pupils are friendly, tolerant and welcoming to each other. There have been no exclusions.
Personal development and	Personal development and relationships are excellent. A strong emphasis is placed on the personal development of individual pupils. There are very good opportunities for pupils to develop

relationships	independence and show initiative.
Attendance	Attendance is very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They arrive on time and lessons start promptly.

All pupils, from the youngest to the oldest, are able to work independently on a task that they have been given. They have very good levels of concentration. Older pupils co-operate very well in activities that require them to work together. Pupils quickly settle to work. Pupils' personal development is excellent. They help with many tasks around school. Pupils are encouraged to consider others through charitable work. Relationships are excellent throughout the school between pupils and between pupils and adults. All the staff are very hardworking and committed to the care and education of the pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Overall, teaching is very good. No teaching is less than good. In lessons where the teaching was most effective, pupils made good and often very good progress in their learning, working purposefully and productively. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy sessions is mostly very good. In other subjects there is good use of opportunities for teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills and information and communication technology. In the Reception Year, the activities are well planned and carefully prepared to match the needs of the children and successfully extend their learning. There are high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. Pupils' skills are developed through well-structured tasks that build on earlier learning. Lessons are imaginative and tasks are carefully prepared. No time is wasted. The purpose of the lessons is shared with pupils and reviewed at the end to demonstrate what they have learned. The pupils are eager to learn. They enjoy being challenged in their learning. Their good concentration and determination are important features and reflect their positive attitudes in response to the teaching. As a result, the pupils work hard and achieve well. Teachers are alert to the particular needs of gifted pupils and pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are quickly identified and receive good support. The teaching meets the needs of all the pupils well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is very well planned and provides a stimulating and varied learning experience through a broad and well balanced curriculum. The organisation of morning sessions is particularly imaginative.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very good and this enables pupils to achieve well and make good progress. Effective support and good individual education plans guide teaching.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and	Provision is excellent overall. Pupils are very aware of their moral and social responsibilities. They have very good opportunities to develop their awareness of their own culture and of others.

cultural development	
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How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a very good, caring environment. It has very good procedures for the care and welfare of its pupils. It has very good and effective procedures for the monitoring of pupils' academic and personal progress to inform planning for future learning. The school is a most friendly place where pupils feel safe and happy. The pupils are very well looked after.
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The very good assemblies contribute very effectively to the pupils' excellent personal development. The school has successfully developed a very effective partnership with parents. Parents are welcomed in school. Parents receive very good quality information from the school, including information about their children's progress. The school has very good links with parents and the local community and this contributes to pupils' learning, particularly their positive attitudes to their work. There is a good range of activities outside of lessons.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher's excellent leadership has played a key part in improving the school. She works with her staff to raise standards and shares her vision for change with staff, governors and parents. The headteacher and staff have implemented national strategies and improved their practice in most areas of the school's work. The quality of teaching and the curriculum have been improved. The school is very successful in putting its aims and values into practice.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors show a strong commitment to supporting the school and new developments. The governors fulfil their statutory duties very well. They have a very good understanding of the school and take an active role in evaluating developments. They give excellent support to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The evaluation and analysis of the school's performance is very good and is used well to inform development plans to raise standards. There is clear and accurate evaluation by staff and governors which is used well to inform the school's plans for development. The school has very good procedures for the monitoring and self-evaluation of its performance, including the monitoring of teaching.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes excellent use of its resources. The money available is used effectively to support the school's priorities in its improvement plan. Improvements to the accommodation have taken place due in part to the very good partnership between the school and community.

The leadership and management is a strength of the school. Challenging targets are set for pupils to raise standards. There is a shared commitment to continuous improvement and the school's aims and values are met very well. The school has a good number of teaching and support staff. It makes very good use of their specialisms. Support staff are used well and this helps pupils make good progress in their personal development. The accommodation is good and very well looked after. It offers an exciting visual environment with attractive displays. The

school has a good range of resources to meet the requirements of the curriculum. The school makes good use of the funds available and ensures supplies and services offer good value. The principles of best value are effectively applied through the clear targets for improvement that are very carefully supported through the school's financial planning to ensure developments have a positive impact on pupils' attainments and the quality of education that the school provides.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The high quality of leadership and management. ◆ The high expectations the school has of pupils. ◆ The quality of the teaching. ◆ They find staff are very approachable. ◆ Their children like school and achieve well. ◆ The care and attention shown by the school for the welfare of the pupils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The range of activities outside lessons.

The responses to the questionnaire sent prior to the inspection and inspectors' discussions indicate a high level of satisfaction with the school. Inspectors' judgements support the positive views expressed by parents and carers. Parents think highly of the school and all that it provides. They support its aims and the values it promotes. A small number of parents would like to see more of activities outside of lessons. Inspectors' judgement is that the school provides a good range of activities outside of lessons, including lunchtime activities, visits to places of interest and residential visits for older pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In 2001 the number of pupils at both Year 2 and Year 6 was less than 10. It is not therefore appropriate to report national performance data for comparing the schools performance with national averages or the performance of pupils in similar schools.
2. In comparing the pupils' performance with previous results consideration is given to the impact of pupils with special educational needs in each year group, together with significant differences from year to year in the number of boys and girls. In this small school this has a significant effect on the whole school performance data. The numbers of pupils undergoing national testing and assessment are too small and variable from year to year to provide a reliable guide to the trend of standards throughout the school. Since the last inspection the results of national tests indicate an overall improvement in the standards attained.
3. Statistical data for small cohorts of pupils can be misleading. The number of pupils in each year group has varied between two and 13. This has a significant impact on the attainment each year and makes trends from year to year an unreliable measure. The results in National Curriculum assessments over the last four years have been consistently above the national average for pupils at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. In the same period the standards for pupils at the end of Year 6 have varied, reflecting the prior attainment of pupils in that year group, with consistent improvement since 1999 that has been above the national average overall. There is clear evidence to suggest that when the previous levels of attainment of these pupils are taken into account they made good progress in their learning. The wide variation in the numbers of boys and girls in each year group make any comparative analysis unreliable.
4. The previous inspection in April 1997 reported that standards of achievement overall were satisfactory and broadly in line with national expectations at Key Stage 1 and 2 in English, mathematics and science. The standards attained by children in the Reception Year was judged to be satisfactory. Present inspection judgement is that the school has successfully raised standards since the last inspection. The commitment of the headteacher, staff and governors is reflected in their continual drive to further improve the quality of education provided.
5. Most children on entry to the school have levels of attainment which are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Information from the baseline assessment administered in the first few weeks after they enter the school supports this judgement. Assessments indicate that standards vary significantly within year groups and from year to year. They make a very good start and learning in the Reception Year is good. Consequently, by the end of the Reception Year, the children achieve well and many exceed the early learning goals in all areas of learning. Their good progress is helped by thorough planning, careful match of work to their needs and the very good contribution made by support staff. The quality of teaching has a significant impact on the progress made by the children.
6. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are good. The standards seen during the inspection are not significantly different to those attained in the National Curriculum assessments in recent years. In Year 2 and Year 6, the pupils attain standards in information and communication technology which are good and above those expected for their age. They are confident in the

use of the computer for sending electronic mail and in the use of the computer to control a programmable toy. In religious education standards achieved by most pupils are good and exceed the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus at both key stages. These standards reflect the commitment of the staff to a high quality of teaching and the improvements made to the curriculum throughout the school, particularly in information and communication technology and design and technology which were identified as areas for improvement in the last inspection report. The school has set clear and realistic targets for improvement which have been met well.

7. The standards in reading, writing and mathematics of the current Year 2 pupils are good. Test results have remained consistently above the national average over the past four years. The school now has good information to enable it to assess pupils' progress and set targets for the future and uses it well to plan work for the differing abilities of pupils. For example, through more challenging work for higher attaining pupils. This helps ensure all pupils achieve well in relation to their previous attainment.

8. Pupils are given a good introduction to language and literacy and make good progress in their learning. By the end of Year 2, most pupils show good levels of confidence in speaking and listening tasks. Pupils' attainment in reading is developing well. Handwriting skills develop well and this is reflected in the quality of presentation of written work. Younger pupils write simple words accurately, unaided and with appropriate letter formation. Older pupils write in sentences and a significant number are confident in their use of sentence structure, full stops and capital letters.

9. In English learning is very good. Throughout the school pupils attain good standards in speaking and listening. Across the school standards in reading are good. Standards of presentation improve throughout the school. By the end of Year 6 pupils are able to write for a range of different audiences and purposes. Older pupils are able to write extended pieces of work, for example, about their topic work in history. Pupils have very good attitudes to their language work, they enjoy what they do and make good progress in their learning overall in English. Pupils work well together when undertaking paired tasks. They behave appropriately and concentrate on their work.

10. In mathematics, most pupils attain good standards in their numeracy skills. Year 2 pupils are able to count forward and backwards mentally. They are able to count simple fractions and appreciate that four quarters are the same as one whole. Numeracy skills are developing well. Most pupils have a good understanding of number facts to 20. They are confident in doing mental calculations and are developing strategies for quick recall, using their knowledge of number bonds to solve simple problems. The higher attainers have good recall of two, five and ten times tables. By the end of Year 6 pupils have covered all areas of the mathematics curriculum, they understand factors and the prime numbers and can use simple algebra. In shape, space and measure, they have good knowledge of the features of two and three-dimensional shapes. Most have good problem solving skills.

11. In mathematics, learning is very good. Pupils attain good standards in their numeracy skills. They use a variety of ways to organise and record their work. Pupils have good opportunities available to them to practise their numeracy skills. Most pupils have good attitudes to mathematics and make good progress in their standards of achievement and learning throughout the school. The pupils listen attentively and follow instructions well. This has a positive impact on levels of achievement and progress. Pupils with special educational needs and talented pupils receive good support and make good progress.

12. In science all pupils have a sound understanding of basic scientific concepts. Most

pupils in Year 2 are able to suggest what makes an experiment fair or not. They know that pushes and pulls are forces and that electricity is a source of energy. Pupils' scientific vocabulary and enquiry skills are developing well and they learn to record efficiently what they have found out. Pupils can confidently explain their experiments, to investigate forces and friction with wheeled models. Some can predict and hypothesise. Pupils learn about medicines as part of their topic on the body and how medicines must be used correctly. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils understand the conditions required for animal and plant life, they know about life cycles, pollination and reproduction and are able to identify the parts of a flower. Most pupils can discuss how materials change from solids to liquids and to gases and understand that some of these changes are reversible and some are not. They understand the importance of healthy eating and how different foods contribute to a balanced diet. Observations and measurements are recorded in different ways, by written accounts, diagrams, graphs and sometimes using information and communication technology. Pupils learn to predict and hypothesise. They predict, observe and measure with appropriate precision and record their work well.

13. In science, learning is very good. Pupils have good attitudes; they particularly enjoy the practical investigations and make good progress in their standards of achievement and learning in science. Pupils acquire a sound knowledge and understanding and develop good investigative skills. Most pupils can confidently explain their experiments, using appropriate scientific vocabulary. Many can predict and hypothesise. By the end of Year 6 pupils have a secure understanding of fair tests. They carry out a wide range of investigations, predict, observe and measure with appropriate precision and record their work well. Learning of talented pupils and those with special educational needs is good and they achieve good standards in relation to their prior attainment. They are supported well by all staff

14. The pupils attain good standards in skills in information and communication technology. They have very good opportunities to use these skills across the curriculum. For example, for research in history and in learning about other religions and cultures in religious education. Children in Reception receive very good provision for information and communication technology and make good progress in developing their skills. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 follow instructions to start a program and click on the mouse to operate games. They can follow instructions to produce symmetrical shapes, supporting their mathematical knowledge and understanding. They can predict ways in which to alter the direction of a programmable toy. Pupils use a simple art program to produce their own artwork on a theme of autumn colours. By the end of Year 6, pupils are skilled at word processing. Pupils can write text on screen and edit their work; their word processing skills are good. Pupils with special educational needs and talented pupils make good progress.

