

INSPECTION REPORT

OLLERTON INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

New Ollerton, Newark

Local Education Authority area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122665

Headteacher: Mrs CA Lamb

Reporting inspector: Mr D Walker
19121

Dates of inspection: 27-30 March 2000

Inspection number: 194415

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Whinney Lane New Ollerton Newark Notts.
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P G Bracegirdle
Date of previous inspection:	19 November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr D Walker	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
		Information technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements
		Physical education	What should the school do to improve further?
		Special educational needs	
Mr A Beckley	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?
Mrs S Mardel	Team inspector	English	How well are pupils taught?
		Art	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Design and technology	
		Religious education	
		Under fives	
Mrs C Lister	Team inspector	Science	How well is the school led and managed?
		Geography	
		History	
		Music	
		Equal opportunities	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ollerton Infant School serves the areas of Boughton and New Ollerton. The school currently has 202 pupils on roll, including 92 pupils attending its 60 place nursery on a part-time basis. Pupils enter their Reception class at the beginning of the term in which they are five and all pupils are taught in mixed age classes. Nearly half of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. This figure has doubled since 1997 and is well above the national average. 62% of the pupils are on the special educational needs register and one pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The school has a growing number of pupils who have either joined or left the school during the current school year. The attainment of pupils on entry to full time schooling is below average for Nottinghamshire schools in literacy and numeracy.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that has many strengths and no significant weaknesses in any area of its work. The headteacher provides high quality leadership and is well supported by a dedicated staff and an effective governing body. Good teaching and high quality support from other adults enable all pupils to make good progress in their learning. The standards achieved by pupils are generally high in relation to similar schools and steadily improving when compared to all schools. The quality of care given to pupils is excellent. This reflects the clear vision of the headteacher and the very strong relationships that exist between adults and pupils. Pupils respond very positively to this and their behaviour and attitudes to school are very good. Pupils like their school and work hard because of the encouragement and good teaching they receive. They appreciate all the work that has been done to make the school environment so attractive. This is a school that parents and the community that the school serves can be proud of. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Good teaching ensures that all pupils make good progress.
- Teaching of literacy and numeracy is effective in developing pupils' basic skills.
- Provision and support for pupils with special educational needs are excellent.
- The environment of the school is attractive and stimulating for pupils. This does much to encourage their good behaviour.
- Pupils are keen and eager to come to school because it is such a caring community.
- The nursery offers a very good introduction to school.
- The effective leadership of the headteacher and governing body provides a clear vision for learning.
- The school has many ways for encouraging the very good behaviour of pupils.
- Good teaching, effective leadership and management and standards that are good compared to similar schools mean that the school provides good value for money.

What could be improved

- There are some variations between classes in how well different subjects are taught. There is no systematic monitoring of these variations.

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 good progress since the last inspection in addressing those areas identified for improvement. Since the last inspection, standards show significant improvement in English and science and steady improvement in mathematics. These continued improvements must be set against the low attainment of pupils on entry and the increasing number of pupils with special educational needs. There are now twice as many pupils with special educational needs as there were in 1997. The school has done very well to continue to improve the standards achieved by its pupils given the growing diversity of their needs. The standards achieved are generally high in comparison to those of similar schools and the school is now aiming to improve its performance against all schools. The management of behaviour by adults is now consistent and the very good management of lessons by teachers is one of the strengths of teaching within the school. Lessons always start on time and the punctuality of pupils is good.

The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection with a higher proportion of lessons now being of a very high standard. The proportion of teaching judged to be unsatisfactory has also reduced since the last inspection. Teaching in the nursery is now always good or better. The last inspection judged the teaching of pupils with special educational needs to be satisfactory. The teaching of these pupils is now good and the school has put in place a wide range of strategies to support their learning. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented effectively and the teaching of the basic skills to pupils is good.

Since the last inspection the headteacher and governing body have developed an effective senior management team. The deputy headteacher now has a permanent post and a clear role as a senior manager. The senior management team now meets regularly to consider school improvement issues. There is now a more effective link between the strategic plan for the school and the management of finances. All those involved in strategic planning are aware of the principles of best value and these are actively put into practice.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	n/a	E	D	A
Writing	n/a	E	D	B
Mathematics	n/a	E	E	C

<i>Key</i>	
well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

These results show how well the school is performing when compared to other schools like Ollerton. When standards are judged like this, the standards achieved in reading are well above average, standards in writing are above average and standards in mathematics and science are in line with those for similar schools. These standards indicate the good progress that pupils make given their generally low attainment on entry and the good quality of teaching they receive across all age groups. The school is now aiming to bring its performance up to the average for all schools nationally, and this has already started to happen in some areas. Since the last inspection the school has had a clear focus on the raising of standards in all subjects, but particularly in literacy and numeracy. The school has put a range of strategies in place to support the learning of all pupils. These strategies have already had a positive impact on standards in reading and writing and are beginning to effect an improvement on the standards in mathematics. The standards of work seen during the inspection were generally close to the national average in most subjects, including English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Standards in religious education were in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. It was not possible to make a judgement about standards in history and physical education due to a lack of evidence. Standards in art are high. No difference was seen in the performance of boys and girls. The difference last year was due to the nature of the particular group of pupils. Children under five make good progress but most do not attain the national outcomes by the time they enter Key Stage 1. This reflects the generally low attainment that pupils have when they join the nursery.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are eager to come to school and show a keen interest in school life. They are very enthusiastic learners and have a very good attitude to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The behaviour of pupils is very good and they behave very well in all situations around the school. They are courteous, cheerful, trustworthy and show respect for their own and school property.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships with all adults are very good. Pupils support each other very well and they think carefully about the impact of what they do.
Attendance	Attendance is good and is actively promoted by the school.

Relationships between adults and pupils are very good. Pupils respond positively to adults and listen carefully in lessons. They work hard for their teachers because the work they are given is planned to their individual needs. The behaviour of pupils is very good because they find their work so interesting. All teachers and adults manage behaviour in a similar way and this helps pupils to behave correctly wherever they are in the school. Pupils feel good about themselves because teachers help them to be successful in their work. This, in turn, makes pupils try even harder with their work. Pupils work hard at this school and behave well but not only because teachers expect it, but because that is what they expect to do as well.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	N/A

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

Teaching is a strength of the school and ensures that all pupils make good progress. Hard working and dedicated teachers enjoy excellent support from a range of other adults within classrooms and the nursery. They work together as an effective team and this has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Teaching was good or better in 64% of the lessons observed, and was very good or excellent in 25% of the lessons observed. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection with a higher proportion of lessons now being of a very high standard. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has reduced since the last inspection. Only 2% of unsatisfactory lessons were observed during the inspection.

Teaching for the under fives is good with many very good features and teaching is good overall in Key Stage 1. Lessons are well planned with work that is carefully matched to the needs of all pupils. Teachers are clear about how the higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are to be challenged and how resources are to be used to support learning. Teachers know their pupils well and use this knowledge to make a difference in their learning. This leads to pupils being extremely well supported in their work. Pupils react very positively to the way that the work is planned for their individual needs and they work hard for their teachers. This enables them to make good progress in their learning. Pupils receive excellent support from a range of other adults and they are particularly effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good and is effectively developing pupils' literacy and numeracy. Regular assessment of work allows teachers to set individual pupil targets for future learning in these subjects. The teaching of other subjects is generally satisfactory, although with some variations in subjects from class to class.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Pupils have access to a full range of learning experiences. A very good range of extra-curricular opportunities is provided for pupils. An effective personal and social education programme makes a very good contribution to the self-esteem of pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	These pupils receive excellent support from all adults and make good progress. They are effectively supported by a wide range of strategies.

Aspect	Comment
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Moral provision is very good; social provision is good; spiritual and cultural provision is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Teachers and other adults have a very good understanding of the needs of pupils. This allows them to give very good support and guidance to pupils. Pupils are well cared for and this helps them to learn effectively.

The school gives priority to developing pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy. It also offers a wide range of other learning opportunities to pupils. Running through all of this work is a commitment to support the personal development of pupils and the school does this very effectively. The school has a range of activities that target effectively the learning of identified groups of pupils. This contributes to the effective provision for pupils with special educational needs. The use of information and communication technology to support learning is a developing feature of the school's work. The curriculum provision for pupils under five is very good and offers a suitable range of experiences across all areas of learning. The good partnership the school has with parents has a positive influence on pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides high quality leadership that is linked to a clear vision for the school and its role within the community it serves. She is well supported by an able deputy headteacher and a committed team of teachers and other adults.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is effective in the discharge of its duties. All governors offer good support through their links with particular classes. Some individual governors give excellent support through their high level of committee and class involvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses its performance thoroughly and uses this information to identify areas for future development.
The strategic use of resources	Funds are used effectively to support agreed priorities. The school makes very good use of external grants, as in the development of the outside environment.

The best use is made of available resources and they are well managed. The school offers very good support to newly appointed governors and newly qualified teachers. All those involved in strategic planning are aware of the principles of 'best value' and these are effectively put into practice. The school has been successful in gaining a range of funding through external grants and these have been well used to enhance the quality of education provided for pupils.

The high quality external environment and the creation of a ‘partnership room’ are very good examples of the use of this funding. Very effective leadership and management have ensured that all key issues from the last inspection have been successfully addressed. Plans for improvement are based on rigorous evaluation of performance and targets for improvement set for individuals, age groups and the whole school. Teaching is monitored regularly by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators have started to monitor teaching in some aspects of some subjects. This programme now needs to be extended to include all subject co-ordinators.

