

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **GRANBY JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Ilkeston

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112571

Headteacher: Mr B Allsopp

Reporting inspector: Mr M Johnstone  
21114

Dates of inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> November 2001

Inspection number: 195101

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Heanor Road Ilkeston Derbyshire
Postcode:	DE7 8DX
Telephone number:	0115 9322424
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Jeffery
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21114	Malcolm Johnstone	Registered inspector	Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13526	Richard Barnard	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?
23453	Carole Cressey	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Music Equal opportunities English as an additional language	
17857	David Walters	Team inspector	Science Geography History	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
2818	Graham Warner	Team inspector	English Art and design Religious education Special educational needs	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is a large community junior school for pupils aged seven to eleven. It is situated in the Cotmanhay ward on the outskirts of Ilkeston in Derbyshire. The pupils come from a mixture of private and rented accommodation in close proximity to the school. The area served by the school has features of social and economic disadvantage. There are 360 pupils on the roll consisting of 149 girls and 211 boys. Fourteen per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is similar to the national average. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. For pupils who are now in Years 3, 4 and 5, attainment on entry at seven was broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics but for pupils who left last year and for those who are now in Year 6, it was below average. Fifteen per cent of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs. This is broadly average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. Five pupils have a statement of special needs relating to physical and emotional and behavioural difficulties. This number is similar to the national average. The school has a stable staff and there have been no problems with recruitment.

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

The school is providing a sound education for its pupils. It has made good improvement and has addressed successfully the serious weaknesses identified in the last inspection. Teaching is good and is having a marked effect on pupils' achievements across all subjects. Despite a dip in 2001, standards are steadily improving year on year. The headteacher provides good leadership and there is a clear commitment to improvement by all connected with the school. The capacity for further improvement is good. The school is providing satisfactory value for money.

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

- The school has made good progress since the last inspection
- The headteacher provides good leadership and is supported well by staff and governors.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good; pupils and teachers get on well together
- Teaching is good and is improving pupils' achievements
- Pupils' moral and social development is well promoted
- There are good systems to find out how well pupils are doing

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in English, particularly in writing, are not high enough.
- The effectiveness of monitoring in identifying what does or does not work well in teaching and learning.
- The development of skills from year to year in religious education, history and geography.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Overall improvement in the serious weaknesses identified in the last inspection in March 1997 has been good. A new headteacher took over soon after the last inspection and is providing good leadership and a clear sense of direction for the school. The quality of teaching has improved and assessment systems are now good in key subjects. Despite a dip in the 2001 National Curriculum tests, standards in science have improved markedly and are now similar to the national average. Despite frequent changes in the governing body, the governors are now better informed and more involved in the work of the school. There have been improvements to the curriculum and this now meets statutory requirements. Co-ordinators have developed their role satisfactorily but are not yet influential enough in developing teaching and learning in their subjects. Whilst some weaknesses still remain, accommodation and resources have improved and are now satisfactory.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	D	E	E
Mathematics	E	D	E	E
Science	E	C	E	E*

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

Since the previous inspection, the school had increased its average points score in English, mathematics and science. Until this year, the trend in results mirrored the national upward trend with particular improvement in science. The percentages of pupils achieving the higher level were also increasing and were close to the national average. Results in the 2001 National Curriculum tests, however, bucked this upward trend. In English and mathematics, standards were well below the national average and those in similar schools. Standards in writing were particularly low for both boys and girls but especially for the boys. Standards in science were in the bottom five per cent compared to the results of similar schools. Particular factors affecting this group account for this dip;

- there was a higher than usual percentage of pupils with special educational needs,
- there was greater pupil mobility as this group moved through the school,
- more pupils than usual were absent for the tests,
- this group of pupils came into the school with below average attainment and
- there were more boys in the group and in all subjects the girls did better than the boys.

Inspection evidence of the work being done by the current Year 6 pupils and analysis of the results of the school's own testing and assessment of pupils in all year groups indicate that standards are in line with the national average in mathematics and science. In English, they are close to the national average but remain below it, due to the weaknesses that remain in pupils' writing, particularly of the boys. In this aspect, standards are not yet high enough. In English and mathematics, the school is on course to reach the realistic targets set for 2002. These reflect the inspection findings. In all other subjects, standards are similar to those expected for pupils' ages. In all subjects pupils who have special educational needs receive sound support and make satisfactory progress.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic about learning. They are polite to visitors and in lessons they help each other with their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is mostly good. It is particularly good in the large majority of lessons. Outside lessons, there is some boisterous behaviour by a minority, mainly boys.
Personal development and relationships	These aspects are mostly good. Pupils are developing a good understanding of their responsibilities through the school council and in lessons on personal and social education and citizenship. Opportunities for pupils to work independently in some subjects could be extended. Relationships are good.
Attendance	Attendance levels are similar to the national average. However, too many pupils take holidays in term time and this has a detrimental effect on their progress.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils in:</b>	<b>Years 3 – 6</b>
Quality of teaching	Good

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

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and meets the needs of the large majority of pupils well. Teaching is consistently good in Year 6 and leads to particularly effective learning by this group of pupils. Teaching has improved markedly since the last inspection when it was judged to be a serious weakness with a significant minority of unsatisfactory teaching. In the lessons seen, almost all the teaching was at least satisfactory and good teaching was seen across all the year groups. More very good lessons were seen than at the time of the last inspection. Teaching of pupils who have special needs is satisfactory and enables them to make sound progress. The teaching of English and mathematics is mostly good, although the teaching of writing needs some improvement. Literacy and numeracy lessons are well structured and setting pupils by ability has a good effect on the learning of the above average, average and below average pupils.

Key strengths in the teaching relate to:

- good relationships, class management and high expectations of behaviour. These develop pupils' learning well by establishing a good attitude to work, developing their self-esteem and ensuring they know that their efforts are valued;
- teachers' good subject knowledge in most subjects that leads to clear explanations and demonstrations that include all pupils;
- teachers' interactions with the pupils to check their understanding and help them improve;
- good questioning that extends pupils' learning and is targeted equally to boys and girls and to pupils of all abilities; and
- good planning and teaching methods that ensure pupils are productive and work at a good pace.

Areas for improvement in teaching across all subjects relate to:

- an over-reliance on commercially produced worksheets that restrict opportunities for pupils to write at length;
- review sessions at the end of lessons that do not explore effectively what has worked well, what has not and why;
- marking of pupil' work that does not indicate how it might be improved; and
- greater use of the individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs in general lesson work in order to move learning on at a faster rate when additional support is not available.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a broad curriculum that covers all statutory requirements and is relevant to the age and interests of the pupils. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, including sport.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Regular reviews of pupils' progress ensure that their needs are kept up-to-date and movement up and down between the various stages is appropriately considered and acted upon.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Pupils' moral and social development is good and personal and social education lessons are having a good effect on pupils' awareness of citizenship and their responsibilities in the wider community. Cultural development is satisfactory, although provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good. There are good procedures to track pupils' progress in key subjects and this information is used satisfactorily to plan subsequent work.

The school has developed a satisfactory partnership with parents and has made good efforts to strengthen the links through the use of questionnaires about all aspects of school life. Information about what is happening in schools is sent home regularly. The large majority of parents are supportive of the school in most aspects of its work, although a few do not ensure that their children attend regularly.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior staff provide good leadership. There is a clear sense of direction and good teamwork. All staff have a clear commitment to improvement. There has been some good monitoring of lessons but this has not been sharp enough to make teaching and learning even better.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. They have a sound understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the school and are developing their strategic role satisfactorily.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has developed very good tracking systems to monitor pupils' performance in national and school tests and to evaluate the value added achieved by the school with the various year groups. However, it has not succeeded in analysing fully what works well, what does not and why.
The strategic use of resources	Educational priorities are supported satisfactorily through the school's financial planning and specific grants are used effectively for their designated purposes. The principles of best value are understood well and practised effectively.