15. In terms of their capabilities most pupils achieve well. All pupils on the special educational needs register have individual education plans which set targets for learning and monitoring and give dates for reviewing progress. Talented pupils and those with special educational needs receive well-targeted support and make good progress. Work is carefully matched to meet the needs of individual pupils. The needs of the more able are well catered for and their progress is good. Pupils show interest in their work and persevere with tasks. They generally receive very good support both in and out of the classroom. This contributes well to the pupils' attainment and learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and the relationships they have with each other and with their teachers are excellent. They respond very well to the values promoted by the

school and their personal development is excellent. The standard of behaviour is very good overall, both in lessons and around the school. Their interest and enthusiasm for their lessons when they are fully involved and excited by the activity is excellent. For example, a Foundation Stage music lesson, where animal sounds were interpreted on the percussion instruments by the pupils, drew laughter and obvious keen enjoyment from even the youngest of the very well behaved children. Pupils carry out their responsibilities conscientiously and with increasing maturity and show kind, caring attitudes towards their friends and the younger pupils. These very positive features create a happy and harmonious community in which each individual feels valued. Pupils' response to these aspects of personal development has improved since the last inspection and the large majority of parents are happy with the attitudes and values promoted by the school. During their time in school pupils develop an awareness of good citizenship and the purpose and value of education. The very good standard of behaviour seen during the current inspection has improved since the previous one, with pupils showing a mature respect for the feelings of others and a well-developed work ethos. The personal development and the relationships they have with their peers and the staff are a strength of the school.

17. The children in the reception class enjoy their time at school and have excellent relationships with their teachers, with each other and with other adults who work with them. They arrive at school in good time and settle happily into the day. They take part with enthusiasm in the varied activities, responding well to instructions and listening carefully to each other and to their teacher. They show understanding of the classroom routines and tidy up carefully and sensibly. They clearly understand how they are expected to behave and help each other well, giving support to others when needed.

18. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, take part in all aspects of school life with great enthusiasm and concentration. The majority of parents who returned the questionnaire prior to the inspection agree that their children like school and this was confirmed by the pupils themselves. They respond with enthusiasm, courtesy and interest to their lessons, becoming involved in the challenge of question and answer sessions such as during a literacy session. Pupils contribute well to the group discussions offering a range of interesting ideas and suggestions. Pupils show an increasing curiosity and are quick to consult a dictionary to broaden their knowledge of the origins of tropical fruits, for example, during a Key Stage 2 literacy lesson. The majority of pupils want to succeed. They are hardworking, conscientious in their presentation and concentrate well on the task they are given or which they have chosen for themselves.

19. The behaviour of pupils in lessons and in the playground is very good. They respond to the school's high expectations of their behaviour and have a clear understanding of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They moderate their own and others' behaviour in a mature and sensible manner. When pupils' interest was not fully engaged in a lesson, the class teacher's strategies for motivating and stimulating their interest produced a quick and positive response from the inattentive pupils. The pupils move about the school purposefully and sensibly and, although playtimes are boisterous and exuberant, no unkindness or harassing behaviour was observed. Pupils clearly understand the need to tell someone if they are unhappy and any rare instances of bullying are dealt with swiftly by staff. Pupils confirm they are happy at school and feel safe and comfortable. There have been no exclusions.

20. The pupils' personal development is excellent. Pupils carry out classroom duties sensibly and quietly. The older pupils perform a number of important school jobs well, showing very good levels of initiative and increasing maturity. The good humour and kindness creates a supportive community spirit within the school. Pupils are confident, polite and articulate with

adults; they express their opinions logically about aspects of school life, which they might want improved, such as during the regular meetings of the Focus Group. They take differing viewpoints into consideration during their discussions, listening quietly to one another. Pupils work constructively in pairs and groups in lessons, learning the value of working together, such as during a short recital of recorder music in assembly, when group practice produced a musical, balanced 'Land of Hope and Glory'. Spontaneous applause greeted their success, which reinforced the promotion of a common ethos and shared values, which reflects the school's aims and the attitudes of its pupils.

21. Attendance is above the national average and has continued to be since the last inspection. The majority of pupils arrive punctually. Registers are completed efficiently and there is an insignificant level of unauthorised absence. Parents take their responsibility to advise the school of reasons for absence seriously. Pupils enjoy coming to school and they settle quickly to their lessons, which start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

22. Overall the quality of teaching is very good. There are differences in quality between classes and subjects, but none of the teaching that was seen during the inspection was less than good. Teaching is better now than it was at the time of the last inspection. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they feel confident. It was particularly good in literacy and numeracy lessons in Year 3 to 6, reflecting the positive impact on pupils' learning of the increased staffing to enable teaching groups composed of two year groups in these lessons. The high quality of teaching throughout the school makes a positive contribution to the standards attained and the quality of education provided. In three quarters of the lessons seen teaching was very good. It was good in the remainder. The teaching for children in the Foundation Stage was very good. There was a high proportion of very good lessons in Years 3 to 6.

23. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection is an improvement to that seen at the time of the last inspection in 1997 and reflects the commitment of the staff. The experienced teachers provide good support for their new colleague, as does the headteacher. All teaching seen during the inspection was good or better. The most effective teaching was seen in the Reception Year and Years 3 to 6. Work takes proper account of pupils' previous learning and lessons have rigour and pace.

24. In the excellent and very good lessons, teachers' planning shows suitable learning objectives, which are carefully matched to pupils' prior levels of attainment. The purpose of each lesson is shared with the pupils and reviewed at the end of the lesson. As a result, pupils are clear about what they have been learning and make good progress. The teachers and pupils get on well together and the pupils are very eager to learn.

25. The majority of lessons proceed at a good pace and a range of teaching strategies is used to good effect. The teachers' planning shows clear and appropriate learning objectives. Skilled questioning techniques ensure that all pupils are challenged and teachers monitor pupils' progress carefully during the lesson. For example, pupils in the Year 5 and 6 class enthusiastically responded to a literacy session to develop their understanding of different styles of writing, which had links to their work in history. There was good assessment and planning, together with clear explanation and encouragement from the teacher. In art and design teachers stress the need for pupils to observe closely and very good use is made of examples of the work and styles of famous artists, for example, in Years 1 and 2 when

producing artwork to depict the colours of autumn using a computer program. There is very good use of questioning to help pupils develop and refine their work. These strategies effectively promote the learning of all pupils, including the more able. For example, pupils in a Year 3 and 4 class when pupils enthusiastically respond well to an information and communication technology session to support their work in art when drawing tropical fish.

26. Teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is very good. There is detailed planning based on the six areas of learning and careful consideration has been given to planning for the transition into the National Curriculum. All staff have excellent relationships with the children and are calm in their approach. They are well organised, they encourage independence and initiative. Good teamwork and communications are a strength of the school and promote good standards and progress. The staff, all of whom have a good understanding of how young children learn, effectively monitor the children's progress and use the results of assessment effectively to inform planning.

27. The nursery nurse uses her comprehensive knowledge of the areas of learning to provide a variety of activities that are very well matched to the needs of individuals and groups. The staff's knowledge of child development is very good and high standards are set within the daily activities. Children are carefully introduced to a wide range of early learning experiences and are supported well. They are skilfully encouraged to develop their personal and social skills. The youngest children quickly settle to routines and show enthusiasm for learning. Children make good progress in all areas of learning. Relationships are excellent and staff have a very caring approach to their teaching and support children well in all the ongoing activities, contributing to the good learning. There are high expectations and children are helped to succeed by staff adjusting tasks and questions appropriately. The children work hard and make good progress.

28. The teaching of the skills of literacy and numeracy has a positive impact on pupils' standards of attainment and progress. Teachers have a good subject knowledge for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Literacy and numeracy lessons in each class address the appropriate parts of the national strategies. This supports the good development of pupils' numeracy and literacy skills throughout the school. Planning follows the framework for teaching these subjects. Literacy and numeracy skills are applied in other areas of work to reinforce understanding.

29. Very good opportunities are provided in most work for pupils' speaking and listening skills and this also contributes well to their excellent personal development. Introductions to lessons usually include questions, explanations and demonstrations. Pupils' suggestions are carefully considered and they are encouraged to share their ideas. They make good progress, developing confidence and increasing fluency during class or group discussions. Reading and writing are reinforced in other work. For example in their work in history older pupils at Key Stage 2 produce good extended writing on the lives of explorers following use of information and communication technology to research and gather information. Pupils have very good opportunities to use reference books to develop effective and efficient skills in reading for information both within the school and during their regular visits to the local library.

30. The teachers have a good understanding of mathematics and especially of how younger pupils learn. There is very good teaching of mental arithmetic. The teachers correctly emphasise the quick and accurate recall of number facts. Teachers effectively communicate their high expectations of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, and draw good quality work from them. The pupils learn and use mathematical language in other subjects as well as in mathematics, for example, when recording their findings in science.

31. In science, teaching is very good. Teachers are well organised and scientific concepts are developed through practical activities, for example, through the observation of the insulation properties of different materials to muffle sound and reduce heat loss. There are good links with other subject areas. For example, during the school's science week there were good links with design and technology through a project in construction engineering supported by a visiting specialist.

32. In the other subjects the teaching is never less than good. The very good teaching of art and design has impacted greatly on pupils' attainment in this subject. There is some very good teaching of information and communication technology and the skills pupils learn are applied well throughout the curriculum, for example, in art and design. Pupils' enthusiasm is reflected in the work they undertake voluntarily at home, for example, in producing artwork on a computer linked to their study of the Vikings in history.

33. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Class teachers and support assistants have very positive approaches to pupils with special educational needs who are integrated well with their peers. They are given activities that enable them to succeed in their learning and they make good progress. The co-ordinator for special educational needs works closely with class teachers to ensure that the work being done in the classroom meets the targets identified in individual education plans. Monitoring and assessment of targets set is very good. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in the classroom. Support assistants work very effectively under the direction of the class teachers. Teachers plan to ensure that pupils' targets are progressive and achievable. Individual education plans for pupils identified as having special educational needs are in place. These are of a good quality, set realistic and careful targets and state how they should be achieved, with reports to record the outcomes. Plans are reviewed regularly and targets adjusted to ensure that pupils achieve success and continue to make appropriate progress. The quality of teaching and the effective use of additional help make a good contribution to the achievement of pupils with special educational needs and gifted pupils.

34. Teachers follow a commonly agreed planning format. The imaginative planning of the morning session includes a range of different activities in addition to numeracy and literacy and this results in very good coverage of the various areas of the curriculum. Individual lesson plans clearly identify the objectives and consideration is given to previous learning experiences and pupils' differing abilities. Teaching is very effective using resources and accommodation very well. This results in challenging work and the pupils making good progress. Teaching is particularly effective in lessons where there is good subject knowledge and enthusiasm. For example, in a Year 3 and 4 mathematics lesson the teacher motivated and enthused pupils with a range of task when they discovered patterns in the sum of the digits in work on the three times table and the plenary session was used well to provide good opportunities for pupils to share what they had learned. Teachers' expectations are high and there is good use of resources. Throughout the school, teachers are most successful at creating an orderly, working atmosphere. Teachers have good control and relationships between them and their pupils are excellent. Expectations of good behaviour are high.

35. Teachers often plan together, for example, during weeks when work is focussed as in the science week held shortly before the inspection. This helps to ensure that pupils receive consistent coverage of the curriculum. Teachers' subject knowledge, their use of time and their effectiveness in classroom organisation and discipline, all have a very positive impact on the implementation of plans and the consistency of provision between classes. The organisation of the school day, in particular the morning sessions, contributes very effectively to the planning of the curriculum to carefully match the learning needs of all pupils.

36. The quality of the teaching has a good impact on pupils' learning. Strategies for day-to-day assessment and regular monitoring and recording of pupils' progress are very good. The school is continuing to refine schemes of work for foundation subjects. Systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching, which also involve members of the governing body, have been established. There is a shared commitment to further raising the quality of education and standards achieved by pupils.

37. Pupils' work is marked regularly and use is made of good, constructive comments giving pupils guidance on ways in which they can improve their work. The teachers use praise and encouragement effectively during lessons to motivate and enthuse the pupils. Pupils are encouraged to take reading books home and work is given which is linked to the work in school. The provision of homework and the quality and range of information to parents is good.

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

38. The curriculum is very good, meets statutory requirements and includes all required subjects. It is broad, well balanced and provides a stimulating and varied learning experience for all its pupils. The curriculum is enhanced once a year by a dedicated week to one area of learning. The school is very successful in allocating appropriate time to all subjects. The organisation of morning sessions is particularly imaginative. The curriculum timetable also allows for the school to take all children to Melton Leisure Pool and Library every fortnight. Alongside the implementation of Curriculum 2000, policies and schemes of work were adapted to meet statutory requirements. The teaching of religious education follows Leicestershire's agreed syllabus and the daily act of collective worship meets requirements. There is a very good policy for personal, social and health education, which includes a drugs awareness theme. There has been a full consultation about how and when to teach sex education. Appropriately, sex education is taught through the science scheme with support from the school nurse.