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 standards achieved by their children. • Their children make good progress. • They can easily approach the school with questions or problems. • Teaching is good and teachers know their pupils well. • The good behaviour and positive attitudes promoted by the school. • The happy and caring atmosphere. • How the school keeps them informed about what is happening in school. • The leadership of the school is always trying to improve things. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More regular homework in mathematics.

Effective links have been established with parents and the inspection confirms parents’ positive views of the school. The school provides effective communications with parents and there is a good range of opportunities for parents to become involved in school activities. The school has very recently introduced regular homework in mathematics for pupils and the impact of this will need to be reviewed at an appropriate time.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

- 1 Since the last inspection the school has had a clear focus on the raising of standards in all subjects, but particularly in literacy and numeracy. The school has put a range of strategies in place to support the learning of all pupils. These strategies have had a positive impact on standards in reading and writing and are beginning to effect an improvement on the standards in mathematics.
- 2 When pupils join the nursery there is a range of attainment but, generally, it is well below that expected of pupils of this age. The school's data shows an increasing number of pupils at the lower end of the scale. Attainments in literacy and mathematics are both below local education authority averages. Attainment in mathematics is lower than attainment in literacy.
- 3 Pupils make good progress in the nursery but standards are still generally below those expected for the age group in all areas of learning when pupils join their Reception class. A baseline assessment is undertaken shortly after pupils join their classes, using the local education authority's baseline assessment scheme. Once again there is a spread of attainment with pupils' attainment in mathematics being significantly below that in literacy.
- 4 In the 1999 National Curriculum tests and tasks for seven year olds, standards in reading and writing are below the national average and standards in mathematics are well below the national average. In science there is no national test but teachers' own assessments show that standards are also below the national average. Despite this low level of attainment against national figures, the percentage of pupils achieving the national benchmark of Level 2 has increased by 19% in reading and 18% in writing since 1998. This reflects the impact of the school's work in these areas. Standards in mathematics have also risen over the same period but not by as much. Much of the work to improve standards in mathematics has taken place this year to support the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. The impact of this can be seen in the standard of pupils' current work that shows pupils working in line with the standards expected for their age.
- 5 Ollerton Infant School has a high number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. This figure is more than twice the national average. When Ollerton's standards are judged against those of all schools like this, the standards achieved in reading are well above average, standards in writing are above average and standards in mathematics are in line with those for similar schools. Standards in science, based on teachers' own assessments, are above average. These standards show the good progress that pupils make given their generally low attainment on entry and the good quality of teaching they receive across all age groups.

- 6 The proportion of pupils who achieve the higher levels in the national tests is close to the national average for reading and writing, in line for science and below for mathematics. When compared to similar schools, however, the figure for reading is well above average, writing and science are above average and mathematics is in line for similar schools. This shows that the school is effective in meeting the needs of its higher attaining pupils.
- 7 Trends over time and since the last inspection show an improvement in the school's results but attainment is still below that expected for the age group. Over the period from 1996 to 1999, the performance of pupils was below the national average for reading and well below the national average for writing and mathematics. Although no test data is available prior to 1998 due to decisions made by the local education authority, teacher assessments over time show significant improvements in English and science and steady improvement in mathematics. Results in the tests show significant improvement in reading, writing and spelling since 1998. The effective introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has had a positive impact on these results. Results in mathematics show a steady improvement over the same period.
- 8 These improvements must be set against the low attainment of pupils on entry to the school and the increasing number of pupils with special educational needs. There are now twice as many pupils in the school with identified special educational needs as there were in 1997. The school has done very well to continue to improve the standards achieved by its pupils given the growing diversity of need.
- 9 During the week of the inspection, standards in speaking and listening and reading were in line with the national standards for seven year olds. The improvement in reading, when compared to the 1999 national test result, reflects the effective work that the school has done in this area. Standards in writing were below those expected nationally for this age group. Creative writing is the next area to be targeted by the school for improvement. Standards in mathematics and science were in line with national expectations for seven year-olds. This shows good improvement in the standard of mathematics since the 1999 national tests and reflects the effort that the school has put into improving this aspect of its work.
- 10 The performance of boys in national tests is well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics for the period 1996 to 1999. The performance of girls over this period was below the national average for reading and mathematics and well below for writing. Although taken over four years, no information was available for 1996 and 1997 due to the local education authority not participating in the tests for these two years. There was an improvement in the performance of boys and girls in the reading and writing tests from 1998 to 1999. The performance of girls also improved in mathematics but that of boys did not. This reflects the specific nature of that group of pupils. The test results also show that girls perform better than boys in reading, writing and mathematics. Over the period from 1996 to 1999 the performance gap between boys and girls is less for maths, however, than it is for reading and writing. During the inspection, little variation was observed between the performance of boys and girls. The school is effectively supporting the learning of all pupils through a wide range of strategies.

- 11 Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by the school and make good progress. The school has put in place a range of activities that offer effective support within English and mathematics. Teachers know their pupils well and this helps them to plan effectively for these pupils and offer work that is well matched to their individual needs. Targets within the pupils' individual education plans are precise and offer appropriate steps in learning. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support from a range of additional adults who work in classrooms with pupils or support on a one to one basis away from the classroom. Pupils find their work interesting and respond well to it. Relationships are excellent and pupils work hard for their teachers and other adults. This helps them to make good progress in their learning.
- 12 In information and communication technology, only limited direct teaching was observed. Evidence from pupils' past work and from discussions with pupils indicates that standards by the age of seven are in line with national expectations. Although pupils make satisfactory progress at present, the planned developments for this subject will enable the school to aim for higher standards.
- 13 Pupils make satisfactory progress in their work in religious education. At the end of the key stage the attainment of pupils is in line with the expectations within the agreed syllabus being followed by the school.
- 14 Standards in geography and design and technology have been maintained at a satisfactory level since the last inspection in 1996, with pupils producing work of a range and standard typical of that found nationally. Standards in art continue to be above those of most seven year olds. This is because of effective planning, the positive impact of the subject co-ordinator and the strong role that art has been given in raising the self-esteem of pupils. Standards in music, whilst satisfactory, are not at the level described in the last report. This reflects changes in the organisation of the subject and the absence of a music specialist within the staff. No judgement is possible about history and physical education due to the lack of evidence.
- 15 Overall, the standards achieved by pupils are high in comparison to similar schools. The school is now aiming to improve its performance to match the average for all schools. This has already started to happen in some areas. The progress made by all pupils is good and reflects the good quality of teaching and the high level of care that they receive from all adults.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 16 Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good overall and have a positive impact on their learning in the school. Pupils are eager to come to school and show a keen interest in school life. Lessons begin on time and continue without interruption. This has a positive effect on pupils' attainment. Pupils are very interested in the very good range of curricular and extra-curricular activities the school provides.

- 17 The pupils' behaviour in school and at break times is very good. They are courteous, cheerful, trustworthy and show respect for their own and school property. Pupils form constructive and productive relationships with each other and with teaching and non-teaching staff. There is a very safe learning atmosphere at the school and no oppressive behaviour or bullying was seen during the inspection. The school has a clear system of rewards and sanctions and no pupil has been excluded during the current school year.
- 18 In several good lessons seen, pupils were effectively encouraged to reflect on what they do and how this will effect the feelings, values and beliefs of other people. In some lessons, opportunities for pupils to think and reflect could have been further developed.
- 19 Pupils are given responsibility around the school such as assisting in serving and clearing at lunchtime. Pupils actively respond to responsibility and show initiative when offered the opportunity.
- 20 There is a high level of attendance at the school. Attendance is enhanced by the strategies adopted by the school through its community links and the Community Liaison teacher. Registers comply with statutory requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 21 Teaching is a strength of the school and ensures that all pupils make good progress. Hard working and dedicated teachers enjoy excellent support from a range of other adults within classrooms and the nursery. They work together as an effective team and this has a very positive impact on pupils' learning.
- 22 Teaching was good or better in 64% of the lessons seen with 25% being very good or excellent. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection with a higher proportion of lessons now being of a very high standard. The proportion of teaching judged to be less than satisfactory has also reduced since the last inspection. Only 2% of the lessons observed were unsatisfactory.
- 23 Teaching for the under fives is always good with very good features. The activities provided are carefully planned within a clear structure and encourage the developing independence of pupils. The planning makes sure that pupils are fully involved by taking careful account of the individual needs of all pupils. Individually targeted questions help to keep pupils on task and the open-ended nature of the questioning encourages pupils to think for themselves. Pupils respond positively to adults and listen well. They enjoy answering questions and the teacher's careful targeting of questions ensures that all pupils join in. This helps to develop the pupils' understanding of their work. Occasionally, the lack of an appropriate intervention fails to develop understanding and this can lead to individual pupils becoming restless at times. Praise is used effectively to raise the self-esteem of pupils and reward success.
- 24 Teaching in Key Stage 1 is lively and enthusiastic. Lessons are well planned, and nearly always have clearly defined learning objectives that are well matched to the range of abilities within classrooms. This is particularly important as all the classes in

Key Stage 1 have more than one age group. Teachers deal effectively with this by planning for the full range of abilities within classes. Teachers are clear about how the higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are to be challenged and how resources are to be used to support learning. Teachers know their pupils well and use this knowledge to make a difference in their learning. This care and thought leads to pupils being extremely well supported in their work. Pupils react very positively to the way that work is planned for their individual needs and they work very hard for their teachers. This enables them to make good progress in their learning.

