

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ELLISTOWN COMMUNITY PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Ellistown

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 119914

Headteacher: Mr. A. Cotton

Reporting inspector: Mr. M. Thompson  
25372

Dates of inspection: 21 – 25 May 2001

Inspection number: 195488

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Whitehill Road  
Ellistown  
Coalville  
Leicestershire

Postcode: LE67 1EN

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs. P. Burbidge

Date of previous inspection: January 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members |                |                             | Subject responsibilities                                                     | Aspect responsibilities                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------|----------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 25372        | Mike Thompson  | <i>Registered inspector</i> | Science; Information and communication technology; Art and design; Music.    | What sort of school is it?<br>The school's results and pupils' achievements.<br>How well is the school led and managed?<br>What should the school do to improve further? |
| 12387        | Diane Willson  | <i>Lay inspector</i>        |                                                                              | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.<br>How well does the school care for its pupils?<br>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?       |
| 23658        | Stephen Parker | <i>Team inspector</i>       | Special educational needs; English; Geography; History; Religious education. | How well are pupils taught?                                                                                                                                              |
| 18241        | Wendy Harknett | <i>Team inspector</i>       | The Foundation Stage; Mathematics; Design and technology.                    | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?                                                                                                   |
| 1710         | Thelma Edwards | <i>Team inspector</i>       | Equal opportunities; English as an additional language; Physical education.  |                                                                                                                                                                          |

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Ellistown Primary School is situated in the centre of the former mining village of Ellistown, some two miles to the south of Coalville. The buildings date from 1915 and share the site with an adjoining community centre built in the early 1980's. The school role has risen by 40 per cent since 1995, and housing developments currently underway within the village will result in a further significant increase in the number of pupils. Plans for large extensions to the school have been approved and building work is ready to begin.

The school is smaller than most. There are 164 pupils on roll, taught in six classes. There are four single-age classes for reception and Years 1, 2 and 3, and two mixed-age classes for pupils in Years 4 and 5, and Years 5 and 6. Although most pupils are from Ellistown, about 15 per cent come from surrounding villages. Twenty-three per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs. This proportion is slightly above the national average. Five pupils have statements of special need, which entitle them to extra help. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, at 13 per cent, is broadly average. Almost all pupils are of white, UK heritage.

Children are admitted to the reception class, as four year olds, in two intakes. These are in September, for children whose fifth birthday falls between September and February, and in January for those whose fifth birthdays are between March and August. Shortly after admission, children in the reception class are assessed, using a nationally accredited 'baseline assessment'. Results of assessments administered show that the profile of attainment on entry has improved over the past four years, and the most recent group of children tested was above average. Overall, attainment on entry is about average.

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

This is an improving and effective school that gives sound value for money. The headteacher provides very clear educational direction and shows a strong commitment to raising attainment. A number of initiatives, introduced during the two years since his appointment, are beginning to make a difference, but have yet to impact on the standards achieved by 11 year olds. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress and, by the age of 11, achieve average levels in most subjects as a result of sound teaching.

## WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Standards in mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology and geography are above average at the end of Key Stage 1, because pupils in this key stage are well taught.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well taught when withdrawn from lessons. Overall, these pupils make good progress.
- Pupils are keen and enthusiastic. They behave well and achieve good standards of personal development.
- The school plays an important part in the life of the community and has developed very good links with parents.
- The school cares for its pupils very well. Its provision for pupils' moral development is very good and it caters well for pupils' social development.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide very good leadership and management.

## WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards in English and information and communication technology at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The way in which teachers in Key Stage 2 use information about pupils' attainment to plan what pupils should learn next and match work to pupils' different abilities.
- The marking of pupils' work at Key Stage 2.
- Outdoor play for children in the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup>.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, the school has made good progress since its last inspection in 1997. The key issues identified in the inspection report have all been addressed. These issues related to:

- raising standards in design and technology;
- developing an Early Years' policy;
- providing opportunities and resources for the physical development of the under fives;
- developing schemes of work in all subjects.

Standards in design and technology have significantly improved and are now above average at the end of both key stages. A policy for the Early Years, now known as the Foundation Stage, has been agreed and implemented. This policy, together with the scheme of work for the Foundation Stage, includes a focus on children's physical development. The school has invested in a range of new play equipment, but there is still no separate outdoor play area for children under five. There are now agreed schemes of work in place in all subjects.

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<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three. Children complete the Foundation Stage at the end of the reception year.

Standards achieved by seven year olds have generally improved as a result of very good teaching in this year group. Pupils identified as having special educational needs make better progress because of very good teaching when they are withdrawn from lessons for specialist help. Procedures for assessing pupils are better, as are arrangements for their day-to-day care and welfare. Improvements in the provision for pupils' moral and social development are to be seen in the orderly and caring environment in which pupils work and play.

## STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | Compared with |      |      |                 |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
|                 | all schools   |      |      | similar schools |
|                 | 1998          | 1999 | 2000 | 2000            |
| English         | E             | D    | E    | E               |
| mathematics     | A             | C    | D    | E               |
| science         | B             | C    | E    | E               |

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

The information shows that standards achieved in mathematics in the national tests in the Year 2000 were below average, and well below average in comparison with standards achieved by similar schools, with about the same proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Over the previous two years, results in mathematics and science have been average or better. In these subjects, the decline in the average points scored in 2000 was mainly due to the large number of pupils with special educational needs in the group of pupils tested. However, the average points scored in English have been below or well below average each year. To some extent, this has been because the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 each year has been low. The year-on year trend of the school's overall average points score in the national tests is below the national trend.

Inspection evidence shows that the results likely to have been achieved by 11 year olds in the most recent national tests will be better than those achieved in 2000. The evidence suggests that they will be close to those of 1999, with average standards in mathematics and science but below average attainment in English. In English and mathematics, the school is on course to achieve the significantly higher targets set for performance in 2001. In design and technology, attainment is better than in the other foundation subjects,<sup>2</sup> and is above what is expected of eleven year olds. In art and design, geography, history, music and religious education, standards are about average. However, standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below average. This is because pupils do not have frequent enough opportunities to practise and develop their skills. In physical education (PE), no lessons were observed in Year 6 and therefore no judgement about attainment can be made. However, swimming records show that standards in this area of the PE curriculum are well above average. Over time, pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress in design and technology and satisfactory progress in all other areas of the curriculum except writing and ICT.

<sup>2</sup> Foundation subjects are those other than the 'core' subjects of English, mathematics and science.

In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology and geography and, by the age of seven, achieve standards above those expected nationally. In all other subjects, pupils at this key stage make satisfactory progress and achieve average standards.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Attitudes to the school                | Pupils enjoy coming to school and being at school.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Overall, behaviour is good. It is very good at Key Stage 1. When work is not well matched to pupils' needs they can sometimes become restless.                                                                                                     |
| Personal development and relationships | Relationships are very good. When given jobs to do, pupils carry out their duties conscientiously. However, teachers sometimes direct pupils too much. When this happens, pupils have few opportunities to develop skills of independent learning. |
| Attendance                             | Satisfactory.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils:  | aged up to 5 years | aged 5-7 years | aged 7-11 years |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Lessons seen overall | Satisfactory       | Good           | Satisfactory    |

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, with good teaching or better in half of all lessons, and very good or excellent in a quarter. Teaching was unsatisfactory in three lessons, all in Key Stage 2. Standards have improved since the last inspection because of higher proportions of very good and excellent teaching. The best teaching is to be found in Key Stage 1. Teaching of English is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Teaching of mathematics is very good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2.

Strengths of teaching in all classes are that teachers clearly identify what is to be taught, enjoy good relationships with their pupils, and are often enthusiastic about what they teach. As a result, learning is enjoyable and lessons generally develop at a good pace.

Teaching is better at Key Stage 1 because teachers are better at providing achievable challenges for pupils of different attainment within their classes, and because they have higher expectations of their pupils. By contrast, much of the teaching at Key Stage 2 is targeted at pupils of average ability. Lower-attaining pupils are given extra help, but higher-attainers are not challenged enough in most lessons. The school has identified the need to provide greater challenge for its higher-attaining pupils, and groups are withdrawn once a week for specialist teaching provided by the headteacher.

The quality of teachers' marking also varies between key stages. Marking is generally good in Key Stage 1, but in Key Stage 2 marking is inconsistent and there is little evidence of pupils learning as a result of teachers' assessments of the mistakes they make.

Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are well taught in Key Stage 1 and satisfactorily taught in Key Stage 2. Pupils with special needs are very well taught when they are withdrawn for sessions as individuals, or in small groups, with a specialist teacher.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect                                                                                      | Comment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The quality and range of the curriculum                                                     | The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. A good feature of this school is the way in which it enriches pupils' learning through educational visits and community projects.                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs                                         | Good overall. Provision is very good for pupils withdrawn from lessons for teaching by specialists.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language                                 | The few pupils with English as an additional language are very well integrated into the school. They make good progress and play a full part in all activities.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development and good provision for their social development. Arrangements for developing pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness are satisfactory.                                                                                                                                                             |
| How well the school cares for its pupils                                                    | Arrangements for the day-to-day care and welfare of pupils are very good. The school's systems for assessing pupils' academic progress are also very good. However, teachers in Key Stage 2 do not make enough use of the information gained from these assessments, to plan what pupils are to learn next and to match work to the different abilities of the pupils. |