39. The curriculum provided for the youngest children is a strength of the school. Detailed schemes of work cover the six areas of the Foundation Stage and good principles for early years' education effectively support the very good teaching and management of support staff, and the broad range of stimulating resources. The school's provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is excellent. All staff are very successful in developing the personal, social and emotional development of children in the Foundation Stage which allows them to become independent and co-operate very well as they move from the Early Learning Goals into the National Curriculum. In Years 1 to 6 the school is also very successful in promoting pupils' personal and social development, preparing them very well for the next stage of their education. For example, pupils participate in sporting events, such as the Tag-Rugby Tournament, and use the facilities at the King Edward VII School as part of their studies of information and communication technology during the whole school Science Week. This increases their opportunities to work with a wider range of hardware and to experience the ethos of a large comprehensive school.

40. All subject areas are now very well supported by good policies. In response to the last inspection, policies and schemes of work have been developed for all National Curriculum subjects, which have been reviewed by staff, co-ordinators and governors. The size of the hall was reduced to provide a third classroom to assist the effective implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, which are effectively taught in two groups, thus separating the Years 3 and 4 from Years 5 and 6. Planning of the two year rolling curriculum is very good with detailed documentation for each subject area in place.

41. Opportunities for all pupils, including those who are talented and those with special educational needs, effectively ensure all have equal opportunity and access to the curriculum, reflecting the school's aim to prepare each child for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Support assistants have received very good training and are well briefed by teachers. The early identification of pupils with special educational needs is a good improvement since the last inspection. The quality of the support is very good and ensures a good rate of progress for these pupils. Individual education plans are detailed and are regularly updated. Review procedures for pupils are carried out according to requirements. The Code of Practice is fully in place. Teachers set appropriate tasks for those pupils identified as high attainers to ensure that they make progress in accordance with their abilities.

42. There is a good balance of extra-curricular activities for infants and junior pupils. Activities include recorder playing, information and communication technology, gardening club, and a rolling programme of coaching and sporting activities, in which many take part. Activities sometimes involve parents. Pupils have very good opportunities to visit a wide variety of places of interest such as Beaumanor Hall, Leicester and the National Tramway Museum at Crich. The school has strong and effective links with local churches and with the local community. All these aspects of the school's life enrich the curriculum and contribute very effectively to pupils' personal, spiritual and cultural development.

43. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent overall and shows very good improvement since the last inspection. The school lays considerable emphasis on promoting a strong Christian ethos. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. The pupils receive many opportunities to explore values and beliefs from within the Christian faith through the collective worship provided daily and through the strong links that the school has with both Sewstern and Buckminster Churches. The school caters very well for the less specifically religious aspects of spiritual development within the curriculum. It provides very good opportunities for pupils to explore their personal creativity in art and in music and to reflect on matters important to them in personal, social and health education and through discussion of texts in English.

44. The school's provision for the moral development of the pupils is excellent. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and how to make moral judgements through the religious education programme and in the implementation of the very effective behaviour policy. Since the introduction of the development of positive behaviour throughout the school, the incidents of poor behaviour have been negligible. Topics in geography and history also provide pupils with opportunities to think about and discuss moral issues from the past, or current concerns about the environment. The high expectation that the staff have of pupils' behaviour is also an important element of the provision for their moral development. The school praises and gives recognition to good and supportive behaviour in assemblies. The school has introduced a "House System" into which the school is divided. Each house has the name of a local castle and points are awarded to individuals for all aspects of school life. The effect of introducing this Castle Cup has been very positive, as the pupils really look forward to the results and try hard to earn points for their team. The parents value the school's high moral standards.

45. The school very successfully encourages pupils to relate positively to other pupils, staff and to visitors. The teachers and other staff provide them with very good role models. The provision for pupils' social development is also excellent. The school is a significant focus for the local community. It encourages the pupils to feel part of that community. Many of the school's activities, such as charitable work, support this. It also encourages pupils to take a pride in the school and in the locality and this develops a sense of community. Within the

classrooms and about the school, pupils are encouraged to undertake a wide range of duties to support the running of the school and develop their sense of social responsibility. A school Focus Group has been formed, which is made up of elected pupils from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Meetings are held twice a term and give pupils an opportunity to express their views and take greater responsibility for the smooth running of the school. Many decisions have been made, such as colour schemes for the building extension, a timetable for pupils to play for assembly and arrangements for fund-raising activities. The older pupils look out for the welfare of the younger ones.

46. The school has worked hard to improve opportunities for cultural development, and provision is now very good. It promotes pupils' awareness of cultural and religious beliefs in the wider community through, for instance, developing links with a school in Tanzania, and through the study of Judaism and Islam. Pupils are enabled to appreciate their own cultural heritage through work done in art and music, where they study and copy the work of acknowledged masters. They learn about musicians and artists of the past. Parents and members of the community provide cultural links and the school works with the multicultural centre in Leicester to help pupils to experience the world beyond Buckminster. There are also very good opportunities for pupils to develop an awareness of cultural diversity through subjects like religious education, geography and history. A wide variety of multicultural books and resources have been purchased since the last inspection. These measures mean that the school is taking important strides in enabling its pupils to gain insights into the ethnic diversity of modern British society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

47. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are very well cared for at school. Parents confirm these findings. Throughout the school, pupils' personal development is monitored and supported well by excellent procedures for enabling pupils to develop into increasingly confident and mature individuals. Information gathered through the procedures of monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress is used effectively to provide a very good level of educational support and guidance for each individual. The excellent relationships between pupils and their teachers ensure that the pupils feel safe, happy and motivated. This has a very significant impact on their learning and attainment. The quality of the overall pastoral care of the pupils has been well maintained since the last inspection. The use of assessment data to support and guide academic progress has been very well developed throughout the school.

48. Children in the reception class are well cared for in a happy and well-ordered community. They are given a secure and caring introduction to school life and settle quickly into the routines of the classroom. Parents have good opportunities to speak informally to staff in the mornings to exchange information or discuss any concerns. Staff consistently reinforce good work and behaviour with praise and children quickly learn what is expected of them. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported to meet their personal and academic targets, integrating fully into every aspect of the daily life of the school. There are effective links with outside agencies and specialist visitors.

49. The school has very good and consistent procedures for monitoring attendance and registration is prompt and efficient in all classes. Attendance levels are consistently above the national average and parents confirm the view that their children like coming to school. The school has good procedures for recording and monitoring any persistent instances of poor behaviour and, in such cases, parents are always involved at an early stage. All staff are consistent in reinforcing acceptable and considerate behaviour, which pupils understand and

respect. Pupils are rewarded by praise for good work and behaviour and try hard to live up to the school's expectations. Parents speak highly of the effective procedures to deal with any concerns they may have and pupils are confident in the knowledge that staff will deal with any incidents of bullying, however rare.

50. Pupils say they would feel confident talking to their teacher about any worries they may have and are confident that they would be helped. The school gives high priority to the safety and welfare of all pupils and all adults in the school know the pupils very well. There are comprehensive procedures for the governing of health and safety issues, and there is very good first aid provision with appropriately trained staff. All Year 5 and 6 pupils have also received first aid training. The headteacher and a class teacher are the designated members of staff for child protection and have received full training. The school follows recognised guidelines and staff are vigilant in their approach to this aspect of care. The quality of supervision during the midday break is very good, the supervisors are well organised and the pupils respect and like them.

51. The school has very good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. The testing and recording system is very well developed and the information gained is used consistently and effectively. There is a consistency of marking which enables pupils to gain a clear understanding of their capabilities. There is regular assessment of pupils with special educational needs and the information is used to prepare effective individual education plans which are used well to support pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. The school has very effective links with parents and this has a positive impact on the work of the school and on the pupils' attainment. The school provides opportunities for parents to become involved in school life and in their children's learning. Parents have high expectations of the school and, because the school appreciates the value of parental involvement in school life, their views are sought and incorporated whenever possible. The majority of parents are supportive of the work of the school and value the very good educational and social opportunities it provides for their children. This is reflected in the very positive views expressed by parents prior to the inspection. The good partnership with parents seen at the last inspection has been well maintained and strengthened.

53. The information provided for parents about the school is of very good quality. It is well written, accessible, comprehensive and informative. Both the prospectus and the governors' annual report for parents contain useful information about the school, its aims and achievements. The quality of the annual written reports to parents is very good, highlighting areas for greater effort and setting targets for achievement. They are pertinent to the individual child and provide for parental comment. They do not contain specific information on the standards their children achieve in each year group, other than for reading. There are two parents' evenings each year and teachers are always available to parents, either informally each day at the school gate or by appointment. Newsletters are regular and informative and topics to be studied and curriculum information are given in a similar format. The Parish Magazine contains items of school news each month and parents speak well of the value of the home-school diary. Parents of new pupils appreciate the very good introduction to school, which includes home visits. 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.

54. The school has an open door policy and is committed to involving parents in their children's learning and in the life of the school. The majority of parents consider that the school

sets an appropriate amount of homework. The majority of parents help their children with their homework and this has a positive impact on individual attainment. The Parents', Teachers' and Friends' Association is active in raising funds and promoting a social forum for the school. It makes a valuable contribution to the school's resources providing items such as the popular Play House in the playground and decorating the library and children's toilets.

55. Prior to the inspection, a small number of parents raised the issue of the need for more activities outside lessons and the desire for more consultation with parents. The current inspection confirms that the school provides a good range of activities outside lessons and that the school's open door policy and regular annual parents' meetings provide full opportunities for parents to access information about their children's progress with the teaching staff. The parents who assist in classes confirm the availability of staff and the welcome parents receive from the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The governors, headteacher and staff make an excellent contribution to the quality of education in the school and the standards pupils achieve. The school has made a very good improvement since the last inspection in April 1997. The school has a very effective partnership between the headteacher, staff, governing body and parents. It has successfully developed and implemented plans to tackle all the areas for development identified in the last report. The curriculum for design and technology has been developed well and the work of co-ordinators is much improved with very useful subject files developed for each subject. The standards of teaching and standards attained by pupils during the inspection represent a significant improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum is planned imaginatively, particularly the morning session. The work of the school is monitored and evaluated effectively by the headteacher, governors and curriculum co-ordinators. The school has identified clear and realistic targets which have been met well and has the potential to continue to build on its improvements. The overall leadership and educational direction provided by the headteacher are excellent.

57. The headteacher's leadership and the management of the school is highly effective. The school is successful in putting its aims and values into practice and the effect is seen in pupils' very good behaviour and excellent personal development and the quality of care provided for them. The headteacher and staff have implemented national strategies, played an active part in liaising with other local schools and improved their practice in most areas of the school's work. Results and the quality of teaching have improved steadily. The subject co-ordinators now have a good overview of their subjects.

58. The headteacher receives very good support from a committed, hard working staff. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Responsibilities are clearly defined and staff are well deployed. The high level of commitment of the staff and governors has contributed effectively to the significant improvement in the quality of provision and standards achieved since the last inspection. There is evidence of a shared determination to succeed and move forward in raising standards and the quality of teaching and learning.

59. Since the last inspection the school has made very good progress in addressing the issues outlined in the previous report. Monitoring has brought about a further improvement in teaching. The school improvement plan is now very effective and spending is linked to the school's objectives. The headteacher provides a clear vision of how the school can improve. Together with staff and governors she assesses the strengths and weaknesses and identifies appropriate priorities for development. Co-ordination of the school's curriculum and aspects of

school life are suitably delegated. The curriculum co-ordinators have defined roles. There is clear provision in the school development plan and budget to promote their professional development. Curriculum development is monitored by the headteacher, co-ordinators and governors. Good policies are in place for all curriculum areas.

60. The aims and values of the school are clear and parents strongly support them. The management of the school is very successful in promoting them. The school's aims, values and policies are reflected in the work of all staff and there is a shared sense of purpose. These are exemplified by the very good assemblies observed during the inspection and the quality of pupils' contributions to their discussion of Peace and Remembrance. Behaviour and discipline are managed well. The school has developed a consistent approach by all staff which is very supportive of pupils. A commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils is evident in the day-to-day work of the school. The staff and pupils are valued and there is a very positive and caring ethos that supports pupils' learning and helps their excellent personal development. The school plays an important role in the local community and is regarded as an important part of the community. Links with parents, the local church and community are strong. For example, many local residents have visited the school to help celebrate the school's centenary and contribute to pupils' work in history. This impacts favourably on pupils' learning and the values they hold.