- 25 The behaviour of pupils is very good because they find their work so interesting. All teachers and other adults manage the behaviour of pupils in a similar way and this helps pupils to behave correctly wherever they are in the school. Pupils feel good about themselves because teachers help them to be successful in their work. This, in turn, makes pupils try even harder with their work.
- 26 Pupils within the nursery and in Key Stage 1 enjoy the support of a range of other adults. These adults provide excellent support and are a key factor in the good progress made by all pupils. Often, for example, they work with target groups of pupils with special educational needs, sometimes away from the main teaching group. The effectiveness of their questioning and quality of their relationships enhance teaching and makes a very positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- 27 Within literacy and numeracy lessons, teachers make good use of discussion, questioning, class, group and individual work to challenge and stimulate pupils. Planning takes good account of the national frameworks for literacy and numeracy. There is a good balance between direct teaching and practical activity and recording. Teachers show good subject knowledge and understanding in the way that they present these subjects. In the very best lessons pupils have planned opportunities for developing their own thinking within lessons.
- 28 These features of very good teaching are not always evident in some of the other subjects of the curriculum. In a science lesson, for example, the work given did not challenge all the pupils in the class. The school does not yet consistently monitor teaching and learning in all subjects. This means that teachers do not always know what is effective or what improvements are needed when teaching some subjects.
- 29 The use of information and communication technology to support learning is a feature of teaching within the school. Teachers make good use of it in some subjects, as in literacy, where older pupils word process their own stories based on the books being used in the literacy hour. The school now needs to ensure that information and communication technology is used effectively across all subject areas.
- 30 Teachers make regular assessments of pupils' learning in most subjects. Teachers set targets for pupils in English and mathematics based on what pupils already know. These regular assessments help to ensure that work is planned at the correct level for each pupil. This is one of the reasons why pupils make good progress and why they enjoy their work so much. Pupils receive good feedback in lessons and this helps them with their work. This is not always the case with the marking of their work in books. The marking does not always make clear what it is that pupils need to do next in

order to improve their work. Teachers do, however, identify learning targets for their pupils in literacy and numeracy to support the improvements identified through the marking of the pupils' work.

- 31 Teachers regularly work with small groups of pupils where the work is closely matched to the individual needs of pupils within these groups. These groups are mainly used to support work in literacy and numeracy and are supported by very effective support assistants for special educational needs and nursery nurses. The impact of these groups on the progress of pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, is significant. The good teaching they receive, based on planning that reflects their individual needs, enables pupils to succeed and make good progress. The relationships between adults and pupils in these groups are excellent and pupils respond positively.
- 32 The last inspection report made reference to the unsatisfactory teaching being due to teachers concentrating on working with groups of pupils rather than the whole class. This led to small numbers of pupils with behavioural difficulties causing disruption in classes. It also judged the teaching of pupils with special educational needs to be satisfactory in Key Stage 1. The school has effectively addressed these areas and turned them into strengths within teaching and learning. The behaviour of pupils throughout the school is very good and the school is very effective in its management of those pupils with behavioural problems. Teachers offer an effective balance of group and class teaching. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is now good in Key Stage 1 with a range of strategies in place to support their learning.
- 33 Pupils in all classes complete work at home. Work to support literacy is undertaken on a regular basis with recent developments in the school's homework policy leading to mathematics homework being set on two occasions each half term for pupils in Key Stage 1. Parents are less sure of the school's homework practice for mathematics than they are for literacy.
- 34 Pupils enjoy learning at school. Teachers know their pupils well and this allows them to set work that is well matched to pupils' abilities. Good teaching ensures that lessons are well managed and learning takes place at a good pace. Pupils respond very positively to this teaching and they show real interest in, and enthusiasm for, their work. They often work for long periods of time with very good concentration. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good and pupils try hard because they like the adults they work with. The approach used to behaviour is the same by all adults and this ensures that pupils behave well not only during lessons but at playtimes and dinner times as well. Pupils work hard at this school and behave well. This is not only because teachers expect it but because that is what they expect to do as well.

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

- 35 Overall the school offers a satisfactory range of learning opportunities although the time allocated to some subjects will need to be reviewed as the school prepares to implement the revised National Curriculum from September 2000. Provision meets statutory requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious

education. The very good range of activities provided outside the school day give pupils more choice than is often seen in infant and nursery schools.

- 36 In addition to the statutory provision the school curriculum also includes lessons in personal and social education. Based on a developing scheme, these lessons make a valuable contribution to the school's aims of raising self-esteem and confidence. All subjects work together to support the school's overarching aim to *take pupils where they did not think they could go*. Extra time is given to the teaching of English through, for example, group spelling sessions and drama. This provides opportunities for pupils to improve their skills in reading and speaking. The pupils' understanding of their own health and well-being is developed through their work in science.
- 37 The school's overall curriculum plan is based on teachers teaching all subjects to their own classes. Some subjects are grouped together and taught as part of a theme. The time given to teaching is slightly longer than the recommendation for Key Stage 1. A well-judged decision to allocate a significantly greater amount of time to English, both in terms of a daily literacy hour and across other subjects, is having a significant impact on pupils' attainment. The generous allocation to mathematics is also beneficial. The use of these sessions is consistent from class to class and demonstrates good practice.
- 38 However, it is not always clear how much time the pupils spend on some subjects of the curriculum. In physical education, for example, it is not clear from the school's documentation how it ensures that all elements of the subject are covered in the time allocated. [Sometimes lessons also have a number of learning objectives from across several subjects](#). One such lesson involved pupils in listening to an aboriginal 'dream time' story, designing their own aboriginal painting and undertaking map work related to Australia. This made it difficult for the teacher to ensure that the correct time allocation was being given to each individual subject. Governors have, however, allocated one day per term for staff to plan thoroughly across year groups. This enables staff to discuss these issues and ensure coverage of the curriculum overall.
- 39 The school has recently begun to consider the national schemes of work presented by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. It is the intention to use these as a focus for a curriculum review, especially where policies are outdated as in design and technology.
- 40 The curriculum provision for pupils under five is very good overall. It provides a suitable range of learning experiences covering the six nationally recommended areas of learning. Staff have begun to incorporate the Early Learning Goals into their planning. Effective liaison with teachers of the Reception classes ensures that pupils make a smooth transition in the work they do as they move from the nursery.
- 41 The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and National Numeracy strategies. Although these are still relatively new, they are already having a significant impact on pupils' learning. Time allocations for English allow for additional school initiatives. These include 'Parents and Children Enjoy Reading' (PACE) which provides additional reading support from friends of the school for those pupils who need it. Weekly targeted groups to support literacy, arranged by ability rather than age, enable pupils to make progress at a pace appropriate to their level of attainment.

English is well integrated across the curriculum. However, during the week of the inspection only limited opportunities were seen for pupils to undertake their own research or work independently.

- 42 The school is successful in making a considerable range of enriching experiences available to pupils both at dinnertime and after the end of the school day. These include gymnastics, computer, craft, dance and gardening clubs. They are well supported by both boys and girls and include pupils of all capabilities. These occasions benefit pupils greatly, building their social skills and widening their sometimes narrow range of experiences.
- 43 The curriculum is well adjusted to meet the needs of pupils with physical, behavioural and learning difficulties. Pupils are taught in a combination of individual and group withdrawal groups, or supported within the class. Work planned for them reflects well what the rest of the class are doing, thus retaining their entitlement to the full curriculum. A group of Year 1 pupils, for example, worked with a support assistant to develop a game based on bears using a modified vocabulary. Pupils are generally well integrated back into lessons when they return. Teachers' knowledge of their pupils and the way in which the needs of all pupils are planned for as individuals is an important factor in the drive to raise standards.
- 44 The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is generally good overall but there are variations between the different elements.
- 45 Provision for pupils' moral behaviour is very good. Teachers offer positive role models. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour both in and out of lessons. Simple school rules are on display in every room and teachers refer to them if necessary. The support given to pupils to help them achieve their individual targets enables them to develop a sense of responsibility. The entire ethos of the school supports pupils developing awareness of right and wrong.
- 46 Social education is good. Both on the playground and in the classroom pupils work and play co-operatively. Minor incidents are dealt with sensibly and consistently by all adults. This is helped by the fact that mid-day staff have received training and guidance in the school's approach. Family service in the dining room helps to reinforce positive social behaviour.
- 47 Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Prayers are said in thanks for meals and assemblies contain time for reflection. However, planned opportunities in lessons to enable pupils to wonder about the world in which they live were not observed during the inspection. Since the last inspection the school has continued to provide opportunities for pupils to listen to music, see visiting theatre companies and visit art galleries. Work in art on display shows that pupils have a wide experience of different artists. Whilst there appears to have been some considerable improvement in pupils' encounters with the stories, music and art of other cultures, inspection findings show that these sometimes lack depth.