The number, qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff match the demands of the curriculum satisfactorily. Accommodation and resources have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. The school hall is unsuitable for physical education and there is no fixed apparatus to allow pupils to experience working at height. This has a limiting effect on pupils' standards in gymnastics.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• Teaching is good and their children are making good progress.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible</li> <li>• They would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They would like more information about how their child is getting on.</li> <li>• A closer relationship with the school.</li> <li>• A more interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• A more consistent level of homework.</li> </ul>

Inspectors support the parents' positive views about the school. The school's relationship with parents is judged to be satisfactory, as is the amount and quality of information about how pupils are getting on. The number of formal meetings between teachers and parents is similar to primary schools and teachers are available at any reasonable time to discuss pupils' progress. The new pupil organiser booklets are a good innovation and should improve the partnership. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and similar to that in many schools. There are some inconsistencies in the level of homework given both across and within year groups.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Until this year, the school's results in the national tests for eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science had seen an upward movement mirroring the national trend. The percentages of pupils achieving the higher level 5 were also increasing and were close to the national average. The much poorer results this year are the result of factors detailed in the parents' summary under Standards
2. Inspection evidence of the work being done by the current Year 6 pupils and analysis of the results of the school's own testing and assessment of pupils in all other year groups indicate that standards are in line with those expected for pupils of these ages. In English, standards are below those expected because of the weaknesses in pupils' writing, particularly of boys. In this aspect, standards are not yet high enough. In English and mathematics, the school is on course to reach the realistic targets set for 2002, which reflects the inspection findings. In all other subjects, standards are similar to those expected for pupils' age
3. Since no pupils are debarred from any aspect of the curriculum, the pupils with special educational needs (SEN) inevitably have an impact upon the results achieved by the school in national and school based tests. The school has analysed the results very thoroughly and is aware of the input that special needs has upon these results. The 2001 group of special needs pupils was larger than immediate past groups and was a factor in the lower results attained. Nineteen of the pupils who took the National Curriculum tests were on the register of special needs. Of these, 15 were boys. The majority of the pupils had learning difficulties and none attained the average level 4. Nevertheless, the school ensures that pupils with SEN are prepared as well as possible for participation in the tests. They receive good support with the school's internal testing programme as well as participating in the practice tests that prepare pupils for the actual national tests. The all-inclusive nature of the school's approach to making provision for all pupils' needs ensures that all pupils with SEN achieve as well as all other pupils as they move through the school. The school has not identified any gifted or talented pupils. The setting of pupils by ability has resulted in a good match of work to pupils' abilities and this has ensured that the above average pupils achieve at least satisfactorily and often well in most aspects of literacy and numeracy.
4. By the age of eleven, standards in speaking and listening are average and most pupils achieve well since many enter school lacking confidence when speaking in front of others. By the time that they are in Year 6 classes, most average and above average pupils discuss issues with confidence and speak clearly. Most pupils listen with care so that they make a considered contribution to discussions in lessons. There is, however, a minority of mainly boys who have greater difficulty in developing their listening skills and this affects their achievements, particularly in writing.
5. In reading, standards are average by the age of eleven and most pupils achieve well. Pupils have clear understanding of letter sounds and how these need to be combined together in order to help them read unfamiliar words. This develops their confidence, accuracy and fluency well. Pupils who have SEN also achieve well in this aspect of learning through good additional support. Above average pupils achieve particularly well in reading and talk with knowledge and enjoyment about events and characters in books they read at home and at school. All pupils know how to make use of the library but have too few opportunities to use these skills in independent research.

6. Standards in writing including handwriting are below average, particularly for boys, and most pupils underachieve in this aspect of their work. Throughout the school, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write factual accounts and teachers rely too heavily on commercially produced worksheets in some subjects. There is not enough opportunity for extended story writing or for writing in subjects such as religious education and history. Although there are lessons in practising the skills of handwriting, they are not transferred across to other aspects of English or other subjects consistently enough. A minority of pupils are still not writing in a joined and legible script by the age of eleven. Spelling is satisfactory and most pupils spell common words accurately in their free writing. Pupils have sound knowledge of punctuation and grammar but this is not capitalised upon enough to support independence in writing. Pupils' speaking and listening and reading skills support learning well in other subjects but the use of their writing skills across the curriculum is underdeveloped.
7. Standards in numeracy are satisfactory and pupils achieve well. The school builds well on the satisfactory mathematical knowledge which pupils have when they enter the school at seven. Pupils of all attainment levels are becoming confident at using their knowledge of addition, subtraction, tables, fractions and doubling to solve challenging real life problems. Pupils are developing sound mental recall of tables and simple number problems. Pupils have a sound understanding of shape, space and measures and data handling. They use their numeracy skills effectively in subjects such as science, geography and design and technology. Pupils with SEN are given good support from class teachers and support staff in mathematics lessons and this enables most to make similar progress to other children.
8. Overall, pupils' achievements across the range of their science work are good. With more opportunities to take part in experimental and investigative work, all pupils, including those who have SEN, are making good progress in understanding the idea of a fair test and the importance of collecting first hand evidence to support an idea.
9. The school has done well to maintain the increasing national expectations for information and communications technology (ICT) and standards are similar to expectations. Pupils develop skills in learning how to produce, amend and enhance text satisfactorily as they move through the school. Skills in handling information are sound and by the age of eleven most pupils use databases and spreadsheets accurately to record, add and retrieve information. Pupils are beginning to use e-mail to communicate with other schools and they are developing sound understanding of control technology. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use computers in every day lessons and this places some limitations on their achievements in the subject.
10. In all other subjects, standards are similar to those expected for pupils' age and pupils' achievement are satisfactory and sometimes good. In art and design, pupils achieve well when drawing inspiration from the work of great artists. In design and technology, standards have improved from being below average in the last inspection. Above average pupils achieve well in the design element of the subject when evaluating their design and making relevant changes as a result. Pupils develop a good knowledge of topics they cover in history and geography but do not develop key skills effectively from year to year and consequently their achievements are satisfactory. Pupils achieve well in the singing and composition elements of music. Whilst most pupils achieve satisfactory standards in all aspects of physical education, the restricted space available for physical activity has an adverse effect on pupils' achievements. Standards in religious education have improved since the last inspection and now meet the requirements of the local agreed syllabus.

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

11. Pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and relationships with staff and each other are having a positive impact on their achievements. This shows an improvement over the standards described in the previous report when relationships and attitudes were satisfactory. Pupils and their parents say that they enjoy coming to school and this is confirmed by the lively and keen interest they show in their work and the general life of the school.
12. Attitudes to learning are good throughout the school. Pupils are keen to get on with their lessons, try hard to do their best and sustain interest well throughout the school day. Attitudes were particularly good in lessons observed in Year 6 where, in three-quarters of the lessons, they were judged very good. This is because of the high levels of interest generated by teachers and the impact of the pupils' increasing maturity as they move through the school. For example, in a mathematics lesson the teacher's enthusiasm rubs off on the pupils when they successfully find the shape with the longest perimeter from a given area.
13. Behaviour in lessons, assemblies and in the playground is mostly good. There was no evidence of bullying, racist or sexist behaviour during the inspection and pupils say everyone is friendly. A minority of mainly boys are boisterous in the playground and movement around the school is sometimes disruptive. Five pupils were temporarily excluded last year. All these pupils have now left the school. Almost all were in Year 6 last year and their poor behaviour contributed to the dip in standards. There have been no exclusions this academic year.
14. Pupils have a good awareness of why rules and conventions exist. Towards others, they show respect for their feelings and beliefs and a genuine appreciation of their efforts. Relationships throughout the school are good. Pupils and teachers got on well together and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning, especially the interaction between teachers and pupils at the start of lessons. Pupils co-operate well in pairs or groups, as was evident in a Year 6 design and technology lesson on designing a bus shelter. Pupils worked very well together seeking advice from their teacher and each other to help overcome problems with designing and making. Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful. They love chatting to visitors.
15. Pupils' personal development is good. They are developing a good awareness of citizenship. A good example is their keen and responsible approach to being members of the School Council. Pupils show pride in the school. Members of the football team are proud when talking about their achievements. Pupils show initiative and independence when working but opportunities are limited especially in relation to independent research skills.
16. In common with all pupils, those who have SEN enjoy coming to the school. They are secure in knowing that their efforts to improve their performance will be valued. In consequence, they make positive responses in lessons. They join in with all curriculum and extra-curricular activities. These are all open to them because of the school's all-inclusive ethos. They have good relationships with teachers and support staff as well as other pupils. This has a good effect on their personal development and self-esteem.
17. Attendance rates are satisfactory and at about the national average. Levels of unauthorised absences are similar to national averages. Most pupils arrive punctually for school. The number of pupils taking holidays in term time causes the school concern. These absences mean pupils miss important parts of their learning.

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

18. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and meets the needs of the large majority of pupils well. In the 65 lessons seen during the inspection, just over 15 per cent were very good, 47 per cent were good, 35 per cent were satisfactory and one lesson was poor. Teaching is

consistently good in Year 6 and leads to particularly effective learning by this group of pupils. Examples of good teaching were seen across all year groups.

19. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be a serious weakness. At that time, 28 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory and there was little very good teaching. Improvements are due to several factors:
  - the leadership by the headteacher has provided a clearer sense of direction and purpose;
  - four new staff have joined the school and brought with them good levels of expertise;
  - teachers plan and work together better;
  - the setting of pupils by ability for literacy and mathematics has resulted in a better match of work to pupils' needs; and
  - monitoring of teaching and learning, although the effects of this have not been so marked due to a lack of rigour and focus in its application.
  
20. The skills of literacy and numeracy are generally well taught, although the teaching of writing has some weaknesses. Teaching of reading is focused appropriately on the teaching of phonics (letter sounds). This has had a good effect on pupils' learning since they are able to use the strategy successfully to read unfamiliar words. This has given them additional confidence and improved their progress. Weaknesses in writing, particularly of the boys, are being addressed through the planning of additional writing sessions outside the literacy hour. Some teachers are targeting writing activities that are more geared to the interest of boys and this is impacting well on their learning. Much of this is new and has not yet raised standards sufficiently. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to write at length in other subjects and this slows their learning in this aspect. All teachers have secure knowledge of mathematics and use an appropriate variety of methods to teach mathematical skills, including effective whole class mental sessions and fast moving question and answer sessions. These assess the pupils' understanding and extend their thinking well. Lessons have a good pace and work is well matched to the different abilities in the class. Above average pupils are encouraged to move on to more complex challenging tasks to move their learning on at a faster pace.
  