61. Management of the curriculum is undertaken by the teaching staff, who are co-ordinators for subjects or aspects of school life. The role of individual curriculum co-ordinators has been developed well. All co-ordinators give at least good leadership in their areas. In-service training is encouraged for teachers and learning support assistants. The co-ordinators are involved in writing policies and action plans and overseeing the planning and resourcing of their subject. They provide good support to colleagues through discussion and advice. There has been good provision for professional development, for example, through the attendance on a course for co-ordinators which has enabled the development of very useful co-ordinator files for each subject. Very good use has been made of staff specialisms to teach music.

62. The management of the provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. The staff working with children in the Foundation Stage are very well qualified and have high levels of experience and expertise to teach the appropriate areas of learning. They are fully integrated into the school and share the same development, appraisal and in-service training opportunities as their colleagues. There are comprehensive schemes of work enabling staff to plan effectively, and as a result the curriculum offered to children is good. It strikes a good balance between the teaching of basic skills, opportunities for imaginative and creative development and freedom for children to make choices and develop skills in working independently. The admission process is managed very well, helps the children to settle quickly into school and is greatly appreciated by parents.

63. Governors have a very good strategic view of the school's development. The governing body has developed its involvement in the management of the school well. The chair of governors is very supportive and works closely with the headteacher and makes a very positive contribution to the life of the school. The governors have an excellent relationship with the headteacher and staff of the school. There is regular and productive communication between all concerned. Governors are kept well informed about policies, practices and procedures. They maintain a high level of involvement, through visiting, observing and working alongside pupils they gain a very good understanding of the school's strengths and what improvements are needed. The governing body meets its statutory obligations in full.

64. Members of the governing body value their involvement in the school's development. Together with the headteacher, they have established clear intentions for school improvement

and have put in place procedures that enable them to fulfil their responsibilities for strategic planning. The governors take an active part in school life in areas such as health and safety, the provision for pupils with special educational needs and financial decision making. Governors have been involved in the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school's documentation is clear and well presented. The school improvement plan is a very effective working document which provides for a regular audit and review of the work of the school and identifies appropriate priorities. A curriculum committee helps ensure governors have an appreciation of what is happening in school. The school fully meets statutory requirements for the recording and publication of National Curriculum assessments. The governors' annual report and the school brochure contain all information to meet statutory requirements.

65. The school has carefully analysed the results of assessments in order to produce both individual and school targets and to influence future planning. Improved assessment and the better use of base line assessment are enabling the early identification of weaknesses which can be remedied.

66. Systems to monitor and evaluate the school's performance are very good. The headteacher and external advisers have visited classrooms to observe and evaluate both new and experienced teachers. They have provided feedback to them and they have found the comments helpful. This has resulted in an improvement in teaching quality. Evaluation of the school's past test results identified that pupils could be doing better in their writing. As a result work in this area has been modified and the impact of this is to be closely monitored.

67. The headteacher effectively manages the induction of new staff, including newly qualified teachers. The school has an effective system for professional development. The monitoring of work in the classroom is very good. The school monitors actions taken as a result of the findings, in order to ensure the quality of learning experiences for the pupils. Governors are setting appropriate performance targets for the headteacher and evaluating progress towards achieving them. Staff needs are identified and suitable provision is made for their professional development within the school improvement plan and the budget. Funds allocated for in-service training are used well and enable the staff to improve their professional skills through attendance on relevant courses.

68. There is very good monitoring of the effectiveness of financial decisions. The governing body receives regular financial reports from the school and uses the information effectively to review spending plans and when possible to improve the level of resources. Since the last inspection available funds have been put to excellent use to provide an improvement in provision through increased staffing both teaching and support staff and through improved resources. In particular there have been several improvements to the accommodation, including new teaching areas, a school field and a new staff and administration area. The school is projecting an appropriate carry forward to cover contingencies for the current financial year. There are very good financial controls and the school follows appropriate guidelines for the administration of funds.

69. The school improvement plan clearly identifies priorities. There is provision for monitoring and evaluation of the impact of initiatives and responsibilities are clearly identified. The priorities set are relevant for the school. All staff and governors are involved in setting these priorities and there are links with the budget. Educational developments are supported through excellent financial planning. The budget reflects the objectives identified in the school improvement plan. Governors and the headteacher make excellent use of the funds available and ensure that supplies and services offer best value. No money is wasted. Grants for specific purposes are used to best advantage. The school spends its money prudently,

seeking value for money. Day-to-day financial management and administration are very good. Routine administrative procedures operate efficiently and unobtrusively. The school administrative assistant gives very good support to pupils and staff. Very good use is made of information and communication technology systems to maintain financial control and accountability. The administration is efficient and effective and supports the smooth running of the school.

70. A commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils is evident in the day-to-day work of the classes. The responsibilities associated with co-ordinating the provision for special educational needs are undertaken well by the nominated teacher. The school's provision for equality of opportunity and for pupils with special educational needs is good and well managed. Policies are comprehensive and accord well with the Code of Practice. The tasks of monitoring the effectiveness of individual education plans, giving guidance to staff on addressing targets and demonstrating the appropriate use of resources are carried out both formally and informally. There is a nominated member of the governing body for special educational needs who liaises with the co-ordinator. Governors report to parents about the success of the special educational needs policy and give details of the allocation of funding to support pupils. Regular reviews take place and the headteacher ensures the involvement of outside agencies where necessary. The funds allocated to support pupils with special educational needs are effectively used to meet these pupils' needs. The school's provision for equality of opportunity and for pupils with special educational needs is well managed.

71. The school has a good number of suitably qualified teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum and the age range of the pupils. They are well managed and deployed according to their strengths and experience and work very effectively as a team and share a common ethos. The school benefits from the commitment, hard work and enthusiasm of the whole staff, including very good caretaking and cleaning staff. All staff are caring and committed to the learning and welfare of the pupils. Relationships and communication between staff are very good. Communication between staff and parents is very good and the headteacher provides very good information about the activities of the school.

72. The accommodation is adequate and is used well. The school building is pleasant and well maintained. Classrooms and corridors include interesting displays which enhance the environment and provide stimulation and interest for pupils and visitors. They contribute to the quality of the learning environment and ensure pupils' work is valued. The school has benefited from the development of the accommodation through provision of additional teaching space and a new school field. The grounds have benefited from an environmental initiative to plant a living sculpture with willow saplings. The classrooms offer sufficient space. The organisation of the rooms generally allows pupils full and independent access to the resources. The range of resources and the efficient organisation has a positive impact on the work of the school. Outside there are hard playing areas and a recently acquired grassed area. Effective use is made of the accommodation and this has a good impact overall.

73. The school makes excellent use of the very good range of learning resources. Staff are keen to make effective use of information and communication technology. Good use is made of visits into the community and these enhance and enrich the curriculum. Time is used very efficiently, particularly in the imaginatively planned morning session; lessons start and finish punctually. Overall efficiency in all aspects of school management and provision of education is very good.

74. Taking into account the pupils' attainment on admission, standards achieved, the positive leadership and management and very good teaching, very good use of available funds, effective use of all resources the school provides very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

There are no key issues for the school to address. The basis of the governors' action plan will be its plans for the continued development of the school as outlined in the school improvement plan.

The following less important area for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs 53 and 86:

- ◆ Equipment for children in the Foundation Stage;
- ◆ Pupils' annual written reports.

◆ PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	30
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	6

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	21	7	0	0	0	0
Percentage	7	70	23	0	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 slightly more than three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	57
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4

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	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	1	1	2

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	1	1	2

As the number in each year group in 2001 was 10 or less it is not a requirement to publish the schools National Curriculum test results.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	57
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.3 : 1
Average class size	19

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	55

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	153,251
Total expenditure	153,158
Expenditure per pupil	3,259
Balance brought forward from previous year	11,356
Balance carried forward to next year	11,449

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.4

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	57
Number of questionnaires returned	40

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	18	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69	25	3	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	72	23	5	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	45	3	3	0
The teaching is good.	79	15	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	50	3	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	18	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	85	12	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	64	18	15	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	82	13	5	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	72	28	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	46	15	5	0

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

75. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Children are normally admitted to the school from the beginning of the school year after their fourth birthday. Children are very well prepared for admission to the school through the good relationship with the local pre-school provision, which is mainly outside the school's catchment area. Children's attainment is broadly in line with that expected for their age when they start school. Results of the nationally required assessments conducted in the first weeks of school show that there is a wide span of attainment. At the time of the inspection eight of the 25 children in the mixed Year 1 and 2 and Foundation Stage class were in the Reception Year. Children with special educational needs make good progress because of the very good support and the school's immediate response after early assessments.

76. The curriculum provided for the youngest children is a strength of the school. Detailed schemes of work cover the six areas of the Foundation Stage, and very good principles for early years' education, effectively support the very good teaching, the very good management of support staff and the broad range of stimulating resources. By the end of the Reception Year the children achieve well and many exceed the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

77. The provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is very good and makes a positive contribution to their very good personal development. Appropriate time is given to ensuring that the children know the routines, such as sitting quietly on the carpet and clearing away their equipment. Children are expected to take care of their own books and personal needs and towards the end of the year they put on their coats and fasten buttons and buckles successfully. They enjoy school, are enthusiastic learners and concentrate well on tasks, often for long periods. Most children play amicably and productively with others in a mature way and are keen to tell others about what they have done and seen. They show considerable perseverance in trying things again if they do not work out properly the first time. For example, when completing jigsaw puzzles and building models with mobilo. At the end of lessons, children are good at tidying away after themselves and take pride in the tidiness of their classroom. Many children have high levels of confidence; they co-operate very well with one another, take turns and have a clear sense of right and wrong. The very high standards maintained in their personal and social development have a positive effect on their learning and prepare them effectively for the National Curriculum.

78. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers, the nursery nurse and support staff work closely together as a team to develop the children's independence and ensure that children follow the agreed patterns of very good behaviour. Parents give valuable help in the classrooms. The school is very successful in developing the personal, social and emotional development of children in the Foundation Stage which allows the children to become independent and co-operate very well as they move from the Early Learning Goals into the National Curriculum.

Communication, language and literacy

79. Provision for communication, language and literacy is very good. By the end of the Reception Year, most children attain levels above average for their age in language and

literacy and make good progress in developing their skills. The majority are keen to communicate and speak well. Their listening skills are very good, they listen attentively to other children's news and enjoy joining in with question and answer sessions. Children enjoy looking at books and sharing stories with one another and adults. They concentrate well on stories such as "Five Little Ducks", and are able to describe the main events and usually order them correctly. Many know the sounds that letters represent and use this knowledge in their reading effectively. Some recognise simple words and read whole sentences with a good degree of fluency and expression. Many children form their letters accurately and make good attempts to write their own sentences with help from the teacher. Groups of children in the "Buckminster Doctor's Surgery" role-play area hold long conversations about why they need to see the nurse or the doctor. Pupils' good progress is due to very effective teaching and a flourishing partnership with parents who are well informed about the school's approach to the teaching of reading. Parents are enthusiastic in their willingness to hear their children read. Children know most letters of the alphabet and apply their knowledge of letter sounds when looking at new words. They form letters extremely well and write their names and other words confidently. A few children already write short sentences with very little help.

80. The quality of teaching of language and literacy is very good. In literacy sessions, effective use is made of books with large print to talk about the pictures and text and to encourage children to look at words and sentences. Children remember earlier books and enjoy returning to favourite stories. They know many rhymes and poems and take pleasure in saying these aloud. Teachers are very skilful in questioning children and giving them very effective encouragement as they work. They expect children to make good progress and constantly refer to their knowledge of what each child can do to provide work at an appropriate level. Good opportunities are provided for children to develop and extend their writing skills. Children are encouraged to write letters and words linked to a range of different activities. All helpers in the classroom are deployed effectively and are very well informed about individual children's learning needs. Children are given a good introduction to computers and become familiar with the ways in which the keyboard and the mouse can affect what happens on the screen.

Mathematical development

81. Children make good progress and many exceed the expected levels by the end of the Reception Year. They count accurately to 10, recognise numbers and match a set of objects to the appropriate number correctly. A few manage much larger numbers and are beginning to add numbers and solve simple problems. They have a sound understanding of shape and enjoy the challenge of looking for shorter and longer objects around the classroom whilst others compare the size of their shoes. They sing and play games based on number rhymes such as "Five Little Spacemen" and improve their mathematical language through practical activities.