- 48 The nursery has excellent links with the local under fives centre, and very strong links exist between the local family of schools and the Dukeries College. Work with the local junior school prepares pupils well for transition to their next school. The school makes use of the swimming pool at the local secondary school and also visits their environmental area. Many pupils' experiences are very limited so the school makes good use of as many visits as it can afford to venues such as Perlethorpe Environmental Centre. Visitors to school are welcomed and include the local clergymen, librarian and historian. The school is a strong focus for the local community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 49 The school makes very good provision for the health, safety, welfare and protection of all its pupils. There is a comprehensive system of health and safety checks and audits that is managed by the headteacher in consultation with the school governors. There are also good links between the school and local health care professionals. There are four qualified first-aiders and an effective system to protect the safety of the pupils.
- 50 There are effective measures to promote good behaviour in the school through the use of good strategies and policies that are consistently implemented throughout the school by all the staff. There was no evidence during the inspection of oppressive behaviour, harassment or bullying at the school. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
- 51 The child protection procedures in the school are very good and are known and implemented by all staff. Problems and issues relating to child protection are carefully and sensitively handled by staff.
- 52 The school has good measures to promote high levels of attendance. Attendance is enhanced by the strategies adopted by the school through its community links and the Community Liaison teacher. The school constantly reminds pupils and parents about the benefits of good attendance through newsletters and celebration of high achievers. Absences are followed up and there is a link to the education welfare officer.
- 53 The school has good systems for the effective assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic performance, and monitoring of their personal development and attendance. There are ongoing records of assessment kept by individual teachers and a twice-yearly review of pupils' progress. Assessment information is used to guide teachers' planning of the work that pupils are to do. Targets are set for pupils based on this information. Classes are sensitively divided into learning groups with work well matched to each group's needs. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support through class teachers and the use of an effective team of support assistants and qualified nursery nurses.
- 54 The school gives good support and guidance to all its pupils. The annual reports to parents contain information on individual pupils' academic progress, personal development, behaviour and guidance. The statements within the reports on design and technology, information communication technology, history, geography, art, music and religious education reflect the differentiated groupings within classes. The school puts much effort into ensuring that these comments are informative and detail pupils'

attainment. Pastoral support and guidance for pupils are very good and is provided by the class teachers, supplemented effectively by all staff. A strength of the school is the provision and support for pupils with special educational needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 55 The school has a strong commitment to the involvement of parents in its work.
- 56 The parents and carers' views of the school are generally supportive and positive; parents feel welcome in the school and value the ways in which the school keeps them informed about what is happening. Although there is no parent teachers association, parents and carers make a substantial, positive contribution to the pupils' learning at the school. Many parents help in the school through hearing reading and supporting strategies such as the effective PACE reading project.
- 57 The school provides a good range of information to parents and carers in the form of newsletters and posters. The prospectus is well presented and informative but the governors' annual report to parents in 1999 did not contain all the required information. These omissions related to a statement on progress in implementing the action plan drawn up following an inspection and a description of the arrangements for the admission of pupils with disabilities.
- 58 The school has good links with the community and there is a family liaison teacher who is effective in building good relations with parents. The school has a good system of home visits for nursery pupils and there is an effective home-school agreement. Allocation of homework is being trialled at the moment and some parents are unsure of how often homework is given to pupils.
- 59 The school works very effectively with parents and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Parents are encouraged to take an interest in their child's education and a number of parents provide practical support for the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 60 The headteacher is a very effective leader and this is a strength of the school. The headteacher receives good support from the governing body. The headteacher's vision is that every family should be valued and that every child should achieve his or her best. This vision is understood and shared by the governing body and all who work in the school. The aims of the school have been reviewed by governors and staff to match and explain the vision.
- 61 The chairman of the governing body sees his role as being very important and gives a great deal of personal time to the school. Each member of the governing body has adopted a class which is regularly visited by them. Reports on these visits are shared with the whole governing body. This process is effective in making governors informed about teaching and learning within the school.
- 62 Since the last inspection the headteacher and the governing body have worked to build a stronger senior management team. The deputy headteacher now has a permanent

post and a clear role as a senior manager. The senior management team meets regularly to consider school improvement issues. This has enabled the senior staff to effectively support the headteacher in developing specific aspects of the school's practice.

- 63 Appropriately qualified teachers adequately staff the school and most teachers have a subject management role. This includes the teachers who are not full time in the school. Teachers are generally effective in this role and they offer good support to each other.
- 64 The accommodation is good. It is well kept and pupils appreciate how much has been done to make their school bright and attractive. This has a positive impact on pupils' behaviour. Resources are good in most areas but there is only limited non-fiction reading material for younger pupils and weaknesses in the resources to support geography and religious education.
- 65 There is now a stronger relationship between the strategic plan for the school and the management of finances. The full governing body agrees and sets the annual budget and the strategic plan is reviewed annually by staff and governors before changes are agreed. All those who handle finances are aware of the principles of best value and there is evidence of comparing, challenging and consulting on outside costs, such as administration of contracts and a suitable school uniform, to ensure that the school saves money and has the most competitively valued resources. The school has been successful in gaining funding through grants and sponsorship and this has been used to create a safe, practical and stimulating learning environment for pupils and their families. Grants and sponsorship have recently led to the creation of a school garden and pond, parents' room and exciting and varied playground areas.
- 66 The headteacher has a monitoring programme in place that reviews teachers' planning and the quality of teaching. It also monitors, as suggested by the last inspection, the effectiveness and consistency of procedures for supporting and improving pupils' behaviour. This, which has been agreed with all staff, has contributed to effective learning in literacy and is beginning to support improvements in numeracy. Although it is not legally necessary for an infant school to agree targets in literacy and numeracy with the Local Education Authority, this has been done and the targets set are seen as challenging but contributing to the school's improvement.
- 67 As part of the school's monitoring programme, the progress towards achieving these targets is regularly analysed by the deputy headteacher. Findings from this analysis are discussed with staff to plan further improvements. Information on pupils, such as results of their baseline assessment, is used extensively to set targets for individual pupils, to identify learning difficulties at an early stage and to provide pupils with suitable support, particularly if it is recognised that they have special educational needs. One excellent example of the use of data is the keeping of records of each pupil's personal and social development, from the time children begin school, to make certain that they are given the best opportunities to learn, whatever their personal needs or stage of social development.

- 68 Not all subject leaders are involved yet in monitoring teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility. It is intended that they should all receive appropriate training and opportunity to analyse standards, the quality of teaching, and the effectiveness of the curriculum within their subjects. Some training has been received from the school's link inspector to support this development. Because this monitoring is not yet happening with sufficient rigour to ensure that all subjects are equally well taught, there is a lack of clarity about the impact of teaching, and the improvements needed, in some subjects. In practice there is some variation in how teachers teach and the work that pupils do in some subjects. These subjects include science and geography.
- 69 The headteacher is responsible for staff professional development. This is generally identified through the school's development plan but also through staff appraisal. The latter now links individual teachers' targets to whole school needs. The headteacher and deputy headteacher agree targets for their own improvement with the governors. These are regularly reviewed and dates for completion set. Because of this, the school is well prepared for the coming of performance management and threshold assessment.
- 70 The induction of all new members of the school community is a strength of the professional development programme. Recently appointed governors have had the advantage of both a school and Local Education Authority programme for induction. The newly qualified teacher on the staff has received excellent support and all the requirements of the career entry programme have been met. Her induction tutor has also been given appropriate professional development. There has also been an induction programme for the deputy headteacher, both through the school and the Local Education Authority in-service training programme.
- 71 This is a school where leadership strategies help to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to do their best. All key issues raised from the last inspection have been addressed through the thorough work of the school. Leadership and management are now highly effective. Senior management's plans for school improvement are based on rigorous evaluation of present and past performance and on challenging targets for individuals, age groups and the whole school. Although it needs to progress more rapidly, there is a developing programme to make sure that teaching is consistently well organised and managed across the curriculum. Teaching and standards in literacy and handwriting are monitored and success in these areas contributes to improving standards. An environment has been created of trust, hard work and personal esteem where the behaviour of pupils is almost always very good and any inappropriate behaviour fairly and consistently sanctioned.
- 72 The school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 73 The following key issue has been identified as the main area the school should address to further improve the quality of education it provides. This area will form the priority in the governors' action plan.

- Improve the consistency of teaching and learning in all subjects through:
 - building on the existing monitoring framework to enable all subject managers to monitor teaching and learning on a regular basis; (paragraphs 68, 123, 147, 150, 157, 166, 171, 179)
 - identifying what each teacher does well to promote effective learning; (paragraphs 28, 68, 123)
 - agreeing where improvements are needed to support subject teaching; (paragraphs 28, 68, 120, 151, 157).