21. Science is well taught across the school. Lessons move at a good pace and keep pupils' learning focused. A weakness identified in the last inspection was the teaching of experimental and investigative science. This aspect has improved markedly and all teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to participate in investigative work. This is ensuring that pupils now develop their learning well across all aspects of the subject. ICT is taught well in the computer suite and develops pupils' key skills successfully. However, skills are not developed sufficiently in all lessons and this restricts opportunities for consolidating and extending pupils' learning. The teaching of art and design and music is good with effective sharing of teachers' expertise having a good effect on pupils' learning of key skills. Teaching in design and technology, physical education, history, geography and religious education is satisfactory. In history, geography and religious education, there is too great a reliance on commercially produced worksheets. These limit pupils' learning by restricting opportunities for them to develop their writing skills.
  
22. Teaching of pupils who have SEN is mostly good. They receive effective support from the class teachers during lessons. Teachers also use the five members of the support staff effectively to maximise the amount of help that is available to the school. All teachers ensure that pupils who have SEN are involved in whole class activities through targeted questions and modify the work they are expected to do in group and individual activities well. They provide for pupils' individual needs satisfactorily in their planning, although reference to the specific needs in their individual education plans (IEP's) are not sufficiently referred to across all classes. This means that focused support in group and individual activities does not always move them on as quickly as it might. In the classes where additional support is available, the teacher and support assistant work together effectively. Regular reviews of pupils' progress

ensure that their needs are kept up-to-date and movement up and down between the various stages is appropriately considered and acted upon.

23. The key strengths in teaching across all subjects and year groups are:
- good relationships, class management and high expectations of behaviour. These develop pupils' learning well by establishing a good attitude to work, developing their self-esteem and ensuring they know that their efforts are valued;
  - teachers' good subject knowledge in most subjects that leads to clear explanations and demonstrations that include all pupils;
  - teachers' interactions with the pupils to check their understanding and help them improve;
  - good questioning that extends pupils' learning, for example, in a Year 5 literacy lesson the teacher asks how could the text be made clearer for the reader and in a Year 6 dance lesson the teacher asks how would you tell the group how it might improve its performance. Questioning is also targeted equally towards boys and girls and to pupils of all abilities; and
  - good planning and teaching methods that ensure pupils are productive and work at a good pace.
24. Areas for improvement in teaching relate to:
- an over-reliance on commercially produced worksheets that restrict opportunities for pupils to write at length;
  - review sessions at the end of lessons that do not explore effectively what has worked well, what has not and why;
  - marking of pupils' work that does not indicate how it might be improved; and
  - greater use of the IEPs of pupils with SEN in general lesson work in order to move learning on at a faster rate when additional support is not available.

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

25. The school has developed a good curriculum that meets statutory requirements. There is an appropriate range of learning activities. These include good overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are well established and a satisfactory scheme of personal, social and health education has been introduced.
26. Since the last inspection, there has been significant improvement in the quality of the curriculum. The school has introduced nationally recommended schemes of work for all subjects. These provide useful guidance for what has to be taught and how pupils' progress can be checked. As a result, there is good curriculum planning in most subjects. The need to comply with the local scheme of religious education, identified as a weakness at the previous inspection, has been addressed successfully. Provision for numeracy is good. This is having a good impact in mathematics and science where standards are rising steadily. Literacy lessons are well structured and organised, but have yet to make a significant impact on standards of writing. The curriculum is made broader and relevant by a range of good educational visits, both day and residential.
27. No pupils with SEN are debarred from any aspect of the curriculum. They take a full and active part in all lessons with work provided at an appropriate level when they are working in class. This system is further well supported by the sets that have been formed for all mathematics lessons and for literacy lessons for three days in the week. These are already bringing tangible results to mathematics and beginning to do the same for literacy lessons where sets have been more recently formed. Pupils with SEN also participate fully and enthusiastically

with the school's extra-curricular activities. Many of these have a sporting element and in some aspects pupils with SEN achieve particularly well.

28. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. The governing body has approved the policy for teaching about the harmful effects of drugs and misuse of medicines. An appropriate policy on sex education has been agreed. In the most effective lessons, teachers provide good opportunities to develop pupils' responsibility for their learning through research in libraries and CD-ROM sources. This is another effective avenue through which personal responsibility is promoted.
29. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities takes place during lunchtime and after school. Teachers commit a considerable amount of their own time to these sporting and performing arts activities. Community links include sponsorship from commercial firms for prizes and visitors from local churches. These provide a satisfactory level of involvement, which is improving through contact with public services. Contacts with neighbouring schools are satisfactory though the school acknowledges that making them more effective is an area for development.
30. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory. Although the school has tried through its assemblies to address this issue, it remains an area for improvement. Most assemblies do not establish a calm, reflective atmosphere. Without a focal point, such as a candle or other artefact, there is an absence of feeling that the whole school gathering is a special event. Although there are periods of reflection, they are too short to be of value and the assembly moves on to give awards and notices. There is little evidence of an audit of the curriculum to identify opportunities for pupils to experience wonder and contemplation.
31. Pupils' moral development is good. Staff provide good role models and pupils are developing a clear understanding of right and wrong. The classroom rules, combined with rewards and sanctions, are fully understood. This is having a positive impact on the good standards of behaviour in classrooms and improving standards around the school. Pupils have a secure understanding of how their behaviour can affect other people, with the result that classes proceed smoothly, giving everyone more time to learn. The weekly assembly at which awards are presented for good work and progress, acts of kindness and good behaviour, successfully promotes the values taught by the school.
32. Provision for social development is good. In many lessons, pupils are given opportunities to work in pairs or groups in lessons. In this way they are learning to share ideas and recognise the abilities of others. Opportunities to answer in class and contribute information feature in most lessons. This is having a good influence on pupils' self-confidence. The recent School Council initiative gives pupils a good opportunity to be actively involved in the development of their school. Landscaping and other environmental improvements on the school site testify to pupils' willingness to participate. Residential visits are effective situations for pupils to learn about living and working together. The long standing tradition of school performances for others teaches pupils to take responsibility for rehearsing, learning lines and performing as part of a complex group in front of an audience.
33. There is satisfactory provision for cultural development. Opportunities are taken to listen to music in assembly. In art, there is appreciation of work of famous artists. There is a good display in Year 3 intended to make pupils think about their feelings and other reaction to various pictures. Visits to places of interest are having a good impact in subjects such as history, science and geography as a way of making studies relevant. Western European culture is promoted well. However, using art and literature from other cultures is not widely developed. Reflecting the diversity of art, music and literature contained within the United Kingdom is not well developed

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

34. The school provides good care for its pupils and has improved the provision outlined in the last report. The standard of care contributes well towards pupils' positive attitude to school. Health and safety procedures and monitoring are good and potential risks are identified well. Child protection procedures are good and ensure all staff are aware of issues and what to do if they have concerns. First-aid arrangements are good with all staff receiving training. Pupils' personal development is monitored well and staff provide good personal support enabling pupils to develop confidence and self-esteem.
35. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are effective and the use of rewards and praise has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Procedures to discourage and deal with bullying, racist or sexist behaviour are also good. There is some boisterous behaviour as pupils, mainly boys, move around the school and procedures to monitor and control this need tightening up.
36. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. Registers are well maintained and the shortcomings identified in the previous report have been remedied well.
37. The school makes satisfactory overall provision for pupils with SEN. This sustains the provision made at the last inspection. It is a caring school that has an all-inclusive philosophy. All staff are suitably involved in providing for special needs pupils since there are limited numbers of support staff due to budget constraints. The special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has had limited release time more recently because of staff absence so any opportunity for pupils to receive support from her, as they may have done in the past, has also been limited. Nevertheless, this has not prevented the school from continuing to show concern and to make good efforts to minimise the difficulties.
38. Procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' attainment and progress have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now good in English, mathematics and science. School assessments and statutory and non-statutory tests are used effectively to provide useful information about pupils' attainment and progress in these subjects.
39. These results are analysed and used effectively to set whole school targets and to identify areas of development for the school, such as weaknesses in problem solving in mathematics and differences in the attainment of boys and girls. The school is tracking pupils' progress successfully over the year and through the school. Results are also used well to identify where additional support is needed and the level of its effectiveness in raising standards, for instance, for those pupils needing booster, springboard and additional literacy lessons. The school is less effective in setting individual targets to identify what pupils need to do to improve their individual standards.
40. Assessment systems in other subjects are less well developed. Individual teachers have devised some useful systems but there are no consistently used whole school systems to record pupils' progress as they move through the school. This limits the effectiveness of assessment in the drive to raise standards.

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

41. The partnership with parents is satisfactory and has been maintained since the last inspection. The school has taken recent initiatives to improve this partnership. The replies from the inspection survey of parents together with the evidence from the pre-inspection meeting for parents, indicate that parents have mixed views about the school. The large majority indicate

that they their children like school and are making good progress and working hard. Inspection evidence supports these views.