82. Teaching is very good and every opportunity is taken to develop children's mathematical awareness in other activities. For example, teachers encourage children to count and compare size and recognise shapes when they use computer graphic programs. There is very good curricular provision for the children's range of attainment. In every session there is a range of work carefully matched to the needs of the children so that they are both supported and challenged. Group activities are well planned with an appropriate focus on practical activities and recording. All staff encourage the use of correct mathematical language and teach the children to read and record numbers and other mathematical information using pictures, objects and numerals.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

83. The children make good progress and many have above average knowledge and understanding of the world by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children's learning is enhanced by carefully planned topics, which encompass different aspects of the curriculum and include visits to places of interest such as the National Tram Museum at Crich. They learn about different methods of cooking and study food from different countries. Children successfully join materials together to make colourful collages and junk moon-buggies. They talk confidently about their everyday lives and are beginning to have an understanding of past and present and a sense of personal history. They show good understanding of their own locality when discussing their addresses and describing where they live. Children are skilful with construction kits and they enjoy making models of everyday objects, such as vehicles, and of imaginary creatures and monsters. They have a good understanding of design. They improve their skills of cutting and shaping and improve their competence in using scissors and other tools. Children are introduced to early computer skills and are able to use the keyboard effectively to type words and play games. The regular opportunities for discussion about matters of interest encourages children's growing understanding of many aspects of day-to-day life.

84. The quality of teaching is very good. The teacher and nursery nurse challenge and inspire the children by providing them with a wide range of opportunities to explore the environment both inside and outside their classroom. By getting the children to talk, draw, paint and model what they see, they link these experiences effectively to activities in the classroom. All staff use methods which enable children to learn effectively and encourage them to pay attention to safety issues when artefacts, objects and computers are used. Children are learning to handle equipment with care.

Physical development

85. By the end of the Foundation Stage children make good progress and develop sound physical skills. They run, jump, climb and balance with satisfactory levels of control and co-ordination and are aware of space as they move about in the classrooms, hall and outdoors. They are made fully aware of the need for safety when using equipment and understand some of the effects of exercise on their bodies. Physical development is fostered through a good range of indoor and outdoor activities. They begin to learn the importance of balance and methods of landing. Many children ride wheeled toys confidently and use sand and water-play tools appropriately. They have a small play area to extend physical activities outside their own classroom. Children build effectively with large construction kits and bricks. They develop increasing control of paintbrushes, scissors and the computer mouse. Children gain more control as they play with malleable materials and are involved in cooking activities, painting and drawing.

86. The quality of teaching is very good. The teachers' very good planning and provision for these activities enhance the children's progress. Staff build effectively on the children's experiences by providing stimulating, imaginative and safe activities, which encourage the children to develop confidence and increasing skill. The school is aware of the need to provide a variety of more challenging equipment for outdoor play.

Creative development

87. Progress in creative development is good. By the time they are ready to move into Year 1, many children attain levels of understanding and skill which are above average for their age. They use paint to make colourful pictures, experimenting with colours and tints effectively

to paint trees in the colours of autumn. Children develop a good understanding of the use of pattern and colour when printing pictures with circular patterns. They draw and paint for a variety of purposes, for example, when they make a striking collage of "Old McDonald Had a Farm" or illustrate their written work with detailed pencil drawings. There are regular opportunities for children to explore, experiment and mix a stimulating range of materials. Children know songs and action-rhymes and explore different ways of creating sound, for example, by clapping and beating they maintain a steady rhythm. They have regular opportunities to explore the sounds made by musical instruments. Children listen to different sorts of music and respond to it with simple dance movements. They show initiative as they create imaginary situations and play with construction kits or dress up in the role-play area.

88. The quality of teaching is very good. The teachers provide a wide range of opportunities in art, craft, music, dance, story making and imaginative play providing the children with good opportunities to experiment and explore. Through good detailed planning and high quality discussion they very successfully develop the children's use of descriptive language.

89. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved considerably since the last inspection. Very good teaching and curriculum planning give the school the capacity to continue its current very effective standard of provision and to maintain high standards of attainment.

ENGLISH

90. As the number of pupils in each year group in 2001 was less than 10, it is not appropriate to compare the performance of pupils in the school with the performance of pupils nationally or with the performance of pupils in similar schools. A study of results over the previous four years indicate that the level of attainment has been above the national average at the end of Year 2 and since 1999 above the national average at the end of Year 6. The high performance in recent years reflects the school's commitment to high standards. Levels of attainment in all aspects of English for all pupils, including those who are more able and those with special educational needs, are good and above the national expectation. The school has set realistic targets to improve pupils' attainment further and has developed strategies to help achieve these targets. This is a positive indication of the school's success in ensuring all pupils attain their potential.

91. Learning is very good for pupils throughout the school. The youngest pupils quickly develop confidence in speaking and learn to listen attentively to the teacher and to others. The very good opportunities provided for pupils to ask and answer questions in class enhance progress. Good listening skills were evident in the Class 1 lesson in dance, where all pupils listened carefully to instructions, and responded well. By the end of Year 2, many pupils talk confidently about their work drawing readily upon personal experiences, such as when discussing the key structural features of written instructions for making a pizza.

92. By the end of Year 6 standards in speaking and listening are also above the national expectation. Pupils take turns to listen and to contribute their suggestions and answers, showing appreciation of others' points of view. In Years 3 and 4 pupils are very enthusiastic in their preparation, reading and performance of their play scripts based on "All Aboard the Ark" by Sheila Lane and Marion Kemp. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a good understanding of technical language used to describe John Cabot's ship when discussing the differences between recounted text and log diaries. Pupils listen carefully and seriously reflect on the contributions of others. Confidence and learning is effectively reinforced at the end of the

literacy hour when pupils discuss what they have achieved during plenaries at the end of the sessions.

93. Pupils' attainment in reading is well developed throughout the school. By Year 1, pupils have made good progress in letter recognition and in their knowledge and understanding of books. The use of big books, such as "Cool Food" and the reinforcement of grammatical skills as class and group activities, enhances their learning. Most pupils show a well developed awareness of a variety of print and higher attaining pupils recognise the difference between fiction and non-fiction and use a well developed vocabulary when discussing the title, author and illustrator. The majority of pupils attain good levels in reading by the end of Year 2.

94. By the end of Year 6, most pupils read fluently from a wide range of texts. The systematic development of reading skills, including reading for information, reflects the good progress made by pupils, including those with special educational needs. Pupils are carefully guided in using a range of reading strategies, for a variety of purposes. They develop very good levels of accuracy and fluency, through individual and group reading activities. A good range of literature is used for group reading and to support the development of word attack, grammatical and comprehension skills, using the literacy framework as a guide for development. In their understanding of texts, pupils develop literal, inferential, appreciative and evaluative skills very effectively throughout the key stage. In their study skills, most recognise the classification system in the library and develop good use of books to locate information. By the end of Year 6, a significant number are able to cross-reference sources of information, reorganise and present good examples of work. Good use is made of the Internet to support reading for information. Pupils are very well supported by the home-school reading arrangements.

95. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in writing is above the national expectation. Most pupils construct simple sentences and use punctuation correctly. Higher attaining pupils include speech marks in their writing. Younger pupils write simple words accurately, unaided and with appropriate letter formation. Older pupils make good use of dictionaries and word books and acquire satisfactory skills in the construction of sentences. Higher attaining pupils effectively use their widening vocabulary to vary their stories and interest the reader. When writing interesting accounts such as "The Day I Rode My Bike" and imaginative stories, such as "The Mysterious Egg". Many pupils are able to write and compose their own "Incy Wincy Spider" poems related to their reading of "Emily's Legs" by Dick King-Smith. Spelling and handwriting are consistently well taught and standards are good.

96. By the end of Year 6, attainment in writing is above expectations. Pupils write for a wide range of audiences in their English lessons and extensively across other subjects of the curriculum, using a broad and lively vocabulary. Pupils in Year 3 understand the use of commas and use them accurately in lists. In Year 4 they can write detailed reports such as "Science Week" and extended imaginative stories such as "Goodbye Earth", with higher attainers using sub-headings and paragraphs. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 evaluate their visit to the National Space Centre by referring to details and examples of their activities. In Years 5 and 6 pupils write interesting accounts, often linked to their topics, such as the life of Sir Walter Raleigh and diary entries in the style of Anne Frank. Imaginative, expressive and argumentative writing is well developed. The writing of higher attaining pupils contains complex sentence structures, such as a wide range of vocabulary and words to join phrases containing variation and interest. Throughout the school techniques in spelling and handwriting are specifically and consistently taught and in consequence the quality of pupils' work is often of a high standard. The computer is used effectively to present a range of work in a variety of

formats. They use the CD-ROM regularly to find information for their topics and are well able to use the word processor, such as for writing stories and composing poetry.

97. Pupils' attitudes to learning English are very good throughout the school and contribute significantly to the high standards of attainment in literacy. They work well together when undertaking paired tasks and they persevere and complete tasks well. They are well motivated and demonstrate their interest by asking relevant questions and eagerly taking part in discussions and debate. They draw readily upon previous knowledge and their own experience in and out of school. Behaviour in lessons is very good and pupils show initiative and the ability to work independently.

98. The effective use of English in other subjects helps progress throughout the school. In particular, the use of thought provoking writing in religious education makes a useful contribution to spiritual and moral development. The links between English and many other subjects, such as history, are also good and provide reinforcement of pupils' knowledge and understanding of the past, such as in their study of life in Tudor times. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 learn about what it was like for children living during World War II and contrast life then and now.

99. The quality of teaching throughout the school is mostly very good. It is never less than good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, use a range of styles based on good relationships, high expectations of the pupils and good management of the pupils in both whole-class and specific ability groupings. Lessons are conducted effectively and question and answer techniques are well used. The school has carefully analysed and identified its provision for English, along with pupils' attainment. It has established clear priorities for improvement and has worked hard to develop the literacy hour. Suitable targets have been set to improve writing further. Assessment procedures are well established and make an important contribution to planning work to meet the needs of individual pupils. The school has also developed a detailed portfolio of moderated, standardised pupils' work which is regularly updated and which acts as a good reference against which individual attainment levels can be assessed. The work done with pupils who have special educational needs is good. These pupils make good progress when measured against their previous levels of attainment.

100. The provision of resources is very good and fully meets the needs of the National Curriculum and the National Literacy Strategy. Extra resources have been acquired for the literacy hour such as big books and additional audio-visual equipment, such as tape recorders for listening and reading, and overhead projectors for shared reading and writing activities. A comprehensive and inviting school library has been developed. The schools' library service co-operates well with the school to ensure a good selection of books for all pupils. All pupils visit the town library in Melton Mowbray on a fortnightly basis. They show good understanding of the organisation of the library and classification systems and locate information confidently.

MATHEMATICS

101. Due to the small number of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 in 2001 it is not appropriate to report pupils attainment against national averages and the averages for similar schools. A study of results over the previous four years indicate that the level of attainment has been above the national expectation at the end of Year 2 and since 1999 above the national expectation at the end of Year 6. The numbers of pupils undergoing national testing and assessment are too small and variable from year to year to provide a reliable guide to the overall trend of standards throughout the school. The school has set realistic targets for improvements in pupils' attainment and has developed good strategies, particularly in

numeracy, to help achieve these targets. Pupils have achieved well. Progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, in all aspects of mathematics is good.

102. Levels of attainment upon admission to the school are broadly average. During the inspection standards for the majority of pupils were good and above national expectations for most pupils at both key stages. The school successfully follows a well planned and balanced programme which covers, and regularly reinforces, all the required areas of mathematics. It effectively meets the needs of all the pupils with differing levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs.

103. Learning is very good for most pupils and is consistent between key stages. Standards improve as pupils move through the school because of the good quality of teaching, the systematic procedures for the assessment and analysis of pupils' progress, the good lesson planning which takes account of the assessment procedures and the good and often very good attitude towards mathematics by most pupils. Progress of pupils with special educational needs is also good as they are set clear targets and effective monitoring of their progress is carried out.

104. By the end of Year 2 pupils add and subtract small numbers mentally. More able pupils can calculate mentally with confidence using the number bonds they have learnt in each of the four rules. Many recognise that subtraction is the inverse of addition with more able pupils recognising that division is the inverse of multiplication. Most pupils are able to recognise that the opposite sides of a rectangle are equal in length. Pupils identify and name a range of shapes which they know the properties of, such as rectangle, circle and triangle and know the number of sides and corners in each shape. In Key Stage 1 the youngest pupils are beginning to use mathematical language such as odd, even and between. They are able to collect data by counting objects and placing the results in a tally chart. They are able to present some aspects of the results of their work in a range of different charts in mathematics or through information and communication technology.