74 The following issues of a more minor nature should also be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- develop consistency in the quality of written feedback to pupils so that marking identifies what pupils need to do next in order to improve their work (paragraphs 30 106 115 122 146);
- continue to develop the cultural awareness of pupils (paragraphs 47).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5%	20%	39%	34%	2%	0%	0%

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	46	156
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	72

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	60	64

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	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	22

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	31	20	51

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	21	21
	Girls	18	17	18
	Total	39	38	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76[57]	75[57]	76[73]
	National	82[80]	83[81]	87[84]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	22	26
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	39	40	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76[65]	78[71]	86[79]
	National	82[81]	86[85]	87[86]

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	202
Any other minority ethnic groups	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 – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.0
Average class size	26.0

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	6.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	87.9

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	379,399
Total expenditure	363,021
Expenditure per pupil	1,901
Balance brought forward from previous year	17,919
Balance carried forward to next year	34,297

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	46.0

Total number of education support staff	3.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	71.1

Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	248
Number of questionnaires returned	38

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	86.8	10.5	2.6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	81.6	13.2	5.3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	68.4	31.6	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	66.7	24.2	3	0	6.1
The teaching is good.	84.2	15.8	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	78.9	18.4	2.6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	86.8	10.5	2.6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	86.8	13.2	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	78.9	18.4	2.6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	78.9	21.1	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	84.2	15.8	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	57.1	31.4	0	0	11.4

Other issues raised by parents

Three written submissions were also made by parents. These were all supportive of the school. One congratulated the school on its effective approach to anti-bullying.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

- 75 Pupils under five are provided for in a nursery unit staffed by one teacher and three nursery nurses. Pupils attend on a part time basis. The nursery unit provision continues to be a strength of the school.
- 76 The findings of this inspection show that the judgement made in the last inspection about the quality of this provision have been maintained. Indeed the quality of teaching has been raised further and provision for outdoor activity has been improved. Since the last inspection an increased number of ways have been developed to increase children's independence and the breadth of opportunities to develop skills in spoken language has widened.
- 77 Pupils move into Reception classes at the beginning of the term in which they will have their fifth birthday. This transfer is built up to with a carefully structured transfer programme involving visits to classrooms and assemblies.
- 78 Children enter the nursery with a wide spread of experience and attainment. Overall these are well below what would be expected nationally. A large number of the children are on the school's register of special educational needs. Children make good progress. Their progress in personal and social development is particularly good. However, by the time they transfer to the Reception Year in school the majority are still performing at a level below what might be expected for the age group in all areas of learning.
- 79 The teaching of children in nursery is consistently good. All staff work well as a team, supporting each other in the planning and delivery of a range of appropriate activities. The current nursery policy is in need of review. The school has already started to address this as it plans for the revised curriculum arrangements for younger pupils that take effect in September. Very positive relationships, well established routines and a consistent approach to behaviour enable children to know what is expected of them and grow in confidence. Support staff and students work well together and make a significant contribution to children's learning through high levels of sensitive, individual support. Adults know their children well. They keep extensive records of both formal and informal assessments and children enjoy looking at their own 'Special Book'. Occasionally, the children need to be encouraged by adults to persevere with their work

Personal and social development

- 80 Children behave well, are secure and develop an increasing awareness of right and wrong. Those whose behaviour occasionally falls outside what is considered appropriate are dealt with sensitively, in a calm and purposeful atmosphere. Adults are effective in making children considerate for others. Children take turns well and look after equipment carefully.

- 81 Children register their attendance by placing a coloured peg against their name on a board. They also master a simple planning process that involves placing the correct selected activity card in their 'planning pocket' on the wall. These activities develop their independence well. By the time the nursery doors have been open for five minutes, all children are purposefully involved in their first activity of the day. They learn to concentrate for increasing lengths of time and work co-operatively when, for example, cleaning Little Red Hen's cottage, or working in pairs on the computer.

Language and literacy

- 82 Children listen attentively to adults and each other. They are generally confident when talking to adults and most can talk about what they are doing. A few, younger children are less confident.
- 83 Most children enjoy books and handle them well. They chose books confidently from those available in 'yellow den' and happily share them with an adult. Older children with higher ability know that words tell a story and can identify frequently repeated words and some initial sounds of words. The story bag sessions, enjoyed by older children as a separate group with the nursery teacher, help to support this development effectively. Younger children enjoy sharing books, handle them carefully and describe the pictures.
- 84 The youngest children make increasingly recognisable marks on paper and trace pictures to develop their pencil control. Some can write their name under the teacher's writing. Many who will soon transfer into the main school can write their name on their drawings and recognise a range of letters on the computer.

Mathematics

- 85 Activities to develop children's understanding in mathematics are well planned to meet the needs of individual children. A session designed to improve children's ability to make patterns of cubes in different colours and lengths was, for example, arranged so that the patterns became more complicated for children with a higher level of understanding.
- 86 Children can use mathematical language appropriately, identifying long and short patterns of cubes. They recognise numbers to five and can count them. Whilst working with the water tray they count the number of jugs of water needed to fill a bottle. They recognise that the larger the bottle the greater the number of jugs of water that are needed. They also understand that a bottle with a hole in will not fill completely. They correctly match plastic bears to the bears of different size and colour on a printed card.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 87 Planning and teacher records show that an appropriate range of activities take place to support this area of learning. Children visit the local shops to buy the ingredients to cook pancakes and 'Teletubby Custard'. They observe carrot tops and beans growing

and show great interest in the tadpoles from the wild life garden. Visits to the local church and library and exploration of the school grounds increase their awareness of the local environment. Children use construction kits and simple equipment well. The oldest talk about their models clearly, explaining how they have made them. Many are eager to use the computer and are developing good mouse control.

Creative development

- 88 Taped music is nearly always playing in one area of the nursery. Many children move spontaneously to the good selection of untuned percussion instruments in order to accompany the tape. Some can maintain a correct rhythm. A weekly visit from a pianist is planned to support singing and awareness of live music.
- 89 Children enjoy their painting. They use different media to make increasingly developed marks on paper. They produce collage work and patterns. Pencil control on drawing improves over time and they work with different sizes of paper. Three-dimensional work is not neglected. During the week of the inspection children worked with clay to produce models of the Little Red Hen.
- 90 The range of costumes and resources in Little Red Hen's cottage presented children with a very good opportunity for role-play in which to develop imagination.

Physical development

- 91 The school hall is regularly timetabled for nursery use. Children and their parents normally visit the swimming pool at the local college once a week. Unfortunately, this was not possible during the week of the inspection due to circumstances beyond the school's control.
- 92 Since the last inspection the outdoor provision for young children has been greatly improved. Fund raising and sponsorship have enabled high quality outdoor play equipment to be installed. Imaginative markings are well used. The link area between school and the nursery provides a safe, secure covered area where children can take part in physical activities whatever the weather.

ENGLISH

- 93 Evidence for judgements about the quality and standard of English was gained from the observation of literacy lessons in every class, lessons in other subjects, a scrutiny of work from pupils of different abilities, discussions with pupils during lessons and from listening to pupils read.
- 94 Pupils enter school with levels of attainment that are below average despite the good progress that they make in language and literacy in nursery. Evidence shows that pupils' level of attainment on entry to both school and nursery has fallen during recent years. However, there has been a steady improvement in English during this time. There has, however, been a greater improvement in reading and spelling than in writing.

- 95 In the 1999 national assessments for seven year olds, English standards overall were below the national average in reading and writing. However, when compared with schools of a similar type writing was above average and reading was well above average. The number of pupils attaining the higher levels in reading and writing was close to the national average. During the period of the inspection, standards for the oldest pupils in English were judged to be in line with national expectations. An examination of pupils' work identified some weakness in elements of writing. The improvement in reading noticed during the inspection reflects the work that the school has done to support this area of work.
- 96 The previous inspection judged standards overall in English to be average. This inspection shows that whilst standards continue to be in line with expectations, they are now more secure and the number of pupils attaining the higher levels has increased. This is despite a lowering of attainment on entry to the school. Standards in handwriting and the presentation of work by older pupils has improved and pupils are now more confident in their use of punctuation. This represents good improvement overall since the last inspection.
- 97 The school's thorough implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, together with targeted work on spelling and additional support for identified groups of children, is having a positive impact, particularly on the attainment of pupils currently in Year 2.
- 98 By the end of Key Stage 1 standards in speaking and listening are average overall. Many pupils speak confidently as when, for example, giving their ideas about why little bear can't sleep. They respond well to the skilful questions asked by both teachers and support staff. The questions make them think about their answers and give reasons for their point of view. Pupils listen carefully to each other, respecting another point of view, and dealing maturely with the interruptions of one or two pupils with recognised behaviour problems. Pupils enjoy stories read by the teachers, who use their voices effectively to involve all the class. They enjoy joining in with the text of well-known stories as, for example, acting out the part of grandmother when reading the tale of *Red Riding Hood*. Work with puppets develops pupils' confidence in speaking to an audience
- 99 Although some pupils are reaching a higher level than might be expected for their age, standards in reading overall are what might be expected nationally. This represents good improvement when compared to previous test results. The choice of texts is well matched to pupils' abilities and this makes them confident to attempt new words. Many pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 read with expression and enjoy the touches of humour in books like *Mrs Armitage's Bicycle*. Older pupils who find their work more difficult still enjoy their books, but read more hesitantly.
- 100 Younger pupils recognise the initial sounds of words and are beginning to join the sounds 'sh' 'th' and 'br'. They recognise families of rhyming words and join in the shared book work in the literacy hour with enthusiasm. Most pupils know that the author is the person who writes the book. They enjoy books and having books read to them. They handle books correctly and carefully. Older children know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. They explain that the contents page helps us to find information. Few pupils spoke of going to the library outside school hours.