42. About a quarter of parents feel that they could be better informed about their children's progress, are concerned about homework, do not feel that the school works closely enough with parents and want more extra-curricular activities. Inspection evidence indicates that annual reports provide good detail on attainment and progress especially in relation to English and mathematics. Newsletters give parents good information about the life of the school and also about work to be undertaken each term. The recently introduced pupil personal organiser booklet is a very helpful tool in enhancing the two-way communication between teachers and parents, although not all parents are yet using it. The school is open to parents; staff are readily available for consultation at the beginning and end of the day. Levels of homework are similar to those in most schools, although there is some inconsistency in the frequency and amounts set both within and across the year groups. The range of extra-curricular activities is similar to that found in most junior schools.
43. A few parents help in the classroom and some give good support to their children at home. The great majority of parents ensure their children come to school regularly and promptly, although a significant number have taken their children on holiday during term time.
44. The school involves parents of pupils with SEN at appropriate times in the decisions that have to be made about provision to meet those needs. They have initial contact through the SENCO to the first decisions that are made. They are invited to attend all reviews of needs. These invitations are only spasmodically taken up and the school is often disappointed with this level of response. It recognises the need to continue to work upon developing relationships with parents so that attendance becomes a more regular feature of review meetings.

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

45. There were serious weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school at the time of the last inspection. Before the last inspection there had been a great deal of change that had had an unsettling effect on the work of the school. The headteacher had been absent and did not return after the inspection. There was no common purpose evident in the school, although the acting headteacher and senior staff were working hard to paper over the cracks. Soon after the last inspection the present headteacher was appointed. Whilst there is still work to be done, there has been good improvement in most of the weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection.
46. The headteacher provides good leadership and a strong steer to the work of the school. Relationships are good at all levels and there is a clear emphasis on ensuring all pupils have equality of access to a broad and relevant curriculum. There is good teamwork and all staff share a common purpose and clear commitment to raising standards and improving the quality of learning for all pupils. This is exemplified in the very good school development plan that uses data on pupils' performance in national and school tests very well in order to track the progress of the different year groups in the school. It also uses the results of staff and parental questionnaires in order to take account of a wide spectrum of views. There is a particularly good central plan that provides a good overview for the next three years. It includes clear success criteria and time scales. The plan provides the school with a strong and well-defined foundation for development. The school's explicit and relevant aims are reflected in its work and overall, the leadership of the school is bringing about a steady rise in standards.
47. There has been some good monitoring of teaching and learning, essentially in English and mathematics. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have an annual programme that ensures all teachers are monitored at least once. This has provided some valuable information

but it has been too general to bring about substantial improvements in teaching and pupils' learning. For example, it has not been sharp enough to determine how the teaching of writing can be improved. The role of the curriculum co-ordinators has developed satisfactorily since the last inspection but their part in the monitoring of teaching and learning, using the very good information on the progress of different year groups in key subjects, remains underdeveloped. Outside literacy and numeracy, co-ordinators have had insufficient opportunity to see other teachers teach and this clouds their overview of teaching and learning in their subjects.

48. The school has set up sound performance management systems and the headteacher has been set appropriate targets linked to raising standards, particularly in writing.
49. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) plays an active role in developing the sound provision for pupils who have SEN. She is well supported by the headteacher. There is a clear policy for meeting needs that complies with the current Code of Practice and there are appropriate plans to review this in line with the new Code of Practice. This is effectively established as a school priority in the action plan drawn up by the SENCO. Resources are regularly up dated by the SENCO in order to meet changing needs. The regularity of reviews also ensures that changing needs are also effectively met. Support staff are deployed appropriately. They are relatively small in number but are deployed so that all pupils with SEN have regular daily support. The support is often targeted well because the criteria established in the IEPs are being met. The IEPs are devised by an effective combination of input from the class teachers and the SENCO. Outside agencies are also comprehensively involved when they are needed. A good example of this is the effective support for the hearing impaired pupils.
50. The governors fulfil their statutory duties well and have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. They are provided with comprehensive and objective information about pupils' performance and the budget. This is much improved since the last inspection and enables them to develop their strategic role and to ask critical questions about the school's performance. This aspect of their work is now satisfactory and is developing well despite frequent changes in the membership of the governing body. The retiring chair of governors is a frequent visitor to the school and offers good support to the headteacher.
51. Financial planning is sound. A budget deficit has accrued over the last five years due to a drop in pupil numbers each year in relation to the budgeted number. The school has a secure plan to reduce this deficit during the current and following financial year. The comparatively low number of pupils in the current Year 6 eases the financial situation in the next financial year when more pupils enter Year 3. The very low level of income the school receives compared to the national average gives little scope for manoeuvre but where possible funds are linked well to priorities for school improvement. The headteacher and the governor responsible for finance have a good understanding of the school's financial position and receive good information that is enabling them to put the school on a more secure financial footing. The few recommendations of the latest audit report have been acted on successfully. The principles of best value are understood and generally applied well, in particular consultations with parents and staff are used well to inform school improvement. There has been good analysis of the effectiveness of having a deputy headteacher who is not class based. It was difficult to substantiate this during the inspection since the deputy headteacher was taking a class full-time to cover a staff absence. Evidence indicates that her skills are used to good effect, for example when she takes booster classes for literacy and numeracy, supporting the setting arrangements in these two subjects and providing continuity of learning when covering staff absence.
52. Accommodation, staffing and resources are satisfactory overall. The school has an appropriate level of teaching staff, although the number of support staff is lower than average. There is a good programme of in-service training which is effective in keeping teachers up to date with developments in their subjects. The expertise of teachers is used well in subjects such as music,

art and design, design and technology, physical education and information and communication technology. New technology including office computers is used efficiently to support the general running of the school. The school administrative staff offers sound support in ensuring the smooth running of the school. However, limited time allocations mean that the headteacher is involved in some activities, for example, the monitoring of attendance, that do not make best use of time.

53. There is sufficient classroom space, but some rooms in the old building are cramped. The main hall is small and narrow, making assemblies and lessons in physical education, especially in gymnastics and dance, difficult to run. The limitations have an adverse impact on the standards of pupils' spiritual development and their achievements in physical education. This was evident in a Year 5 lesson where the time taken moving equipment during the lesson because the shape of the hall restricted pupils' otherwise good learning. Resources are adequate for most subjects, except for up-to-date hardware and software for ICT, fixed apparatus for physical education and musical instruments from a range of cultures. Some books are worn and out-of-date and do not provide a real incentive for reading.

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

54. In order to build on the improvements in teaching, learning and pupils' achievements, the headteacher, governors and staff should;
- Raise standards in English with particular emphasis on writing by:
    - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length in subjects such as history, geography and science;
    - developing a more systematic programme to improve pupils' handwriting and presentation;
    - focusing on writing activities that are geared more to the interests of boys;
    - raising the profile of writing throughout the school;
    - providing pupils with more stimulating reading material;
    - devising more focused tracking systems to gauge the progress of individual pupils;
    - providing more opportunities for pupils to use their research skills at an individual level; and
    - using computers more to develop and extend literacy skills.
- (These issues are discussed in paragraphs 4-6, 15, 20-1, 24, 55-6, 59, 61-3, 65, 80, 97)
- Sharpen the effectiveness of monitoring by the headteacher, senior managers and co-ordinators by;
    - more rigorous and effective analysis of the very good tracking systems that chart pupils' progress;
    - more careful analysis of monitoring information from lesson observations to make teaching and learning even better; and
    - setting challenging individual literacy and numeracy targets for pupils.
- (This issue is discussed in paragraphs 19, 39, 47, 66, 77, 88, 92 and 105)
- Develop key skills in religious education, history and geography more systematically from year to year and include a review and analysis of the usefulness of commercially produced worksheets.

(This issue is discussed in paragraphs 6, 10, 21, 93, 96-8 and 117)

### **In addition to the key issues above, the school should also consider including the following less significant weaknesses in its action plan:**

- Develop whole school assessment systems to track pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics and ensure they are used consistently in all year groups.  
(Paragraphs 40, 83, 98, 110 and 114)
- Improve the provision for pupils' spiritual development.

(Paragraphs 30, 107 and 119)

- In the marking of pupils' work, include more comments to show pupils how they might improve.

(Paragraphs 24 and 63)

- Continue to build up ICT resources and use computers more across the curriculum.

(Paragraphs 9, 21, 65, 76, 83, 98, 100 and 104)

- Tighten up the supervision of pupils as they move around the school.