105. Older Key Stage 1 pupils are able to count forward and backwards mentally. They are able to count simple fractions and appreciate that four quarters are the same as one whole. More able pupils are able to use mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to ten and above without support. Higher attaining pupils become increasingly confident in applying their knowledge and understanding of mathematics to solve everyday problems. They are able to apply their understanding of one area of mathematics to another and in other areas of the curriculum such as science and design and technology. By the end of Year 2 numeracy skills are developing well. Most pupils have a good understanding of number facts to 20. They are confident in doing mental calculations and are developing strategies for quick recall, using their knowledge of number bonds to solve simple problems. The higher attainers have good recall of two, five and ten times tables. Pupils are developing an understanding of place value to 100 which they apply to calculations involving money.

106. By the end of Year 6 pupils can use their mental skills to tackle successfully challenging problems requiring subtraction of three figure numbers. They understand the equivalence of fractions, decimals and percentages, using their knowledge to solve problems. They can use expanded methods for division with understanding and can calculate the difference between positive and negative numbers. They know the characteristics of solid shapes and are beginning to understand the terms mode, median and range in their work on graphical representation of data. They tackle with eagerness problems set by the teacher, for example, a range of processes, varied according to ability, applied to numbers in a net of equivalent triangles sharpened a class's logic and calculation skills, including work in negative decimal

numbers. Pupils build on their skills and knowledge. Most can make accurate predictions and estimates and can explain clearly the reasons for their choices. They compute with large numbers and understand the relationship between fractions and decimals. By the end of Year 6, pupils are developing quick recall of tables and using patterns in numbers to help in calculations. They are able to describe the methods they use to help them. They estimate and measure appropriately and use and interpret a range of diagrams and charts. They become skilled in using calculators to help them to count or check their work.

107. Speaking and listening skills are being developed effectively in mathematics through the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. There is appropriate emphasis on the development of specific subject vocabulary, for example, in a Year 1 and 2 lesson on multiplication, and the school has increased opportunities for pupils to learn through investigations in mathematics lessons. This provides opportunities for them to tease out their thoughts and develop their mathematical ideas. Pupils are confident in the use of computers and opportunities for the use of information and communication technology are clearly identified in teachers, planning and it is used well to consolidate and extend mathematical understanding. This is often undertaken by pupils working independently or in pairs at the computer and helps to develop their independent learning skills.

108. Pupils adopt a good attitude towards their work. Pupils' attitudes are greatly influenced by the quality of teaching. Pupils are attentive, well behaved, work effectively individually and in groups and participate with interest and enthusiasm. Older pupils are independent and take a good level of responsibility within the classroom. Pupils are encouraged to support and praise one another. All pupils are highly motivated, relationships are very good and pupils are very supportive of each other. Boys and girls and pupils of different age groups work comfortably and easily together. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively and support one another.

109. The quality of teaching is always good or better in Year 1 and 2 and is very good in Years 3 to 6. The teaching is characterised by the good planning of appropriate work for all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and higher attaining pupils; this ensures that they make good progress. Teachers have a clear understanding of what they teach and planning is effective because it takes prior attainment into account. The school has followed the recommended format for the numeracy strategy. This has shown benefits and teachers follow the structure of the hour well. Lessons often begin with a review of the previous lesson so that pupils build on what they already know. New learning objectives are shared with pupils directly or are implicit within teacher introductions, so that pupils are aware of what they are supposed to know and do by the end of the lesson. The work is prepared for differing ability levels and teachers ensure all groups fully benefit from the work undertaken by checking everyone is fully engaged with their task and doing their best. Work is differentiated and all pupils are extended in their learning.

110. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and teach the basic skills well. For example, in a Year 3 and 4 lesson developing pupils knowledge and understanding of the three and seven times table the session at the end of the lesson was used most effectively with pupils quickly identifying a pattern in the sum of the digits. More able pupils are inspired by the teaching, use their initiative and take responsibility for their own learning. Brisk sessions of mental arithmetic at the start of lessons encourage and motivate pupils, who are keen to answer. This pace is usually maintained and managed effectively during the main part of the lesson.

111. Support staff play a significant role in helping pupils to focus closely on their work and sort out their mathematical ideas. This is particularly beneficial for pupils who have special

educational needs. Homework is used effectively to consolidate and reinforce what is learned at school. Parents are encouraged to participate fully in supporting pupils' progress at home and are provided with a termly newsletter to indicate the areas of mathematics that need their support. Teachers' regular and positive marking of work includes helpful comments, which encourage pupils and give a clear indication of what should be improved.

112. There is very good assessment, analysis and evaluation of work throughout the school in mathematics. The use of National Curriculum non-statutory tests and the structures that have been put in place to analyse areas of strength and weakness of pupils' understanding through testing, are very good. Teachers are aware of the need for constant dialogue and feedback to pupils on their performance in mathematics during lessons. This takes place effectively and often to great effect during the plenary session towards the end of lessons. Pupils' work is always marked and often includes diagnostic feedback to pupils.

113. The subject is very effectively led by the co-ordinator. Monitoring and evaluation of the subject has been developed since the last inspection and includes the scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work and classroom observation which has contributed to a significant improvement in the quality of provision. The subject co-ordinator and other staff have attended in-service training and have provided staff training within the school to support the development of the numeracy strategy. Good use is made of information and communication technology within lessons. The subject is very well resourced; resources are accessible and very effectively used.

SCIENCE

114. Due to the small number of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 in 2001 it is not appropriate to report pupils attainment against national averages and the averages for similar schools. The numbers of pupils undergoing national testing and assessment are too small and variable from year to year to provide a reliable guide to the overall trend of standards throughout the school. Available evidence suggests that standards have improved since the last inspection. Standards seen at the time of the last inspection in 1997 were judged to be in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Evidence from the current inspection indicates that standards in science throughout the school are above national expectations. This improvement is a reflection of the very good quality of teaching. The school has set realistic targets for improvements in pupils' attainment and has developed strategies to help achieve these targets. Levels of attainment upon admission to the school are broadly average. Achievement and progress in learning is good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and gifted pupils. The different aspects of science are covered well by the lessons which teachers plan following national guidance.

115. In Years 1 and 2 pupils study forces and motion. They discover that pushes and pulls are forces that can cause familiar objects to move, speed up, slow down or change direction. They use model cars to test their theories and then see that a consistent force can be applied by the use of a slope. They are able to talk about their findings and make suggestions. Most Year 2 pupils are sure what makes an experiment fair or not. They understand the importance of keeping one variable constant when conducting an experiment to see how far an object moves when pushed. They understand the need for 'fair testing' by equality of resources, for example, same cars, but realise the inequality of the testing when the slope is varied in height. Most pupils are good at predicting the result of experiments. Pupils develop a good understanding of basic scientific concepts. They know, for example, that pushes and pulls are forces; that electricity is a source of energy and they have an understanding of what happens to

every day materials when they are heated. Pupils study and record information about the growth of plants. They recognised that under different conditions these grew at different rates, knew the names, such as root and shoot, and could talk about the conditions required for the plants to grow. They record an experiment to discover the best conditions for plant growth. In learning about electricity, pupils learn how to make a simple circuit and record their work pictorially. Pupils study the human body. They learn about the importance of eating healthily. Pupils learn that medicines can be both beneficial and harmful and they learn the importance of handling them correctly. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to talk about their findings and make suggestions. Pupils' ability to share ideas and use appropriate scientific language is developing well. They explain clearly what they observe and have adequately covered all aspects of the subject.

116. By the end of Year 6 all pupils have a good understanding of scientific investigations, as the teachers provide carefully structured opportunities to work systematically through scientific processes. Pupils combine their activities in science with other subjects such as mathematics, design and technology and English. For example, when discussing their construction engineering project during the school's science week when they benefited from the contribution of a visiting specialist and also from a visit by a resource vehicle for work on electricity. Pupils are developing a good understanding of the complexity of fair tests and are familiar with the need to change only one variable at a time when conducting experiments or undertaking investigations. Pupils describe correctly how devices within a variety of electrical circuits function. They are able to carry out investigations and predict outcomes to find out which materials make good conductors or insulators of sound and heat. They know that there are forces of attraction between magnets and magnetic materials. They understand that friction is a force which slows moving objects and experiment with a variety of surfaces to test their ideas. Most pupils know the different organs of a plant. They understand the circulatory system. By the end of Year 6 most pupils have a good detailed knowledge across the science curriculum. They learn to select appropriate apparatus and equipment, how to use it safely and explain and demonstrate their results confidently. Throughout the school, most pupils express themselves effectively in written and oral work. Observations and measurements are recorded in different ways, by written accounts, diagrams and graphs. Information and communication technology is used well to support pupils' work in science.

117. Pupils' learning in science is very good overall. Pupils sometimes combine their work in science with other subjects such as English and design and technology and literacy and numeracy skills are developing within the subject through the use of subject specific language and when handling data. Pupils improve their skills by working collaboratively and in discussions with the teacher. The good links with other subject areas often enhances pupils' understanding and improves their rate of progress. Written work in science makes a good contribution to the development of literacy skills. Presentation is of a good quality and pupils take pride when recording their work.

118. The pupils' attitude to learning in science is good. They enjoy science, especially when they do practical work, showing interest and enthusiasm and set about their investigations sensibly and responsibly. Their behaviour is good throughout and relationships with each other and the teachers are very good. Pupils listen well to others and are co-operative, polite and helpful. They are keen to explain their work and have a desire to do well; they become engrossed in the subject and give well considered answers, for example, in a Year 5 and 6 lesson about how different materials muffle sound because of their different properties. Pupils gave sensible reasons to explain why they thought some materials were better than others. Particularly good is the way pupils develop mature and responsible attitudes to their work.

They collaborate well when deciding how to carry out their investigations and devising ways for recording what they have done. Pupils

respond well during class discussions and confidently describe what they have done and what they have discovered. They work well together and adopt safe practices when using and handling equipment and resources.

119. The quality of teaching is very good in most lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge and give clear introductions. The quality of lesson planning is very good and provides interesting and stimulating work for pupils. Planning often shows good links with other subjects, such as mathematics and design and technology. Lesson objectives are made clear and higher attaining pupils are challenged to extend their learning. Class management is very good and there is skilful use of praise and encouragement. Pupils have good opportunities to ask and answer questions and to predict and hypothesise. The pace of the lessons is good. Teaching rightly places a strong emphasis on pupils undertaking experiments and investigations to find things out. This is developing their scientific vocabulary, improving their enquiry skills and their ability to record efficiently what they have found. In all the classes, pupils concentrate well and are eager to answer questions and complete tasks. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and response. Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. Through very effective questioning techniques teachers provide challenging introductory discussions, effectively recapping on what pupils have learnt in previous lessons. They conclude well by reinforcing what has been learned during the lesson. The high quality of teaching has a very positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress.

120. The science curriculum is broad and balanced. The National Curriculum programmes of study are covered in increasing depth as pupils move through the school. All pupils have benefited from the well planned science week which took place shortly before the inspection which involved the use of visiting specialists and visits from a resource vehicle to enhance pupils study of electricity. Planning ensures that all pupils have equality of opportunity and provides considerable support for all staff. All members of staff are aware of health and safety considerations in the teaching of science. The subject co-ordinator provides very good leadership and promotes a common sense of direction, in which the main teaching points derive from interesting investigative work. Effective monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' work ensures that high standards are maintained. There is a good science policy and scheme of work following national guidance. There are sufficient resources to ensure that all aspects of the National Curriculum can be delivered effectively. Good use is made of the school's local environment and of visiting specialists and resource vehicles.

ART AND DESIGN

121. The previous inspection identified art and design as a subject with average attainment and progress in both key stages. From the scrutiny of display, pupils' work and from discussions with teachers and pupils, and the observation of lessons at both key stages, it is clear that there has been a good improvement in standards throughout the school in this subject. By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 pupils attain levels in art and design which are above those expected nationally and they make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress at both key stages. They develop both technical skills and creativity in their work. During the inspection some good work from both key stages was on display. This included some very good drawings and paintings linked to the topic theme being studied.

122. By the end of Year 2 pupils have extended their skills in printing, painting and modelling, building well upon their previous learning in the Reception Year. Pupils use paint to make colourful pictures, experimenting with colours and tints effectively to paint trees in the colours of autumn. They use a range of tools to decorate a flat piece of plasticine, then use these decorative techniques to decorate pots they mould from air drying clay. Pupils develop a good understanding of pattern and use of colours in creating a design. They observe the use of pattern in fabric and print circular patterns in the style of Sonia Delauney. Many pupils develop good skills in a number of artistic activities, including pottery, paper collage and weaving. They take great care in designing and in selecting their colours for their work. Pupils discuss colour and form and review their work to make improvements. Scrutiny of work shows that pupils use a variety of techniques, such as string printing, collage, colour shading and pastels.