Where parents or other adults support the school and are involved in hearing children read regularly, pupils attain better standards in reading

- 101 Pupils' attainment in writing is below the national average. Whilst pupils can write at length when retelling a story and make class books with titles like 'Colin the Curly Cat', there are too few opportunities for pupils to write for a range of audiences and purposes. Although pupils are beginning to use a storyboard to plan a story and are developing skills in building a character outline, many pupils do not have enough first hand experiences to enable them to develop their imaginative writing. The school is aware of this, and has recently submitted a bid for funding to support this. Creative writing is the next area of planned improvement for the school.
- 102 During whole-class sessions, individuals make good attempts at spelling using the whiteboard. They help each other with punctuation during these sessions and can identify and explain the purpose of a range of punctuation marks, such as speech marks, capital letters, exclamation mark and ellipsis. In Year 2 pupils use simple dictionaries to support their writing. The school's decision to use an identified style of handwriting and to allocate time to its development is enabling older pupils to present their work in a neater and more evenly sized script.
- 103 Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs make good, and sometimes very good, progress. Support staff provide them with high levels of skilled attention, both in groups and as individuals. Work is well matched to their needs. This support is a strength of the school.
- 104 Pupils enjoy their English lessons and apply themselves well. They enjoy joining in with rhyming words and the stories used in class introductions to lessons. They concentrate well on the range of tasks that are given to them. Sometimes these tasks depend too much on printed work sheets. Pupils complete these conscientiously, but they do not often enable older pupils to seek out information for themselves. Occasionally younger pupils become restless when 'carpet sessions' last too long. Few opportunities were seen during lessons for pupils to use information and communication technology as part of their work.
- 105 The quality of teaching seen in English ranged from satisfactory to very good and overall it is good. In the most effective lessons teachers use skilful questioning techniques that make pupils think hard. The literacy hour is well organised and a range of suitable activities are planned. Support staff are involved effectively and help specific groups to make good progress. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. All teachers know their children well and this has a beneficial influence on classroom management. Occasionally, the pace of work in lessons slows when the whole class session lasts too long.
- 106 Thorough assessments of pupils' work are made in lessons and through regular tests but pupils' work is not marked consistently across classes. [Marking does not always indicate that work has been talked through with pupils in order to help them to improve their work.](#) Reports to parents are informative and parents regularly share in the reading diaries.

- 107 The management role of the co-ordinator is having a positive impact on standards. Lessons have been observed and effective feedback given to teachers. Appropriate training for both the post holder and staff has raised teachers' confidence and expectations of what pupils can achieve. The National Literacy Strategy has provided a secure framework for teachers and the additional time allocated to English has been effectively used.
- 108 School, local education authority and national tests are analysed thoroughly and teachers adapt their planning in the light of these analyses. Teachers' assessments of pupils' work are secure as a result of moderation work undertaken by all local schools.
- 109 Resources for literacy are well developed. However, there are still insufficient non-fiction books for younger children and the co-ordinator plans to buy more books for the library.

MATHEMATICS

- 110 The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds are well below the national average but close to the average for similar schools to Ollerton. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels of the National Curriculum is also below the national average but in line for similar schools. Taken over the period from 1996 to 1999, the performance of pupils in mathematics is well below the national average.
- 111 Since 1998, however, the school has worked hard to improve the standards achieved by pupils in mathematics. Results improved slightly in 1999 and, in the lessons observed and in the pupils' work, standards in mathematics are now broadly typical of those found nationally. The inspection evidence confirms the gradual upward trend in standards. The strategies adopted by the school, including the National Numeracy Strategy, are having a positive influence on raising standards. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.
- 112 Pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 1 are developing a satisfactory understanding of number calculations and are confident with simple mental calculations. Pupils know the mathematical names for two and three-dimensional shapes and can recognise reflective symmetry. They make good progress in understanding analogue and digital time. Higher attaining pupils have good mental recall of facts to 20 and are able to use halves and quarters to find fractions of shapes. They are encouraged to use the correct mathematical vocabulary in their work and they enjoy discussing the mental strategies they use to solve simple problems.
- 113 The progress made by all pupils in the lessons observed was generally good, with their attainment often above that expected for their age. Progress in the pupils' past work was generally satisfactory and sometimes good. This improvement reflects the positive impact of the daily mathematics lesson. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and the high quality support they receive allows them to make good progress. Tasks are clearly linked to the individual needs of these pupils, supported by some very effective additional adult support from the school's special educational needs support assistants.

- 114 The teaching of mathematics is good. In a significant number of lessons seen it was very good or excellent. Teachers plan thoroughly for their lessons, using the national framework, and set work that is well matched to the needs of their pupils. The work builds effectively on pupils' previous learning. Teachers develop a brisk pace to their lessons through effective mental and oral sessions. The main focus for lessons is clearly explained to pupils by teachers who use their subject knowledge well. During lessons pupils are well supported by a wide range of high quality resources, with special educational needs pupils receiving excellent support from additional adults. Plenary sessions at the end of lessons are used well to reinforce learning and introduce new work. This good teaching involves all pupils in the lesson with the result that pupils make good progress in their learning. All pupils have a very good attitude to mathematics and they show real interest in their work. They work with enthusiasm and sustained effort. Pupils often complete a lot of work in a short time. Behaviour in lessons is always good and relationships between pupils and adults are very good.
- 115 Teachers regularly assess pupils' learning so that they can make sure that pupils have work that is matched to their needs. Sometimes, however, the marking of pupils' work does not make clear what pupils need to do next in order to improve their work. For younger pupils there is often little indication in their work that this has been said to them. Individual pupil targets do, however, reflect improvements that have been identified through the marking.
- 116 Information and communication technology is being used to actively support pupils' learning in numeracy. Work with a programmable robot is helping pupils to become familiar with degrees of turn and the vocabulary linked to this area of work. It is also supporting pupils' developing work on symmetry and their collection and organisation of information, as in graphs to show the different ways that pupils travel to school. Some pupils also use specialist software to support areas of particular need in mathematics.
- 117 Mathematics has been identified by the school as a priority area for development within the school's development plan. The school is well aware that standards can be further improved in this area. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has made good use of a wide range of assessment data to identify specific areas for improvement. Some monitoring of elements of the daily numeracy lesson have already taken place. As a result, the mental and oral starter sessions, which have been the focus for monitoring, are very successful in getting lessons off to brisk and purposeful start.
- 118 The link governor for numeracy takes an active interest in the subject and has made several visits to the school to talk to the co-ordinator and observe numeracy being taught.

SCIENCE

- 119 At the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, teachers' assessment of pupils' science attainments indicated that the number of pupils who were attaining the national benchmark standard of Level 2 was just below the national average. This is, however, an

improvement of 17% since the last inspection. The number of more able pupils who attained the higher Level 3 of the National Curriculum was in line with the national average. Pupils' results were above the national average for similar schools. During the inspection, the work seen in lessons and in pupils' books was in line with national expectations. They know about the importance of dental care and can sort living from non-living things. The most able pupils were beginning to work within the higher level of the National Curriculum. They could identify and draw simple electrical circuits and know everyday uses for electricity. They are learning about different sources of light and how light travels. This improvement reflects the school's recent work to develop pupils' learning in science.

- 120 The quality of teaching in science is sound overall. When the teaching is good the least able pupils are well planned for and supported and they achieve appropriately. In such lessons all pupils make satisfactory progress and the most able Year 2 pupils work confidently towards the higher level of the National Curriculum. Progress is less than satisfactory when objectives for a lesson are too broad and the teacher is uncertain of the appropriate level of content and challenge for all pupils. Good teaching recaps on previous learning at the beginning and end of sessions. A wide range of teaching and learning strategies is used, including group discussion and small group investigation. Clear instructions are given for essential processes such as making sure a test is fair. There are times in all lessons, however, when the pace slackens, particularly when all pupils, including the more able, are expected to recap on stages of the lesson rather than make independent decisions about what to do next. Relationships are generally very good and pupils work co-operatively with teachers and well-prepared support staff.
- 121 Pupils enjoy science. They generally behave well in lessons and, even when some pupils demonstrate difficult behaviour, are keen to ignore the distractions. Pupils are eager for practical experience and work co-operatively and enthusiastically during investigations such as predicting the relationship between sound levels and the distance from the sound source. They also enjoy presenting and explaining their findings. Pupils also enjoy extra-curricular science. So many children are keen to belong to the environmental garden club that a rota of participants has had to be organised. There are a variety of other curricular opportunities beyond the classroom, including visits to the Local Education Authority environmental centre and to a local garden centre. Visitors to science lessons include the school nurse and dentist. A local environmental group works with pupils to plant trees. The school participates in the Local Education Authority science programme, Trailblazer, and gives extra time to science during National Science Week. Recycling bins around the school help pupils to understand about the sustainable environment.
- 122 Leadership of the subject is good. The science co-ordinator has a high level of subject knowledge, her main first degree being in environmental sciences. She gives a lot of time to planning for the subject, supporting colleagues when asked and to activities such as the garden club. She has worked with teachers to help them recognise and agree the different National Curriculum levels. This work has been done both within the school and with other local schools. Records for the subject are well kept, covering the agreed criteria for learning in all the main areas of science. These records support target setting for individual pupils and are shared with pupils in their Records

of Achievement. Half-termly records are kept of significant achievements in science, as in other subjects. However, there is some weakness in assessment and recording, particularly in the marking of pupils' work which, frequently, does not indicate the level of independent or supported effort made or explain to pupils how their work can be improved.

- 123 The co-ordinator monitors all plans to check what work each class is doing and supports teachers when planning in their teaching teams. However, this core subject is not being monitored to check the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. The consequence is that teachers' organisation and knowledge of the subject are variable. There has been no recent, focussed professional development for science and the science policy has not been updated since 1995. It is planned to address both these short-comings through the school's development plan in the spring and summer of 2001 but also to make some essential changes as part of the review for Curriculum 2000 during the coming summer term.
- 124 At present the subject has a small maintenance budget but is generally well resourced and the co-ordinator has priority plans for the spending of her budget. She is enterprising in seeking outside awards for work in the subject such as first prize from the Nottinghamshire Environmental Association for the development of the school's wild garden.