(Paragraphs 13 and 35)

**\* (It is recognised that the school is aware of these issues and had begun to take some effective action)**

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

65

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

32

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

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	10	31	23	0	1	0
Percentage	0	15.4	47.7	35.4	0	1.5	0

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

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

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

Y3 – Y3

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)

360

Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals

51

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

Y3– Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs

5

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register

49

#### **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

13

Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14
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***Attendance***

**Authorised absence**

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.2

**Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.9
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	56	40	96

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	28	33
	Girls	29	25	31
	Total	57	53	64
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	59 (66)	55 (62)	67 (83)
	National	75 (75)	72 (71)	85 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	33	35	31
	Girls	28	31	24
	Total	61	66	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (64)	69 (61)	57 (67)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	360
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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	9	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: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.1
Average class size	30.4

#### **Education support staff: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	102

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	564,019
Total expenditure	586,770
Expenditure per pupil	1,613
Balance brought forward from previous year	-1,771
Balance carried forward to next year	-24,522

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	360
Number of questionnaires returned	113

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	42	52	4	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	34	54	4	0	9
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	45	13	1	12
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	51	21	2	2
The teaching is good.	28	54	4	0	13
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	19	45	26	1	10
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	35	52	5	2	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	42	50	4	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	13	47	27	2	11
The school is well led and managed.	16	58	8	1	17
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	21	64	2	1	12
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	11	30	21	9	29



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

### **ENGLISH**

55. Standards in English in national tests were well below the national average for eleven-year-olds in 2001. This appears to indicate a decline in standards since the last inspection when they were judged to be about average. However, the school has increased its points score in national tests since that time. The Year 6 classes taking the 2001 tests had a higher percentage of pupils with SEN than in other year groups. The majority of the pupils had identified learning difficulties. Most of the pupils with identified learning difficulties were boys and it was under performance by boys in writing that particularly depressed the 2001 national test scores.
56. Inspection evidence, however, confirms that the school is continuing to work hard at raising standards. The current Year 6 classes show improving standards and overall current progress is good. Attainment remains below the national average because standards in writing are lower than they should be. Over the previous three years until 2001, improvement had mirrored the national trend although the weakness in writing was clearly an issue for the school. It has recognised the need to address this issue but has missed opportunities to extend writing across the curriculum in order to improve skills more rapidly. Standards in reading are average. In reading there is no significant difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls.
57. The school has been analysing the test results thoroughly. It has also introduced a good system of internal testing in order to raise pupils' standards from the time that pupils enter the school. This identifies for them clearly the needs of the above average, average and below average pupils as well as those who have SEN. The school has responded by forming English classes where pupils of similar abilities are working together. In the current Year 6 classes the highest number of pupils are in the above average group. This augurs well for future performance in tests. Teachers are beginning to set individual performance targets for these pupils but this is at an early stage of development. They lack sufficient clarity and are not yet having a clear impact on pupils' performance.
58. By the age of eleven, standards in speaking and listening are average. When pupils enter the school, many have difficulty listening carefully and systematically. They lack confidence in speaking in discussions. As a result of good teaching, their confidence grows and pupils begin to speak more clearly and respond appropriately to what adults and their classmates have to say. By the time they are in Year 6 classes most average and above average pupils discuss issues with confidence. They know that their views are going to be respected in different learning contexts. For example, in a discussion about the different ways that people from a number of religious backgrounds celebrate the significance of harvest, pupils confidently express their knowledge. They listen with care so that they can make a considered contribution to the discussion. The pupils then move on to deepening their understanding by carrying out research work. However, at all stages there is a minority, mainly boys, who have greater difficulty in developing their listening skills. They have too short a concentration span for their attention to be held appropriately. This lack of ability to listen carefully is then reflected in the unsuccessful development of their writing skills.
59. Standards in reading are average by the age of eleven. Good teaching and tracking of reading development ensures pupils achieve well in this aspect of the subject. The effective additional support, particularly for below average pupils and those with SEN, helps pupils well with their reading. Pupils have a clear understanding of letter sounds and how these need to be combined together in order to help them read unfamiliar words. All pupils use this strategy effectively to build words when they are presented with difficulties. Teachers have clearly identified accurate

reading level abilities. As a result, pupils have reading books that offer appropriate challenge. By the time they are eleven, average and above average pupils are reading with fluency as well as accuracy. They know how to seek help from dictionaries if they do not understand words that they have built up. Above average pupils talk with knowledge and enjoyment about events and characters in the books they are reading. They practise their reading daily. All pupils take home reading diaries in order to support the regularity of reading effectively. Pupils know how to make use of the library but have too few opportunities to use these skills in independent research. By Year 6 the above average readers often bring books, such as one of the Harry Potter series, from home because those in the school library are not challenging or attractive enough to encourage them to continue developing their reading prowess.

60. Standards in writing are below average. They depress the overall level of pupils' achievements in English significantly. When the focus of writing is interesting to boys, as in a Year 3 class when the teacher uses a focus on footballers, boys complete work to a better standard. Writing does not have a high enough profile in the school with too few displays of examples around the school. Throughout the school, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write factual accounts. In science, for example, an overuse of commercially produced worksheets limits such opportunities. There is not enough opportunity for extended story writing or for writing in other subjects such as religious education, history and geography. The school is aware of the need to provide more opportunities to develop writing skills as a result of the thorough analysis that has been made of achievements. The importance of taking action to improve skills needs to be taken forward more rigorously if standards are to be raised.
61. Standards in handwriting are generally unsatisfactory. Although there are weekly lessons in practising the skills of handwriting they are not transferred across to other aspects of English or other subjects consistently enough. There is still a minority of pupils who are not writing in a joined and legible script by the age of eleven. Spelling is satisfactory and most pupils spell common words accurately in their free writing. They confidently use dictionaries to support them when they are uncertain about the spelling of words. Regular spelling tests in school and taking home words to learn is helping to raise pupils' achievements in spelling. A sound knowledge of punctuation and grammar is being developed but then is not capitalised upon enough to support independence in writing.
62. In almost all lessons teaching across all year groups is good and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. This is borne out by the sample of pupils' work. This is a significant improvement upon the findings of the last inspection. The improvements have partly been brought about by the effective adoption of the structure of the literacy hour. Teachers plan with more consistency and inventiveness in the tasks that they are providing for pupils. They have made a good analysis of the needs of pupils and this enables them to provide a better match of work to the different needs of pupils. They have then adopted a consistent approach to the way in which they break up the time in the hour so that pupils have a regular working pattern to follow in all year groups. This works well in most respects, however, in most of the lessons seen during the inspection the final review session is often rushed and does not exploit opportunities or critical evaluation in order to show pupils how they might improve. Regular daily reading sessions are well managed by teachers outside the framework of the literacy hour as well as the group reading that forms an integral part of the hour. This supports the improvement in pupils' reading. Whilst the teaching of writing was mainly good in the lessons observed, pupils' performance in writing indicates some weaknesses in the teaching of this aspect.
63. The marking of work is not yet rigorous enough to match the targets that are still being inconsistently set in some classes and year groups. Not enough attention is paid to giving clear indications to pupils about what they need to do in order to improve their work. Where teaching is very good in Years 5 and 6, teachers look at how work can be improved. They make particularly good choices of tasks so that all pupils, including boys and those with SEN, are

highly motivated. The choice of books such as *Nicholas Nickleby* and *Oliver Twist* where the main character is a boy in different circumstances is one example of this. Standard English and the use of dialect is made enjoyably interesting for pupils when their dialect is used to good effect because it is held up as an appropriate example by the teacher. Pupils feel valued in consequence and have enhanced their understanding of the importance of Standard English.

64. Support staff are well deployed and are effective in the work that they do with pupils, both in class and in the small number of withdrawal groups that they work in. They give particularly appropriate support to below average and SEN pupils. They have individual education plans that are mainly clearly focused upon supporting their learning in English.
65. Although the use of the focus given in the literacy hour is firmly embedded in the school's practice, literacy skills are not used widely enough across the curriculum. The impact of the literacy hour on English work is beginning to have a beneficial effect but is not yet clearly found in subjects such as history and religious education. Computers are used more than at the time of the previous inspection but do not support the development of literacy skills as well as they should.
66. The subject is satisfactorily led by an experienced and committed co-ordinator. She has led a good analysis of pupils' performance in both national and school tests. A useful policy and scheme of work are available to guide all teachers appropriately. A good system of planning is secure and some effective monitoring has been carried out in the past. This has not been so rigorously followed more recently because of staff absences but is clearly identified by the co-ordinator's action plan as being a necessary element of what needs to be done in order to raise standards further.

## **MATHEMATICS**

67. The standards achieved by pupils aged eleven are in line with those found nationally. Inspection findings are an improvement on the standards reached in the 2001 tests which were well below the national average and well below those for similar schools. Until 2001 standards since the last inspection had been rising at the same rate as those nationally. The reasons for the underperformance of pupils in 2001 are set out above in paragraph 3 and in the parents' summary.
68. The general improvements in standards are due to the positive impact of the National Numeracy Strategy, improved assessment procedures, improved teaching and improving standards on entry at seven. Pupils in Years 6 entered the school with below average standards in mathematics; the standard on entry of pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 was average. The majority of the pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils in Year 4 are on target to move above those expected nationally with over 30 per cent of pupils in Year 4 already working within Level 4. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.
69. Pupils with SEN are given good support from class teachers and support staff. This support enables them to take a full part in mathematics lessons and enables most to make similar progress to other children. There are few mathematics targets in pupils' individual education plans and consequently support is not focused as well as it might be on individual needs.
70. In Year 3, the school builds well on the satisfactory mathematical knowledge which pupils now have when they enter the school at seven. This ensures that pupils develop a sound knowledge of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division (the four rules) and apply this well working with numbers up to a hundred. Pupils are encouraged to find different ways of arriving at their answers and are continually challenged to explain their calculations using correct mathematical vocabulary. This has a good effect on their learning, for example, average pupils in the middle

set confidently explained that  $3 \times 5$  is the same as  $5 \times 3$  and used the term *inversion* with confidence and understanding. Pupils are excited by what numbers can do and respond well to enthusiastic teaching and explanations. Mental strategies are given a particularly high priority and most lessons begin well with challenging tasks that encourage children to improve number skills. In each year group pupils of all attainment levels are becoming proficient at recalling their multiplication table.