123. By the end of Year 6 pupils build on their previous skills to produce carefully executed work. They combine colour in designs using a variety of media, including pastels, plastic crayon and paint. The computer is used well to support learning. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 look at the work of Seurat and use a pointillist effect to produce attractive and often complex pictures of autumn trees. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 study and emulate the style of Pablo Picasso's "Portrait of Dora Maar", paying particular attention to shape, pattern and colour. By the end of Year 6, most pupils present work of a high standard, both imaginatively and through good observational skills.

124. The pupils' response to art and design is very good and assists their learning. They are well behaved, enthusiastic and concentrate hard. They work well together and share materials sensibly. The majority of pupils are confident and can talk about their work using a well developed vocabulary, such as colour tones, texture and pattern. Their personal development is very good. The pupils make appropriate choices independently with regard to such things as size of paper, colour and design layout. Throughout the school pupils take responsibility for clearing away after lessons.

125. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teachers use a mixture of whole class instruction and allow ample time for group work. They intervene appropriately to question, support and extend pupils' learning. Teachers provide a good range of resources and ensure that pupils' work is valued and well displayed. Scrutiny of work indicates that the teachers have good subject knowledge. They plan their lessons very well, making positive use of the school's comprehensive scheme of work. This clearly outlines what pupils should be taught in each year and provides consistency in the provision between classes. Teachers organise group work very well and use support assistants very effectively to work with pupils, including those with special educational needs. Teachers provide a range of well chosen activities, which are clearly explained and are appropriate to the pupils' abilities. Clear instructions and plenty of praise and advice contribute to calm and orderly lessons where pupils make good progress. Teachers are keenly aware of health and safety issues and ensure pupils comply with these.

126. Learning is very good in both key stages. Pupils steadily improve their skills and techniques, benefiting from the extensive range of materials available to them. Their well developed skills in literacy and information and communication technology help them to improve their knowledge of the contribution made by well known artists and research their work appropriately.

127. Art and design is very well managed by the subject co-ordinator. Good use is made of the natural environment surrounding the school. There are many links with other areas of the curriculum, including observational work in science, careful planning in design and technology,

personal and social and religious education. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 study and act out the story of “The Rainbow People” linked to the theme of “Differences”. Pupils are encouraged to assess and evaluate their own work and this has a positive effect on raising attainment.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

128. No lessons in design and technology could be seen during the inspection. Evidence from medium term planning, lesson plans, display, pupils' work and discussion with teachers and pupils indicates that all pupils, including those with higher prior attainment and with special educational needs, attain standards in line with those expected for their age. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when overall standards were described as below the national expectation. Pupils gain skills, knowledge and understanding at a sound rate by designing, making and evaluating their work.

129. In Years 1 and 2 younger pupils understand that construction kits can be used to try out ideas. With good support from the class teacher they effectively and accurately fit components together to make sliding and lever mechanisms. From the earliest stages in the school, pupils are encouraged to develop their technical vocabulary. Pupils for example, discuss their work on making food items, such as shortcake and cheese straws, using suitable terms such as “mixing, stirring and kneading”. Older pupils successfully use simple tools such as scissors, needles and thread. Effective links with literacy skills are made by pupils as they correctly plan and order instructions to make a ham and cucumber sandwich. They build on their own experience of materials and techniques and consider different ways of joining materials together. For instance, in designing and making Joseph’s colourful coat they know that the consideration of materials is an important feature when designing and making. They design and make puppets, playground equipment, vehicles with moving parts and space buggies using large construction kits.

130. In Years 3 to 6 there are effective links with history and science as pupils in Years 3 and 4 design and make jewels and ships related to their study of the Vikings. They use currents and circuits to design and evaluate a system which will raise the alarm if the school is broken into. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 spent a day as construction engineers as part of the school “Science Week”. They worked with a visiting specialist to build models of vehicles that could either fly, travel on land, under water or on water.

131. Learning is good in both key stages. Progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is sound. They take full part in this subject and develop both designing and making skills effectively. Throughout the school pupils develop their literacy and numeracy skills as they make plans and designs, measure materials, follow instructions and write up their evaluations and compile lists of resources needed for the making aspect of the work.

132. Pupils are keen and interested and participated eagerly in discussions. Where appropriate, they are aware of health and safety requirements, such as washing their hands and their tabletops, before handling food. They are sensible when reviewing their progress towards achieving their goals and set realistic targets for their next lesson.

133. The quality of teaching is good in those aspects seen, such as planning. The planning of lessons is careful. Learning objectives are clear and teachers have a sound understanding of the subject. Good cross-curricular links are often made with mathematics and information and communication technology. Tasks are well structured and there is a good match of work to meet pupils’ learning needs. Attention is given to the variety and appropriateness of

resources and equipment. Teaching methods focus on the learning of skills and processes. The standards achieved benefit from the range of materials and tools and from the teachers' high expectations of the projects to be designed and made.

134. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, committed and leads the subject effectively. The policy and scheme of work for the subject are comprehensive and ensure a proper coverage of the national curriculum requirements, both in terms of content and skills taught. Resources for design and technology are good. There is an adequate range of books and a good variety of materials and equipment. Parental help is seen as invaluable, particularly in food technology.

GEOGRAPHY

135. No teaching of geography was observed. Judgements are based on evidence from teachers' planning, scrutiny of work, school displays and discussions with pupils. There is a satisfactory range of opportunities to develop pupils' interest, skills and knowledge. Most pupils make good progress and reach the expected standard by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The last inspection also judged standards to be satisfactory and in line with national expectations.

136. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and achieve well. Higher attaining pupils are achieving at a standard above that expected for all pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils have a very good attitude towards the subject and are interested in their work. Good teaching creates a positive working environment within which pupils thrive, working in an atmosphere of collaboration and respect for one another.

137. Pupils in Year 1 develop their skills of observation. They take notice of local landmarks such as the church. They record changes in the seasons with particular reference to the change in trees and to the length of day. Comparisons and contrasts are made month by month and emerging weather patterns recorded. Pupils look at maps and a globe to identify different countries with similar and contrasting climates to our own. Their understanding develops well as they become aware that the world reaches beyond their locality. In Year 2 pupils think about how buildings they know well are used. They look at different types of homes and how they are built. Literacy and numeracy skills are practised as pupils draw and label simple maps of their journey to school. Their vocabulary is expanding by learning words such as "journey" and "route" and the specific names for the building materials displayed.

138. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 recognise a key on a map, can use it to gather information and explain its purpose. Pupils can identify a main road on a map. Higher attaining pupils are able to explain why a journey may be quicker on a main road than on a country lane, even though the distance may be greater. High attaining pupils can name the countries that make up the United Kingdom.

139. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are familiar with appropriate methods for finding out information using the Internet, resource books, globes and atlases. Year 6 pupils are able to locate the United Kingdom on a globe and explain which continent it is in. High attaining pupils can explain how the water cycle works, that rainfall is greatest in upland areas on the western side of Britain. Pupils are able to read and interpret weather maps that present a wide range of information.

140. Pupils make good progress in their learning, steadily increasing their level of knowledge and understanding. Most work at a good pace, maintaining interest and

concentrating effectively on the task in hand. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils display very good attitudes towards geography, they are often self-motivated, form very good relationships and demonstrate very good personal development. The subject makes a good contribution to the social and moral development of the pupils. Pupils enjoy talking about geography they develop their understanding of different features in their own locality and in places that they visit and expressing how they feel about them using appropriate geographical terms.

141. Scrutiny of the pupils' work and those aspects seen, such as planning, indicates that the teaching of geography is at least good and that the teachers have a good understanding of the subject. Good opportunities are provided for developing pupil's research skills, which are also enhanced by the provision of research tasks for homework. Planning is good, showing a range of suitable objectives and using a variety of resources.

142. Subject leadership is good. The co-ordinator has made good progress to develop the subject policy and a scheme of work. The scheme of work is being developed to take account of the requirements of personal, social and health education and also citizenship. The monitoring and evaluation of the subject is good and includes the regular scrutiny of teachers' planning and of pupils' work across the school. Resources are adequate for geography. Good use is made of the school's environmental and the local area as a resource for learning. Information and communication technology is used to good effect.

HISTORY

143. The standard of attainment in history is at least satisfactory and good for a significant number of pupils when compared with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and good at the end of Year 6. This is an improvement from the last inspection when standards were judged to be satisfactory throughout the school. The school has sensibly prioritised its areas for development, focussing initially on literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Whole school improvement has had an impact on aspects of history, for example, in the quality of pupils' written work at Key Stage 2. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory and sometimes good progress.

144. In Years 1 and 2 pupils acquire skills and knowledge steadily and are beginning to gain a sense of chronology. They recognise that grandparents came first, followed by parents and that they are the most recent generation. They can explain the chronology of their brothers and sisters, using terms such as oldest and youngest. Pupils are able to draw timelines to reinforce this. For example, linked to their study of their own locality when work is linked to their religious education topic of Peace and involves studying the local war memorial. They know that change made life easier for people, identifying improvements such as the development of electricity and appliances in the kitchen. Pupils are beginning to use books to gather information and record it in a logical order. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are able to use the contents and index in books and explain their purpose.

145. At Years 3 to 6 pupils study the period of World War II and how people's everyday lives were affected. For example, they write about such aspects as the Blitz and the plight of evacuees. Pupils learn that evidence can be obtained from a variety of sources such as videos, grandparents' recollections or the Internet. First hand study enhances the pupils' progress, for example, through a visit to Eden Camp where pupils experienced underground shelters and blackout conditions. This enabled them to make comparisons with their own lives and to understand the feelings engendered in people at that period. Pupils make good links between cause and effect and know that lack of imported foodstuffs created the need for

rationing. There were good links with their work in literacy when they studied the Diary of Anne Frank. In their study of the Tudors pupils focussed on the lives of explorers such as Drake and Raleigh. In doing this work pupils made very good use of their skills in information and communication technology to research and find information that they used well in their written work.

146. Pupils display a good attitude towards history. They describe their work as being varied and interesting. Relationships are very good. Pupils describe the ways that they work well together. Pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils' behaviour is always good and often very good. Relationships are excellent. Pupils work well together in different types of groups, supporting each other with sensitivity and kindness. Pupils' personal development is excellent.

147. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding, supported by effective planning, ensures that teaching methods are used very effectively and that materials are presented in an interesting way that motivate and involve pupils. Expectations of pupils are high, including pupils with special educational needs. Higher attaining pupils are given very good opportunities to achieve well. Pupils are well managed. Good use is made of opportunities for developing pupils' literacy skills, for example, in a Year 3 and 4 class when pupils read an extract on the travels of the Vikings and used their reading skills well to access information. The quality of ongoing assessment to support pupils' progress is satisfactory, although there is little formal recording of assessment.

148. History is effectively led by the subject co-ordinator. There is a satisfactory history policy in place and a useful subject co-ordinator's file. The history curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the more able. The curriculum is enriched by visits to places of interest such as The Black Country Museum and Eden Camp. History makes a very good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. The curriculum is planned to ensure that it is accessible to all pupils equally. The very good monitoring of planning and pupils' work provides very good feedback to teaching staff, indicating strengths and areas for development. The subject is well resourced and enhanced through the increasing availability and use of information and communication technology. The resources are readily accessible to the staff. Staff and members of the community are good providers of artefacts. The accommodation is satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

149. The previous inspection report described information technology as satisfactory. There has been considerable improvement in the provision for the subject and in standards achieved. Attainment in information and communication technology at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is above national expectations. All pupils, including those who are more able or those with special educational needs, are making good progress, as there is very good teaching, regular access and effective use in many areas of the curriculum including English, mathematics, history, geography and design and technology. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to the very good support they receive from the teachers and support assistants.

150. The school has Internet connection and each pupil has an E-mail address. The improved accessibility of computers provides all classes with opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and understanding in the use of computers. Teachers have undergone in-service training to improve their subject knowledge and their own skills in information and

communication technology. The co-ordinator has provided very good documentation to support teachers' planning, including a running record of pupils' achievement. All these improvements have had a positive impact upon standards.