ART

- 125 Because of timetable constraints only one art lesson was observed. Other evidence was obtained from a scrutiny of pupils' work in portfolios and around the school, plus a discussion with the co-ordinator.
- 126 Standards in art are above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in acquiring skills in the subject and developing their understanding of the work of different artists. The scheme of work provides thorough guidance for teachers, enabling them to ensure that pupils make good progress and build on their earlier learning.
- 127 Pupils work successfully in a range of media. They paint blocks of colour effectively and blend colours successfully when experimenting with crepe paper and paint to bleed colours on to paper. In Year 2, pupils' study of the work of Lowry was effectively linked to work on local industry and the arrival of an excavator whilst the school playground was resurfaced. The resulting observational drawing and skilful use of lines of different shades and tones were carefully executed.
- 128 Pupils are beginning to use information and communication technology to create images using programs such as *Paintbox*. Three-dimensional work is effectively linked with topics in other subject areas, as in a design and technology and drama project involving a puppeteer in residence who worked with pupils and parents.
- 129 As only one lesson was seen during the inspection it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching, although the clear impact of teaching can be seen in the good quality of work completed by pupils. In the one lesson observed in Year 2,

the pupils obviously enjoyed their work. They concentrated well whilst planning and painting their aboriginal 'Dream Time' paintings.

- 130 Parents are involved and interested in their children's artwork. They are well informed about the subject through the displays around the school. However written yearly reports contain only details of work pupils have covered in the year. They do not inform parents about their children's progress.
- 131 Since the last inspection, high standards have been maintained. The headteacher co-ordinates the subject and has a clear vision of what is needed. The school places a high priority on the effective display of pupils' artwork, recognising its importance in raising self-esteem.
- 132 Visits to art galleries, the studio at the local college and a good supply of both consumable and staff resources help to support teachers' delivery of the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 133 During the period of the inspection it was not possible to observe any lessons in design and technology. No judgement has therefore been made on the quality of teaching. Additional evidence was obtained from scrutinising a limited amount of work, photographs, teachers' planning records and resources. A discussion was also held with the subject co-ordinator and a group of pupils.
- 134 Work seen during the inspection showed that the about average standards identified during the last inspection have been maintained. Standards in designing and making are average and, overall, pupils are on target to meet expectations for their age at the end of Key Stage 1. They are beginning to evaluate what they do critically and to think of ways to improve their work. Construction kits are used well. Models are interesting and use a developing range of methods of joining materials, for example, gluing and sewing.
- 135 It was not possible to judge pupils' response in lessons, but in discussion they talked about their work and designs with enthusiasm and interest. They were able to explain how they had made their finger puppets and musical instruments. They identified ways in which they would improve their work by, for example, using stronger materials or sewing not gluing buttons.
- 136 The policy for design and technology gives clear guidance to teachers but has not been a priority for review since the last report. The school has considered the national scheme of work presented by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and intends to use this as a basis for review. The headteacher, who co-ordinates the subject, has a clear vision of what the school needs to do in order to revise and update the policy. She is well qualified to manage the subject and monitors work in the subject within the limited time available by making focused classroom visits, looking at planning, classroom displays and the use of resources. Whole-school curriculum meetings also contribute to staff confidence and their awareness of the demands of the curriculum in design and technology.

- 137 The value of the subject as a vehicle for raising pupils' self esteem is acknowledged by the co-ordinator, who has been successful in gaining additional funding to support special projects.
- 138 Resources for the subject are comprehensive in terms of construction kits, tools and consumable materials. Where necessary, they are adapted for pupils with special needs. The school is able to draw on the resources of the family of schools within the neighbourhood for further specialist equipment. There is an annual budget allocation for consumable resources which is supplemented by donations from local companies.

GEOGRAPHY

- 139 Standards attained in geography, as judged through lessons observed and a scrutiny of pupil's past and current work, are in line with national expectations at the end of the key stage. Standards in this subject have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Geography is generally taught as part of a topic as, for example, with art or music. This means that while there is sufficient emphasis over time on the geographical aspects of the topic, its place in individual lessons is not always sufficiently clear either to pupils or in the teachers' plans for what they are to learn.
- 140 In the two lessons seen during the inspection teaching ranged from satisfactory to good. Strengths in lessons included opportunities for pupils to raise their own ideas during practical activities and to use their learning in real situations such as through a local street walk. Other adults were effectively used to guide and support pupils' learning and ensure that even those with difficult behaviour were on task. There were some weaknesses in teaching. These included the use of very broad learning objectives which meant pupils were not all certain what was expected of them, and the tendency to resist following up pupils' questions because of pressure to move to practical groups.
- 141 Pupils meet at least one local and one contrasting area during their time in Key Stage 1. There is also an effective ongoing link with France and Italy through the school's involvement in a European Partnership Project.
- 142 Reception class pupils draw simple maps of the journey from home to school. They draw a picture of people who live in their house. They label pictures of geographical features such as rivers, clouds, and roads. Year 1 pupils complete similar labelling activities. They are developing directional language and can use descriptive language to describe the features of buildings, know the difference between house and bungalow and the more able explain the features of a flat. There is some awareness of the features of a church and pupils point out and describe interesting features they notice on a variety of buildings. More able Year 1 pupils are able to label a drawing of the water cycle and use a simple two-figure grid reference.
- 143 By the end of the key stage pupils listen to stories from other cultures and some are able to identify the difference between myth and legend and say whether the story they hear is factual or mythical. Year 2 pupils recognise a map of the world and identify countries about which they have learned such as United Kingdom, South America and

Australia. Some are able to explain how an atlas helps them to find countries and how to use the index and contents to guide their research.

- 144 Pupils enjoy geography and behaved well in the lessons observed. They respond promptly to instructions. They particularly enjoy practical activity, demonstrated in their eagerness in a street walk and their spontaneous use of the language of direction and of building features they had been taught. They relate well with the adults involved in their learning and show a trust and confidence in the support they receive.
- 145 Many pupils have few opportunities beyond the school day to learn about life outside the area in which they live. The school has recognised this and, as part of its drive for equal access for all pupils to a broad curriculum, has made a bid for funding to provide transport for trips wider afield. The pupils already visit a local farm and make use of the Local Education Authority's environmental centre at Perlethorpe. Links are made between different subjects and these contribute to the pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness as they learn songs from other countries such as the Caribbean and discuss the habits of people in other parts of the world. Geography has a positive impact on the pupils' social development as it increases the pupils' knowledge of the people and features of the area in which they live.
- 146 The policy document for geography contains clear guidance for each year group. Teachers plan their work from this and this ensures that the main aspects of the subject are covered at an appropriate depth. Assessment within the subject includes the 'significant progress' records that are shared across classes and with pupils through their Records of Achievement. However, the recorded work is often unmarked and gives no indication of progress made or what pupils need to learn next.
- 147 The co-ordinator is a part-time member of staff. She has not yet had the opportunity to monitor standards of work or the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. She has a maintenance budget and prioritises the requests made to ensure that greatest needs are met. There is good range of books with appropriate texts at a variety of levels in the school library and some stimulating display around the school of what pupils are learning in this subject. Otherwise, this is a poorly resourced area of the curriculum. The co-ordinator is aiming for basic increases in resourcing such as a globe in each classroom. There has been no recent focussed professional development in geography. It is intended that the content of the subject will be monitored and reviewed against the expectation of Curriculum 2000 in the coming term.

HISTORY

- 148 No history teaching was seen during the inspection and there was very limited evidence of pupils' recorded work available. Some history had been touched upon in recent, major topics as, for example, a time line for sources of light in science but the similar nature of all the pupils' recorded work did not provide sufficient evidence of attainment by different ability groups. It is therefore not possible to make a judgement about standards in this subject. Teacher's long-term plans indicate that the history curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Work at the end of the key stage does indicate that all but the least able can sequence some objects to demonstrate a sense of chronology, know words such as past and present and sort

pictures of objects accordingly. Pupils have some sense of historical periods such as Roman and Victorian and know about some famous people such as Edison.

- 149 Pupils have visited museums in order to experience the past through displays and dressing in historical costume. A local historian has visited classes and also provided the opportunity for children to dress in historical costumes. These visits and visitors help the pupils to develop an understanding of the cultures of other times.
- 150 Pupils' historical recording is almost all pictorial. While policy for the subject is that pupils learn best through discussion, use of artefacts and the creation of exciting display, there is insufficient opportunity for pupils to write about their historical knowledge and understanding. Teachers assess and record pupils' work in history through the use of the 'significant progress' record that details the agreed content for history. The co-ordinator does not review these records which are passed from a child's class teacher to the next class. She also has no opportunity, at present, to monitor standards and quality of teaching in the classroom.
- 151 The co-ordinator is a part time teacher, new to the school, who has managed the subject for just over a term. Her focus, during this time, has been on another subject for which she is responsible and which has a higher priority in the school's current development plan. Priority will be given to history in the school's development plan for 2000/2001. Teachers do work in planning groups to make sure the subject is well covered in topics. The history policy was reviewed in 1997 and was originally due for review again in 1999. This has been delayed to allow opportunity to match the requirements of Curriculum 2000. The co-ordinator has had previous training as a subject leader but there has been no recent professional development in history for herself or for teaching staff. There is no systematic monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning by the co-ordinator to identify effective teaching and areas for improvement. Some resources are borrowed for this subject from the Sandfield Resource Centre in Nottingham. Progress since the last inspection, based on limited evidence, is satisfactory overall

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 152 There were no opportunities to observe information and communication technology being directly taught during the period of the inspection but individual pupils and small groups were seen working with information communication technology resources in classrooms. Other evidence came from discussions with pupils and the review of teachers' planning records, subject documentation and the work on display around the school. This evidence shows that the attainment of pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 1 is generally in line with that expected for their age. Pupils make sound progress as they move through the school but this progress is improving as the new resources begin to take effect.
- 153 Although standards remain at the same level as described in the last inspection, clear improvements have been made in information communication technology. The school's provision and planning, for example, are now much improved. New equipment has been purchased and the national scheme of work for information communication technology is now in use. This is ensuring full coverage of the

curriculum requirements for this subject. The school also plans to invest heavily again during the financial year 2000/01 to ensure that all pupils have access to PC standard computers.