71. By the time pupils enter Year 6, they have made good progress in understanding multiples, factors and place value and are becoming accurate when using the four rules with complex four figure numbers. Higher attaining pupils understand probability, percentages, fractions and decimals well and can convert one to the other. Problem solving skills were a weakness identified in the last inspection. The school has improved this aspect well and now provides very good opportunities to develop this area of mathematics. Time is allocated each week to ensure that pupils achieve well in this aspect of mathematics. Pupils of all attainment levels are becoming confident at using their knowledge of addition, subtraction, tables, fractions and doubling to solve challenging real life problems. Above average pupils in Year 6 use their skills extremely well to work with six figure numbers as they solve the problem of how much a hundred lottery winners would each receive from a jackpot of £781,132. Numeracy skills are used effectively to develop pupils' understanding of data handling. By the age of eleven most pupils are developing sound skills in interpreting graphs, charts and diagrams and are able to explain complex findings.
72. Throughout the school, pupils benefit from a range of well-planned activities and experiences, which support effectively their learning in work involving shape, space and measures. As they move through the school pupils become confident in using a range of measures accurately. By the time pupils enter Year 6 they show a good understanding of measurement. They study time, volume, rotational symmetry and co-ordinates and are learning to measure acute and obtuse angles accurately. Above average pupils understand how to calculate the perimeters and areas of increasingly complex shapes. With effective support, lower attaining pupils use formulae successfully to calculate simple shapes.
73. Pupils have good opportunities to use, consolidate and extend their mathematical skills in other subjects. In history, interesting and relevant time lines are displayed in classrooms. In science Year 4 pupils measure and record the lengths of their different bones as part of their investigative work on skeletons. In geography, work on climate is enhanced as pupils use graphs to interpret which is the hottest or wettest month of the year. Stopwatches and measuring cylinders, as well as non-standard tools of measurement, are in regular use as part of pupils work on tabulating information in science.
74. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes towards the subject are good. They work hard and enjoy the challenge of difficult tasks responding with an eagerness and enthusiasm to the complexities of mathematics. This has a positive effect on the progress and standards pupils are now achieving.
75. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection and is good overall. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. Teaching in Year 6 is consistently good and often very good. Since these teachers taught these pupils in Year 5 and remained with them in Year 6, this has had a marked impact on their good achievements.
76. All teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and have received effective training in implementing the numeracy strategy. They use an appropriate variety of methods to teach mathematical skills, including effective whole class mental sessions and fast moving question and answer sessions. These assess the pupils' understanding and extend their thinking well. Lessons have a good pace and challenge pupils to complete difficult tasks in good time and to a

high standard. Work is well matched to the different abilities in the class and above average pupils are encouraged to move on to more complex challenging tasks to move their learning on at a faster pace. Explanations are clear and pupils are provided with very helpful strategies to help them succeed. For example, in one very good lesson in Year 5 on problem solving, pupils were given very clear and precise guidance on how to solve a problem and how to carefully assess what information was relevant and what could be discarded. As a result, by the end of the lesson, pupils were feeling very confident that they had the necessary tools to work out complex problems. The best of lessons leave pupils enthusiastic about mathematics and excited about how numbers, shape and measures contribute to real life. In lessons that are not so effective, the final review sessions are rushed and lose their effectiveness. Computers are not used as effectively as they might be due a limited number of computers and programs to support learning in mathematics.

77. The work in mathematics is well planned to take account of pupils' different levels of attainment. The marking of pupils' work is variable and does not always include comments on where pupils have gone wrong and how they can improve. Assessments are thorough and provide good information on the standards pupils are reaching and the progress they are making. However, they are not used rigorously enough to set individual targets for pupils to identify exactly what they need to do to improve their work and move to the next higher level.
78. Co-ordination of the subject is now effective in improving the teaching and learning. The opportunities for the monitoring of teaching and learning across the school have had a positive impact on raising the standards of teaching and learning by identifying areas that work well and those that do not. The curriculum for mathematics is good and the schemes of work, setting of pupils by ability and the organisation of the timetable has a positive effect on improving standards of achievement. The subject is effectively resourced and meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum.

## SCIENCE

79. Since the last inspection, results in national tests for pupils in Year 6 moved steadily towards the national average until 2001. There had been particularly good improvement in the 2000 tests. The number of pupils who achieved the higher level was in line with the national average. In 2001, results at both levels fell well below the national average. Analysis of work from the pupils in the current Year 6 suggests this result is a temporary dip. Pupils in Year 6 are working at the level expected for their age and a significant minority of pupils are working at the higher level. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a level of attainment appropriate for their age and this indicates a continuation of the general trend prior to 2001. The most recent statistics on the difference in attainment between boys and girls show that it is not as significant now as in other subjects. Improvement since the previous inspection has been achieved through a higher proportion of good or better teaching and a greater emphasis on pupils having opportunities for more experimental and investigative activities using graphs and measurement more effectively.
80. With more opportunities to take part in experimental and investigative work, all pupils, including those who have SEN are making good progress, using terms such as *fair test* and *prediction* correctly. A good example of this was seen in a Year 4 lesson to test the insulation properties of materials. Each group gave their reasons for what was to be kept the same and what would be different. In this way all pupils participated knowing why they were doing the task. As a result they made good gains in their understanding of investigative methods. Pupils are making good progress using small equipment, such as magnifiers and thermometers, and knowing how important it is in science to collect accurate evidence. There are inconsistencies in expectations between classes for drawing conclusions from results or suggesting reasons why things did not happen as expected. Consequently, progress is not as good as in other aspects of science.

Pupils write their work up in a consistent way, but the standard of presentation is not always as good as it should be.

81. Overall, pupils' achievements across the range of their science work are good. Teachers are secure with what they have to teach and have good knowledge of their pupils. In one class, a pupil whose special needs target was about being cooperative in group activities made good progress when given a specific role in the experiment. Good support from a classroom assistant kept the pupil focused well on the task. Skilful questioning by the teacher brought out what the pupils had observed. There is good evidence of support for pupils with SEN in the analysis of pupils' work. By using writing guides and 'cut and paste' activities, pupils are able to complete their work within a lesson. In one investigation an articulate group of above average pupils in Year 6 evaluated their test as fair and demonstrated good numeracy skills when deciding the type of graph needed to present their results.
82. Teaching is good overall, with some very good features. Through sharing the purpose of the lesson and starting with recall of the previous lesson, pupils' attention is caught quickly. Most pupils are keen to answer or volunteer information and lessons move along at a good pace. Both strategies are effective for creating good behaviour and a good attitude towards work. In Year 6, above average pupils worked with minimal teacher intervention, bringing knowledge and previous experience into a discussion setting up an experiment. This effective personal development situation for the pupils came about because of very good relationships between the teacher and pupils. In the best lessons, teachers are creating an atmosphere of trust, where to make an error in procedure and to correct it is a sign of maturity and progress in learning.
83. The leadership of the subject gives a good sense of direction. Weaknesses reported at the previous inspection have been addressed successfully and an action plan is in place. Teachers have good information about pupils, but this is not exploited fully to set individual learning targets in order to raise standards. However, a recent initiative with self-assessment in Year 4 has begun. Pupils have a list of expectations for each level of attainment and are expected to use them as benchmarks to compare their own work. This is too new to make a judgement on how it is affecting pupils' learning. There is no collection of assessed work to help teachers make their assessments. As a result, there is a discrepancy between test results and teachers' assessment. The system of retaining teachers within Years 5 and 6 is having a good impact on this aspect of teaching as expertise is improving. There are some examples of computers supporting work in science but this is not established successfully enough.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

84. Standards in art and design are at the level expected for eleven-year-olds. This sustains the standards reported in the last inspection. On the basis of the lessons seen and a scrutiny of pupils' work in folders and on display, pupils, including those who have SEN, make good progress and achieve well. This is the result of good teaching and a varied and interesting programme of art and design activities that support the development of skills and techniques successfully. Although art and design work is often related to other subjects the skills and techniques of making art are never absorbed into the other subjects requirements. They remain a clear focus of pupils' learning.
85. Throughout the school, the skills and techniques are systematically built upon. Pupils in Year 3 discover the mixing of colours that produces other colour as they experiment appropriately whilst painting portraits. The focus that they are given of making realistic flesh colours in their portraits is a sophisticated technique that is achieved successfully as a result of the effective praise that they are given by their teacher. The mixture of media becomes a good focus of learning in Year 4. Chalk, paint, charcoal and pencil are all effectively combined to improve knowledge and understanding of shading, tone and colour in creating atmosphere in imaginative

pictures. This is then added to as pupils experiment carefully at changing effects using wax resist techniques. Pupils in Year 6 classes work on the same theme. Their use of sketches of different actions of people in their sketchbooks are improved upon when they study photographs. Pupils then make impressive pictures of a range of people such as cricketers, footballers and cyclists in action. Pupils use pastels, paints and materials such as corrugated card to produce satisfactory one and two-dimensional portraits. The teacher's selection of a good focus for learning resulted in high levels of interest and pupils learning effectively. Pupils also receive good support from the wide and useful range of artists' work that is presented to them as good examples. These are as diverse as Picasso, Gainsborough and Hockney.