151. By the end of Year 2 the pupils have made good progress. Pupils understand the use of the computer to word process text. They know how to use the arrow and delete keys and print the text they have written on the screen. Pupils retrieve and store their work confidently. They use the mouse and the keyboard with skill and have learnt how to operate the printer. Pupils are adept at word processing and know the meaning of 'font'. They use capital letters and punctuate their work. Pupils are beginning to master the technique of clicking and dragging the mouse and are learning the first steps in importing graphics. They use the computer to sort and classify information and to present their findings. For example, they are beginning to use graphics to construct a pictogram showing their favourite foods. Pupils recognise that many everyday devices respond to signals and commands and that they can select options when using devices to produce different outcomes. They are beginning to work successfully on control technology. They are aware that entering a sequence of instructions into a floor turtle makes it move.

152. In Years 3 to 6 pupils continue to make good progress. The pupils use information and communication technology to generate, amend and present ideas. For instance, they design and produce posters for the school's "Science Week". They are able to choose suitable fonts and sizes for headlines and understand how to import graphics from the main bank. Pupils use information and communication technology to combine different forms of information. Pupils successfully use the word processing program to produce stories, evaluations and accounts of school events among many other pieces of writing. They take great pride in composing accurate and good looking texts to print off. They handle text with confidence, changing fonts, editing the text, saving their work, mixing text with pictures and cutting and effectively pasting text from different sources. Younger pupils use a program to create an aquarium with fish of different sizes swimming in different directions. They use edit and undo to remove excess colour and use image to flip rotate to change the direction of the fish. Older pupils use Publisher, Internet and Video-conferencing at the King Edward VII Eco Centre. They confidently use a wide specific vocabulary, for example, "minimise, menu, scroll, cut and paste" and "edit". They are confident in using their skills in information and communication technology in importing graphics and in compiling spreadsheets using familiar data. In a lunch time club pupils make good use of the Internet to send and receive E-mails from friends and members of their families at home and abroad.

153. Attitudes in information and communication technology lessons are very good. Pupils enjoy their work, concentrate well and handle the resources with due respect and care. They are very keen and interested and there is a strong sense of wanting to succeed. Pupils work together well in pairs, taking turns. Careful matching of pairs results in very good social development as pupils work alongside each other collaboratively, gaining a greater understanding of each other.

154. Teaching is very good. There are clear objectives, very good behaviour management and lessons are conducted at a crisp pace. Teachers have good subject knowledge of word processing and graphics and use technical vocabulary to good effect, for example "import, edit" and "click and drag". Teachers develop literacy and numeracy skills effectively as they provide effective opportunities for pupils to use the computers in other subjects. Teachers are adept at assessing pupils' achievement through day-to-day observation or by careful questioning.

MUSIC

155. In addition to classroom lessons, pupils were inspected when singing in assembly and teachers' planning was scrutinised. From this evidence, it is clear that pupils, including those with special educational needs, are attaining above national expectations and make good progress. This judgement is similar to that given in the previous inspection report. The work of the specialist teacher ensures provision for the subject is very good.

156. By the end of Year 2 pupils have developed positive attitudes to music. They can name some musical instruments and copy simple rhythms and melodic phrases. They have learned a repertoire of songs and accompanied them with tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Pupils enjoy performing their music. There is some good work and pupils reach good levels of knowledge and understanding. The youngest pupils are introduced to music by singing songs from memory. They are learning to control the sounds of their voices as well as a variety of untuned instruments with which they accompany the singing. They build their knowledge of rhythm and can introduce different speeds or volume into their work. Their singing is tuneful and enthusiastic. They learn an appropriate variety of songs. They sing tunefully and with expression and learn a range of songs, rhymes and hymns. Pupils in Year 2 show a good understanding of beating in time to music

157. By the end of Year 6 pupils can compose four beat tunes and perform in groups. Pupils build on earlier skills; they further explore pitch through voices and tuned percussion. Pupils sing very well, especially in assemblies. In hymns, pupils sing sensitively in response to the theme, varying the dynamics accordingly. They have listened to a variety of music, for example, African music linked to their liaison with Tanzania. They have used various instruments to build up good compositions. They can sing in rounds and have a satisfactory understanding of musical terms, for example, beat, pitch, tempo, dynamics and staccato. They learn how music can create a mood. Pupils listen sensibly to the wide range of music played in assemblies. They are developing skills in appreciating music and sensibly consider their reactions to the items they hear. Pupils play music at the start of assemblies which they have often practised independently and their talents are appreciated and recognised by all.

158. Recorder playing is very good. Younger pupils play accurately and with verve. Their techniques are secure, because of rigorous teaching, and pupils follow the melody line of simple traditional scores well. Older pupils perform very well to create a lovely tapestry of sounds. Their playing is rhythmical and lovely to hear. The school choir is very popular and pupils take part in concerts and competitions. This extends their musical experiences and helps them to gain an increasingly sophisticated sense of performance.

159. Overall pupils' learning, including those with special needs, is good. The great majority of pupils enjoy music and participate with enthusiasm. Pupils show good responses in musical activities. They collaborate well together when they work on group compositions. They generally behave well, sharing instruments and working sensibly when playing or composing, despite the sounds made by other groups. Pupils show confidence and persistence in their music lessons, trying hard to achieve pleasing results.

160. The quality of teaching observed was very good. The lessons were well planned with clear objectives and the teacher had very good subject knowledge. The pace of the lesson was brisk. Pupils showed obvious enjoyment of the activities developing pupils knowledge and understanding of rhythm using a range of tuned and untuned instruments well. There are high expectations both about the standards teachers want pupils to achieve and their behaviour, for example, when using instruments. Lessons are well planned ensuring good

coverage of the National Curriculum. It provides progressive teaching of skills through interesting activities and makes best use of the specialist skills of the teacher.

161. Music is used in a variety of ways in the day-to-day life of the school. Music is often used in assemblies and pupils are told about composers and their lives. Pupils have been involved in a variety of musical activities such as the Christmas Concert. Much good work has been done, including reflecting a wider range of cultures through music. Music makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development. The subject is effectively co-ordinated and there is a clear commitment to future development. Teachers' planning is monitored to evaluate delivery of the curriculum. Extra-curricular activities include recorder and choir groups. Resources are good in both range and quality.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

162. Pupils' overall standards of attainment in physical education are at least in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages. By the end of Year 6 pupils have covered well all the required areas of the subject. Across the school standards of attainment in swimming are high and pupils make good progress.

163. Younger pupils respond well to rhythm, using their imagination effectively to represent shapes and objects. By the end of Year 2 pupils demonstrate an appropriate range of controlled movements on the floor and they can transfer their skills to apparatus effectively. Lower attainers move with increasing confidence and competently balance, run and turn. Higher attainers are exercising a range of skills such as throwing and catching with control and confidence. Pupils perform safely, know that exercise affects their bodies and are aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

164. By the end of Year 6 pupils demonstrate good ball control and learn to play recognised games such as basketball, football, tag-rugby and tennis. When performing country dances, Maypole dancing and line dancing, pupils learn to follow a sequence of steps and move to tempo. In athletics they demonstrate good throwing techniques using objects such as balls and beanbags and are aware of the importance of correct body positioning for effective jumping techniques. In gymnastics most pupils move with confidence. Higher attainers are able to plan and perform movements with friends and are able to criticise their own and others' performance.

165. Pupils make good progress throughout the school. Younger pupils improve their skills systematically through practice. Older pupils improve their performance and make good progress. In games, they practise hard and show good development learning tactics, such as learning how to run with the ball in football practice. They refine their skills and consolidate their understanding of position and responsibility in team games through self-evaluation and regular practice. Younger pupils understand the need for safety and the need for sportsmanship and show appreciation for the success of others. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

166. Throughout the school pupils have very good attitudes to their lessons and they perform their routines and practise skills enthusiastically. Older pupils understand the importance of playing to the rules of the game. They acknowledge the success of others by applause and all pupils show a responsible attitude to safety of themselves and other pupils. Behaviour in lessons is good; the pupils listen carefully and obey instructions.

167. Teaching of this subject was very good in those lessons seen. Lessons are well planned and include appropriate opportunities to develop skills. The teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject. Pupils are clear about what they have to do and activities are appropriate to the capabilities of the pupils and high expectations in terms of performance are set. Exercises are challenging and tasks ensure that the pupils exercise different parts of the body. Teachers use pupils very effectively to demonstrate their skills to others. Praise is used successfully to acknowledge good performance. Class control and organisation are very good and there is a suitable emphasis on safety. Lessons begin with an appropriate warm up and during the lesson there are times to consider the effect of exercise. A detailed policy and commercial scheme of work gives good guidance and support for teaching. The hall is small and the teaching of physical education, in particular gymnastics, is restricted through lack of space. Outside, there is a large playground with a hard surface and a large playing field which can accommodate a variety of team games. Professional coaches from a variety of sports visit the school and work with groups of pupils. Swimming takes place at Melton Leisure Pool where pupils are taught by qualified swimming instructors.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

168. Pupils' attainment is good and meets and often exceeds the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous report when standards were judged to be satisfactory.

169. In Years 1 and 2 pupils develop an awareness of why people pray. They develop an understanding of stories from the New Testament and through this begin to understand some of the key Christian values. Pupils learn about aspects of Hinduism. They gain knowledge about Hindu gods and goddesses, such as, Rama, Sita, Krishna and Ganesha. They gain an understanding of Hindu ceremonies and worship through participating in setting up a shrine in the classroom. By the end of Year 2 pupils have gained an understanding of Christianity and Hinduism. They have a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity. Their knowledge of Hinduism is less secure. They understand why the Bible is important to Christians. Pupils know about the life of Jesus and can recall events from the Christmas and Easter stories. They know that these times of year are Christian festivals that celebrate episodes from the life of Jesus.

170. In Years 3 to 6 pupils study aspects of religion in increasing depth. By the end of Year 6 pupils understand the place of the books of the Bible among world religions. They know that it is a collection of books written at different times. They have studied the significant events in the life of Jesus and have gained a deeper understanding of his importance in the Christian faith. They have learned some of the similarities between religions, for example, they know that Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Jews and Hindus all have a holy book and that they worship one deity. They know that the Qur'an is the sacred book of the Muslims and know the rituals involved in its handling. They have gained an understanding of the importance of religion in the lives of religious people. They know about the work of famous people who have benefited mankind, for example, Mother Teresa and Martin Luther King. Pupils explore the feelings of characters in faith stories and learn to empathise with them. They reflect on ways in which beliefs influence and motivate the lives of individuals. Pupils learn about the ways in which the Bible helps Christians to live their lives through work on the teaching of Jesus. They gain knowledge of aspects of Hindu and Muslim worship, learn about key people in these religions and the symbolic meaning of such things as light and water.

171. Progress in learning at both key stages is good for all pupils, including talented pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good at both

key stages. The school has created a very positive atmosphere in which pupils show sensitivity and respect for the thoughts, feelings and views of others. They have good relationships and show a readiness to discuss their own thoughts and feelings with openness and confidence. Pupils show an excitement, interest and a sense of awe in their learning when looking at religious artefacts. In class discussions they listen attentively to the teacher and to one another and show interest and enthusiasm when responding to questions.

172. The quality of teaching is very good. The teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and recognise how pupils of various ages and stages of development learn about religion. They are sensitive in their approach to their pupils' feeling and beliefs and this acts as a good model for the pupils' own behaviour in this respect. The teachers are careful to develop the specialist vocabularies that are appropriate to the religions studied and this gives an accuracy and fluency to the pupils' discussions. Teachers' planning is good with lesson objectives clearly stated. It provides good coverage of the locally agreed syllabus. The teachers use resources well to create a sense of awe and wonder. Good quality displays of artefacts and attractive information books are used well by teachers to stimulate interest and provoke research. For example, a Hindu display that includes Rangooli patterns from Hindu literature contributing to their work in art.

173. Religious education makes a very important contribution to the excellent provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, through the very good assemblies seen during the inspection on the theme of Peace and Remembrance. It provides insights into the spiritual values of Christianity and the other religions studied in ways that enable the pupils to relate them to their own lives. In the sensitive attention paid to the beliefs and practices of religious believers the pupils are able to develop the ability to think about and discuss important matters of belief with courtesy and sympathy. This contributes also to the accepting and encouraging atmosphere of the school.

174. Literacy is used effectively to support the subject. There is a good supply of attractive reference books covering the faiths studied and pupils use their writing skills to explain religious practices and beliefs and to retell biblical stories. The pupils regularly visit local churches, for example, for harvest festivals and celebrations of the nativity at Christmas. Church leaders are regular visitors to the school. The subject is co-ordinated with enthusiasm and commitment. Teachers' planning is monitored in order to evaluate delivery of the subject. Clear plans exist for future developments in this subject.