- 154 At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils use a range of equipment. They can retrieve and store work, control devices and use a menu and mouse with increasing confidence. They are able, for example, to direct a programmable robot around a map using a series of instructions. Story frames from a literacy lesson are used as the basis for pupils in one class to word process their own stories. Pupils in another class word-process invitations to their link governor related to a future visit. Tape recorders are confidently used by pupils to practise their multiplication tables and to support a range of work in the literacy hour. Work in numeracy is supported through pupils representing their work graphically, as in a graph of the different ways that pupils travel to school. Pupils use CD-ROMs to download information to support their topic work.
- 155 The small numbers of pupils observed using information communication technology were confident and enjoyed using the range of equipment to support their learning. They were developing the appropriate skills and were able to use information communication technology independently and collaboratively. They were able to work productively without immediate adult supervision. Their behaviour was very good.
- 156 The co-ordinator for information communication technology provides clear leadership and has been effective in developing a range of support documentation for teachers and raising the knowledge of teachers. She has ensured that the school is covering all the elements of the National Curriculum through the identification of the appropriate software for each area of work in the National Curriculum. The school is still waiting for delivery of software to support learning in some subject areas. A detailed action plan is in place to further support developments in information communication technology as it has been identified as a priority within the school's current development plan. Regular assessments of pupils' learning are undertaken and written records are made of their progress at regular intervals.
- 157 There is, at present, no formal monitoring or evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning within this subject by the co-ordinator. The school cannot agree where improvements are needed to support teaching in information communication technology until this takes place. Some monitoring of teachers' planning has been undertaken but there has been little monitoring of the impact of this planning on pupils' work. Further work in this area is planned for next year. This means that the school cannot be sure, at present, that all pupils are presently receiving their full entitlement to information communication technology.
- 158 Pupils in Year 2 have access to a heavily oversubscribed computer club during the lunchtime. This is run by the co-ordinator and enables pupils to access the Internet.
- 159 The school has put considerable effort and resources into improving the provision for, and planning within, information communication technology. It is well placed to continue this improvement.

MUSIC

- 160 At the time of the previous inspection music was said to meet standards above national expectation. Progress was said to be very good. During this most recent inspection standards were judged to be in line with national expectation with progress ranging from satisfactory to good.
- 161 The teaching seen during this inspection ranged from satisfactory to good. A particular strength in lessons was teachers providing a useful review of previous learning and questioning children about this. In one lesson Year 2 children were well challenged through questioning to describe and compare differences in terminology such as rhythm and beat. Opportunities were provided in all lessons seen for pupils to lead performing groups and to choose instruments or songs. Management of behaviour and of the lesson structure was well controlled. Relationships between adults and pupils were always very good. A weakness in all lessons was a tendency to focus on practising previously learned skills and not to develop these skills further or to develop pupils' independence in using the skills in a creative context, such as suggesting and making up their own rhythms.
- 162 Because the school does not have a skilled musician on the staff, at present, it has purchased time with a pianist to join each class for music lessons on alternate weeks. The other week is used to develop pupils' performance and composition. While this arrangement does provide a good support for non-specialist staff, it also means that the timing of the lessons with the accompanist is very inflexible. To compensate for this, extra support for music is given through a range of lessons with musical themes.
- 163 By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are meeting national expectations. They share and recall traditional rhymes and know many other songs. They sing enthusiastically and co-operate in singing rounds. Most name and use untuned percussion instruments with confidence. They listen well and are beginning to understand the difference between elements of music such as beat and rhythm, crescendo and diminuendo. In all lessons they are well behaved and enjoy the activities provided.
- 164 Teachers take opportunities to link music to other topics. During the inspection two classes were using music in geographical and cultural learning about South America and the Caribbean. There had also been a recent visit by pupils to the Local Education Authority environmental centre where pupils made up their own notation and wrote tunes about environmental conditions such as clouds moving and sunshine.
- 165 Singing is also used in assemblies and personal and social education sessions to support pupils' reflection as, for example, in learning to say sorry. There is to be a recorder club in the coming summer term and pupils have the opportunity to use their musical skills in regular school productions. Visiting instrumentalists also provide the children with a concert. There is a good link with the Dukeries College where pupils have the opportunity to watch older students perform. A music teacher from the Dukeries College provides some expert teaching support for two terms each year.
- 166 The policy document for music was written by a past member of staff and was due for review in summer 1999. This has been delayed owing to the change in music

co-ordinator and in order to relate necessary change to Curriculum 2000. At present there is no systematic monitoring of the quality of the music curriculum or the standards attained by the co-ordinator. The subject is well resourced with a wide variety of untuned percussion from across the world and suitable songbooks and library texts. The most recent professional development for staff was in 1997.

- 167 The changes to the organisation of music and the lack of a specialist teacher mean that the standards observed, whilst in line with those expected of the age group, are not as high as observed during the last inspection. Progress in this subject is limited since the last inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 168 During the course of the inspection it was not possible to observe any of the games, gymnastics or swimming elements of the school's physical education curriculum being taught to pupils. The school's planning for physical education is based on a cycle of alternate weeks of swimming and other physical education activities. Due to circumstances beyond the school's control, the swimming sessions did not take place during the week of the inspection. This limited the range of physical education activities that could be observed. It was, therefore, only possible to see one dance lesson during the course of the inspection. Other evidence was gained from teachers' planning records, subject documentation and the records of pupils' attainment and progress. Overall, progress since the last inspection, based on limited evidence, is satisfactory.
- 169 Physical education is a valued area of the curriculum and pupils have access to the full range of activities expected within the National Curriculum. The school also chooses to teach swimming to its pupils. Swimming lessons take place at the Dukeries College and many pupils are able to swim unaided for 25 metres by the end of Key Stage 1.
- 170 In the one dance lesson observed, effective planning enabled the teacher to build successfully upon previous learning. The clearly structured lesson resulted in pupils making good progress in their ability to control their own movements and work in partnership with others. The attitude and effort of pupils was excellent. The range of music used to support dance also enhances the pupils' cultural development.
- 171 The school's support documentation for physical education offers a useful framework but is in need of review. The co-ordinator has not yet had the opportunity to systematically monitor the quality of teaching for this subject area. Pupils' progress in swimming is regularly recorded in teachers' record books and significant progress is recorded at set points through the year. Pupils' experiences are enhanced by an extra curricular gym club that allows pupils the opportunity to work with a qualified instructor. The school has also taken part in the Top Play and Top Sport initiatives.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 172 In addition to the three lessons observed, evidence was gained through discussion with staff and by looking at school documentation. There was only limited evidence of pupils' past written work as most of the pupils' work is undertaken through discussion.

The school links religious education closely to the programme for personal and social education.

- 173 By the end of Key Stage 1 standards are just in line with those outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Standards are higher in work on exploring the message of the Christian religion than in other areas of the curriculum. Current inspection findings show limited progress in the need identified in the last report to strengthen the exploration of other religions. The school has begun to investigate a tighter focus for this aspect of the subject.
- 174 Children show respect for the feelings of others and show sensitivity in circle time when others do not wish to talk. Older pupils begin to understand the importance of keeping a promise. They write about the birth of Jesus and understand the story of Easter at an appropriate level.
- 175 The absence of an appropriate amount of written evidence makes it impossible to make a judgement of pupils' progress over time. In the lessons seen, pupils made satisfactory progress in their understanding of the importance of doing things that we promise to do. They improve their ability to draw out the message of a simple story that Jesus told.
- 176 Teaching, as evidenced in the limited number of lessons seen, was satisfactory. Opportunities are provided for pupils to explore their feelings and those of others. Teachers read stories in clear voices that prompt children to listen carefully. Where religious education was being developed through personal and social education, the calm atmosphere in circle time enables children to understand the rules of the session and to work co-operatively. Occasionally sessions last too long for the very youngest children and they become restless. However, in lessons overall, pupils show interest in their work. They have opportunities to develop their own thinking, and the subject's contribution to speaking skills in Key Stage 1 is valuable.
- 177 The school's scheme of works meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus, but a major review of the subject outlined on the school's development plan was postponed because of the demands of new national initiatives. The co-ordinator has a clear view of how that review will now be carried out in collaboration with the co-ordinator for personal and social education. Both post holders are part time, but have appropriate knowledge to lead their subjects and a clear commitment to doing so. The way in which religious education is planned, and its close ties to the developing personal and social education programme, reflect and reinforce the school's aims very effectively. The school uses visits by other adults to add to the quality of its provision. Seasonal performances and special events such as JC2000 enable children to further develop their understanding.
- 178 There has been no opportunity so far for the subject leader to monitor teaching but teachers' planning is monitored. Discussions have already been held with staff in preparation for the planned review. A significant budget allocation has been made to support the review and implementation of the new scheme and to raise the current low level of resources.