86. The good level of personal development is a reflection of the impact that artwork has upon pupils' maturity. They are working keenly. Their enthusiasm is well targeted at creating effective work that also enhances the general environment of the school. In consequence, all pupils, including those with SEN, work with high levels of interest.
87. Good teaching and learning is well supported by teachers' thorough planning. They have secure subject knowledge as a result of having been involved in drawing up a useful scheme of work. They use resources effectively. In consequence, there is good variety in the activities. The use of sketchbooks is encouraged well by teachers so that the design element of artwork has an impact upon what is finally produced by pupils. Sketchbooks also help the teachers to verify that pupils are making continuous progress in the development of their artistic skills.
88. The leadership and management of the subject are sound. The co-ordinator is well informed. She encourages the other teachers to be fully involved in drawing up the scheme of work that supports the art and design work effectively. At the same time she resources the subject satisfactorily so that the wide range of experiences can promote the pupils' knowledge and understanding of art and design appropriately. There has been no opportunity for the co-ordinator to observe teaching and learning across the year groups in order to develop an overview of strengths and areas for development in the subject. Visits made by pupils to outside events such as the workshops at Nottingham Castle further enhance pupils' wider view of the pleasure and enjoyment that can be gained from making art successfully.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

89. Since the last inspection standards have improved and are now similar to those expected of eleven-year-olds. Overall pupils, including those with SEN, make sound progress. There is an appropriate curriculum that places emphasis on developing pupils' design and technology skills, knowledge and understanding. This is having a positive impact on learning and pupils' achievements.
90. Considerable emphasis is placed on developing pupils' technical skills of making. Account is taken of issues such as the suitability of materials and user preferences, and pupils recognise that their products need to meet a range of different needs. Pupils take these requirements into account, for example, when completing projects to design a stable structure, create moving toys, make bread and design and make musical instruments. All pupils follow instructions carefully to produce detailed and clearly labelled plans of their intentions. Above average pupils show an ability to reflect on their designs and make changes as difficulties arise.
91. The teaching is satisfactory and occasionally good. Well-structured activities provide pupils with a range of opportunities and resources to develop their skills. It achieves a good balance between designing, planning, making and evaluating. There are now some good opportunities for pupils to solve their own design and problems. Where teaching is particularly effective, for example in Year 6, pupils are encouraged to use their skills and knowledge well to work out how they can overcome problems. Pupils grapple with how to ensure that the walls and roofs of

their 'bus shelters' are stable and able to support their structures. They discuss with their teachers the need for corner joints to strengthen walls and roofs. Very good support, particularly for lower attaining pupils and those with SEN, ensure that pupils are given clear instructions and guidance whilst allowing them to make decisions and be responsible for their own learning. Questions and comments such as 'What might you do?' or 'Lets think about it' gave children a greater understanding of their own learning. This has a positive effect on the progress pupils make and increases their competence and ability to solve problems and improve their designs. Occasionally, there is still an over emphasis on teacher directed tasks and pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to experiment and discover solutions for themselves. Pupils are interested in the subject and produce work of good quality reflecting their effort and the skills, knowledge and understanding they acquire. There are good links with mathematics as pupils are reminded of the need to be accurate when taking measurements for their designs.

92. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The curriculum co-ordinator is enthusiastic and this has a very positive effect on the standards and progress pupils make. She works well with staff to raise their confidence and skills in the teaching of design and technology. This is mainly done informally as there is little time available to formally monitor and evaluate the teaching. The school is adequately resourced and pupils have access to an appropriate range of suitable materials to enhance their learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

93. Attainment in both subjects is broadly in line with what is expected for pupils aged eleven. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the last inspection. Weaknesses that were identified in the development of key skills, particularly for the above average pupils, have not been addressed successfully and standards have been maintained rather than improved. The knowledge pupils have of the people and places they are studying is good. Each subject is supported by visits to places of interest, which are having a good impact on pupils' enjoyment and knowledge of the subjects. Both subjects have a secure place in the curriculum and each has an appropriate amount of time allocated to it.
94. In history, pupils in Year 6 have good recall of topics they have covered earlier in the school. When shown photographs of Roman mosaic floors from Spain and Yorkshire, they understood they were the same people because of the similarities in patterns and techniques. They knew that the Romans had conquered large areas of Europe. Pupils in Year 5 have a sound general knowledge of Henry VIII and his wives and key elements of the Tudor period. A good lesson in Year 6 using information from the 1841 census for the Granby area, motivated pupils well and raised their curiosity. As a prompt for further investigations, the teaching in that lesson was good. Pupils used research skills well to find meanings for some of the occupations and expressed surprise at the number of people described as paupers. Visits to Haddon Hall and the day at Newstead Abbey looking at the life of Victorian children are highly successful in increasing pupils' knowledge and creating a fascination with the subject.
95. In history, all pupils are making satisfactory progress building up factual knowledge. Above average pupils are beginning to develop a deeper understanding of what they are studying, for example when they relate events and changes by drawing on their knowledge of the Romans. However, pupils' ability to interpret events from different points of view is not well developed.
96. In geography, pupils have a secure knowledge of the locality from their visits to places such as Castleton. In the work they have done to improve the immediate environment they are making satisfactory progress, observing and expressing opinions about how it might be improved. In the wider aspects of geography, pupils' vocabulary and knowledge improves in a general sense but the improvement is not always related to the needs of the National Curriculum study units. Pupils in Year 3 use words associated with climate, such as *tropical* and *temperate* well and

pupils in Year 6 have a satisfactory number of opportunities to interpret graphs of weather data, such as identifying the wettest or driest months in various places. In both cases, however, enquiry work to establish who might need such information is not considered. These are missed opportunities to extend knowledge and use reasoning skills. Year 6 pupils make good use of information about mountain ranges from CD-ROMs to create a series of fact files for use in future lessons. Pupils' progress in knowing the effect humans have on landscape is satisfactory. Their visit to White Hall has a good impact on their progress in fieldwork and orienteering. The areas where pupils' progress is less secure are in the use and interpretation of Ordnance Survey maps and aerial photographs.

97. Only two lessons were seen in history and none in geography. On the basis of these lessons, teachers' planning, interviews with pupils and a scrutiny of pupils' work, teaching is satisfactory. However, there are weaknesses evident from the scrutiny of pupils' work. Teachers' tend to rely too heavily on commercially produced worksheets in both subjects and this has created a repetitive teaching method and limited opportunities for pupils to write independently. Consequently, some important skills are not as well developed as they could be and there are missed opportunities to use each subject to improve pupils' writing skills. The tasks pupils have to complete consist mostly of adding words or short captions to pictures and diagrams. This is not extending the skills of above average pupils. Analysis of pupils' earlier work in history shows that pupils are not given opportunities to re-tell stories or write about events from different points of view. The beneficial aspects of the approach used are improved factual knowledge, especially in history, and the introduction of some subject specific vocabulary for each subject. In both subjects, teachers also use visits into the local and wider area to develop pupils learning well.
98. Leadership and management of the two subjects are satisfactory. Useful schemes of work have been developed that give teachers information on the knowledge to be developed from year to year. However, teachers are not using the schemes consistently enough to build key geographical and historical skills from year to year. Each subject leader has created a sound development plan. These recognise the need for more regular use of information and communication technology. No assessment has been considered yet and this makes it difficult for teachers to build successfully on what pupils already know.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

99. By the age of eleven, standards are similar to national expectations and most pupils, including those with SEN, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. This is a similar judgement to that made in the last inspection. However, the school has done well to keep pace with the increasing national expectation.
100. There is a systematic approach to the subject, which ensures that pupils receive well planned opportunities to develop ICT skills in each year group. Resources have improved since the last inspection and the regular use of the computer suite enables pupils to develop their skills in communicating information well. However, there is still a lack of sufficient resources to enable pupils to benefit from a range of learning activities in ICT that are meaningful and purposeful to extend their learning in other subjects. The school is well aware of the need to upgrade its software programs and identify financial resources to build further on the improvements made recently.
101. Pupils develop skills in learning how to produce, amend and enhance text satisfactorily as they move through the school. By the age of eleven, they correct spelling, adjust the style and size of print and confidently combine text and graphics in different layouts to produce information. As pupils move through the school competence and confidence increase and they show an increasing awareness of audience as they structure, refine and present their work in ways that

are suitable for specific purposes. For example, pupils in Year 6 use a multi-media package to design a presentation leaflet for younger children.

102. Skills in handling information are sound. Pupils learn to use databases and spreadsheets accurately to record, add and retrieve information. Pupils in Year 5 access different menus, search techniques and input specific words to gain information on a particular subject. By the age of eleven most pupils select information they need for different purposes successfully. They retrieve it from relevant sources and present it in a suitable way. Pupils are beginning to use e-mail to communicate with other schools. As yet the full potential of the Internet to support pupils' learning has not been realised due to technical problems. This limits pupils' progress in this aspect of the subject.
103. Pupils make sound progress in extending their knowledge and understanding of control technology. For example, Year 6 pupils can enter a set of instructions to programme a set of traffic lights. They confidently use input devices and switches to control the process.
104. Teaching and learning in lessons in the computer suite are generally good. Work is well planned with clear learning objectives. Pupils respond with enthusiasm and work well together, sharing ideas and waiting patiently for their turn to learn new skills. Lessons are well organised to ensure that pupils receive a good level of individual support to enable them to gain new skills and concepts. Teachers achieve a good balance between whole class explanations and appropriate opportunities for pupils to work on their own tasks. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to use the skills acquired in the computer suite to enhance their learning in other subjects. There are few examples of pupils using CD-ROMs and the Internet to conduct independent research in subjects such as history and geography.
105. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has a clear vision of how she wants the subject to develop. As a result, she has made a clear analysis of the subject needs and is aware of the need to improve and obtain further resources and to ensure pupils' skills are developed more systematically across the curriculum. There has been little opportunity for her to monitor teaching and learning across the school in order to gain a clearer overview of strengths and weaknesses.

## MUSIC

106. Standards in music are similar to the last inspection and are in line with those expected nationally. All pupils, including those with SEN, make satisfactory progress. Boys and girls take an equal part in musical activities and their achievements are broadly similar.
107. As pupils enter assemblies the playing of an appropriate piece of music develops an appreciation of different composers. However, this is not always used as effectively as it could be and there are missed opportunities to use music to set a quiet and reflective atmosphere for worship. Pupils' singing is satisfactory and all pupils have opportunities to develop their singing skills through whole school singing. They sing with enthusiasm but insufficient attention is paid to encouraging pupils to sing with accuracy, expression, controlled phrasing and articulation.
108. In the lessons observed the teaching helps the pupils to improve their singing skills well. By the age of eleven, they develop an understanding of notation and melody, and sing with expression and clear diction. Pupils are encouraged to use accurate musical vocabulary when talking about their work and in answering questions posed by their teachers. Pupils make good progress in playing instruments and are developing good skills in composition, for example pupils in Year 4 collaborated well to create their own ostinato. Good teaching ensures that pupils have opportunities to reflect on their work and to evaluate their own and other's compositions in order

to make improvements. Their confidence was enhanced as they performed their work in front of parents, visitors and the whole school as part of a 'rewards' assembly.

109. In a Year 5 music lesson, the pupils identified how the composer used musical dynamics to add interest to his work. This was built on effectively as pupils worked together in pairs, to create their own four bar cyclical pattern based on a piece of Indian music. The resulting work was good as pupils' used simple notation and used different instruments to produce layers of patterns. Pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to develop further their skills in composition and performance. In groups they compose their own melody using the pentatonic scale to a set of given lyrics. The teachers' high expectations encouraged the pupils to regard themselves as performing musicians concentrating on improving their work through their knowledge of notation, tempo and pitch. Pupils used musical vocabulary accurately in talking about their work and in answering questions posed by their teachers. Pupils have good opportunities to reflect on their work and to evaluate their own and other's compositions in order to make improvements.
110. The quality of the teaching is good. Lessons are well planned, challenging and stimulating and include a good balance of performing, composing and appraising. Specialist teaching and the enthusiasm of teaching staff and support staff in formal lessons, assemblies and school clubs make a very positive contribution to pupils' attitudes and high standards. Leadership and management of the subject are sound. The co-ordinator has specialist skills that are used very effectively to develop staff confidence, raise expectations and ensure that the subject is enjoyable. This helps teachers to provide pupils with very good opportunities to extend their creative skills. Whole school assessment systems to record pupils' progress remain underdeveloped. Resources for the subject are satisfactory overall but there are insufficient instruments from other cultures to extend further pupils' skills, knowledge and appreciation. The school recorder groups provide an added dimension to pupils' musical development.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

111. The standard of work seen in gymnastics and dance is similar to that expected for pupils' age and the achievements of the pupils, including those who have SEN, are satisfactory. There is no significant difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the last inspection, although at that time only games and dance were observed. All pupils have the opportunity to go swimming each year and a good programme involving general water safety and swimming tuition is planned. School records indicate that the large majority of the pupils are able to swim the expected 25 metres by the age of eleven.
112. In both dance and gymnastic lessons pupils develop a good understanding of the effect of exercise on their bodies. Sound warm-up activities ensure that most lessons begin with a short period of sustained activity that exerts the pupils. Through this, they are taught how the heart beats faster and pumps blood more quickly around the body. Pupils also know that warm-up activities are important in loosening the muscles before the main activity. In a dance lesson involving the translation of the movements of imaginary machines to the rhythm of music, pupils in Year 3 build up simple sequences interpreting the movements satisfactorily. Above average pupils devise more complex sequences and perform them confidently for the rest of the class. Pupils in Year 6 use music well as a stimulus for linking football skills into a sequence of movements, for example, to show passing, kicking, jumping, heading and shooting skills in an imaginary game. In gymnastics, pupils in Year 4 show sound control when balancing on various parts of the body. Pupils with SEN are involved well and all perform good movements involving a balance-roll-balance sequence. Above average and average pupils mirror the movements of a partner well during the activity. Pupils in a Year 6 lesson transfer paired movements they have practised on the floor to work on apparatus such as beams. Above average pupils do this with good precision and co-ordination and achieve well.

113. Teaching is satisfactory overall, ranging from very good to poor. The teachers' enthusiasm for the subject transmits well to the pupils in most lessons. Pupils enjoy the activities and participate whole-heartedly. Teachers change appropriately for lessons and participate themselves. This sets a good example for the pupils and has a positive impact on their attitudes to the subject. In the most effective lessons, activities move at a good pace and keep pupil involvement high. There is good sharing of ideas and questioning that encourages pupils to reflect on their performance and high expectations of pupils' work rate. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, the teacher asks; *Why do you think that movement was good?* and in a Year 4 lesson the teacher asks; *How many balances do you think I am going to be satisfied with?* In a Year 5 lesson, all the pupils made particularly good progress. This was because the teachers' good subject knowledge and class management ensured that the correct techniques were demonstrated, clear instructions were given and pupils worked quietly. Where lessons have shortcomings pupils become too noisy and do not pay sufficient attention and there are missed opportunities to show pupils good quality work and how their own work might be improved.
114. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. A sound scheme of work has been developed using national guidelines linked to school schemes. This gives a good degree of continuity of skill development within the various units of work. In some year groups there is good sharing of expertise with one teacher taking other classes within the year. Assessment systems were judged to be underdeveloped at the time of the last inspection and there has been insufficient progress with this. There is no consistently used whole-school approach to recording pupils' progress. The school participates in sports activities against other schools and the competitive element in these activities makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development, enthusiasm for sport and games, and skills.
115. The school hall and outside play areas are not conducive to the development of physical education, being too small and having poor surfaces. The hall is narrow and has little storage space and the floor vibrates badly. There is no fixed climbing apparatus and this restricts the opportunities for pupils to work at height. The lack of large apparatus and the accommodation has a detrimental effect on standards in the subject.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

116. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when agreed syllabus requirements were not being covered in classes for the older pupils. The improvement results from the enthusiastic work of the co-ordinator, who has brought together the agreed syllabus requirements and national guidance materials. The staff have all been involved in helping to produce the useful scheme of work and all are now teaching the subject with more confidence. As a result there is now satisfactory teaching throughout the school and pupils' achievements, whatever their abilities, are now sound.
117. Pupils in Year 3 make good use of photographic resources as they extend their knowledge of Bethlehem when they begin their study of the Christmas story. They write good imaginary postcards to someone to explain the differences in the town now compared to when Jesus was born. Pupils in Year 4 watch a video of the life of Moses as part of their study of the leaders of people. They confirm their understanding of the qualities of a leader in their verbal follow up. However, opportunities are then missed to extend the written responses of the above average and average pupils as they are expected only to match words to pictures as they work in pairs. Comparisons with their own lifestyle and those who follow the Jewish faith are drawn out in Year 5. Again resources such as the Tallit and Torah are used well to illustrate differences. Pupil's tangible understanding increases in consequence. Pupils in Year 6 begin to research more meaningfully as their teacher produces a wide range of books for them to interrogate as they consider the traditions of harvest in different religions. The pupils work in groups as they

find out about Judaism, Sikhism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity to a growing depth of understanding. In the lessons observed, the range of opportunities being given was appropriate. However, the small sample of work from classes throughout the school shows that there is still too much reliance upon the use of worksheets as the form of recording knowledge and understanding. This is a missed opportunity to develop writing skills that would confirm more appropriately pupils learning from religion.

118. Pupils are interested in religious education and work well in lessons. They concentrate industriously, particularly when working in pairs or small groups.
119. Planning has improved since the last inspection and all teachers now use the local agreed syllabus as their planning base. This is not yet impacting on the development of key skills as pupils move through the school. There are pockets of good work but they are not linked effectively from year to year in order to develop these key skills progressively. There are no consistently used assessment systems to record pupils' progress in the subject. An appropriate number of artefacts and materials support learning in most of the religions in the syllabus. The co-ordinator has supplemented some of these by producing information from the Internet as he recognises the need to continue to provide resources for all religions. In a thoughtful action plan for the subject he is also clear that there is a need to continue to support colleagues by reviewing the provision, particularly focusing on the need to develop the spirituality of the subject so that pupils are learning more from religion. The school is well placed to take this forward and so increase the impact that religious education has upon the quality of pupils' learning.