The school's partnership with parents is very effective.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect                                                           | Comment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher has made a significant impact on the work of the school since his appointment. He and the deputy headteacher work very well together, set high standards, and provide very strong leadership. However, not all teachers monitor their areas of responsibility rigorously enough. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | The governors are committed and supportive, and are developing a good understanding of their role. They ensure that legal requirements are fully met.                                                                                                                                            |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | The headteacher and deputy headteacher evaluate the work of the school very well.                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | The school uses its staff, accommodation and equipment well, and makes good use of funds allocated for specific purposes.                                                                                                                                                                        |

The governors are beginning to apply the principles of 'best value' satisfactorily when making decisions. Children under five lack a separate play area, and opportunities for them to develop their physical skills are therefore more limited than in most schools.

## 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 coming to school.</li> <li>• Teachers have high expectations, and the children are well taught and make good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>• The school keeps them well informed and they find the teachers approachable.</li> <li>• The school works closely with them and helps their children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Their children get the right amount of homework.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities provided outside lessons.</li> </ul> |

Inspectors' judgements support almost all of the parents' positive views. However, not all teachers have consistently high expectations of their pupils, and in some classes the same work is provided for all pupils regardless of their ability. When this happens, some pupils do not make good progress. Inspectors' judgements do not support the views expressed about the range of activities provided outside lessons. The range of extra-curricular activities is better than in most schools of a similar size.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Results of the national tests in 2000 show that the average scores achieved by 11 year olds were below the national average in mathematics and well below average in English and science. When the school's results are compared with those of similar schools, with about the same proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards are well below average in all three subjects. Over the previous three years, results declined in mathematics and science and remained below or well below average in English. Overall, the trend in the school's average points for the three subjects was below the national trend. However, the results of the tests for 2000 need to be treated with some caution because the small group tested contained a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Data provided by the school shows that it will achieve significantly better results this year and will come close to reaching the much higher performance targets set for English and mathematics.

2. Test results at the end of Key Stage 2 over the past three years show girls out-performing boys in achieving the national target of Level 4. However, at the higher Level 5 there is no difference in performance. The school has looked closely at the issue and cannot find any particular reason for this. During the course of the inspection, there was no difference between the performance of boys and girls.

3. Results of the national tests for seven year olds in 2000 were much better than those for 11 year olds. In these tests, the average scores achieved in reading were above the national average, while in writing and mathematics standards were average. When the results are compared with those of schools in similar circumstances, standards are average in all three areas tested. Results generally improved over the previous three years, with the exception of well below average performance in mathematics in 1999. Again, the results need to be treated with a degree of caution because the numbers of pupils tested in some of the years were small. Early indications are that the proportion of pupils achieving the national target of Level 2 in the most recent tests is at least as high as in the previous year, but no national comparisons can be made at this point.

4. Year-on-year comparisons of performance of different year groups are difficult to make because of the effects of the rising number on roll. This means that some of the pupils tested each year are relatively new or may only have been at the school for a few years. For example, one third of the pupils in Year 6 have joined the school within the past three years. The school is particularly good at analysing its performance in the national tests, and has data to show that pupils who have received all of their education at the school perform significantly better than those who have not.

5. Inspection findings broadly reflect the results of the national tests in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. At the end of Key Stage 2, the attainment of 11 year olds is below average in English and average in mathematics and science. Attainment in English is below average because there are too few pupils performing at the higher Level 5 in speaking and in writing. In the other subjects, attainment is above average in design and technology,

average in art and design, geography, history and music, and below average in information and communication technology. Standards are below average in ICT because there is not enough direct whole-class teaching of skills, and because pupils do not have regular enough opportunities to use computers. No judgement can be made about attainment in physical education, because no lessons were observed at the end of the Key Stage. However, records of pupils' achievements in swimming show that standards in this element of PE are well above average. In religious education (RE), standards are in line with those expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus.

6. Standards are better at the end of Key Stage 1 as a result of the consistently good quality of teaching in this key stage. The attainment of seven year olds is average in English, but above average in mathematics and science. In the foundation subjects, attainment is above average in art and design, design and technology, and geography, and average in history, ICT, music and PE. Standards in RE are in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus.

7. Standards in design and technology have improved significantly since the previous inspection at the end of both key stages. Previously, they were judged to be below average.

8. Shortly after children start school in the reception year, their skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening, mathematics and personal and social development are assessed by means of a nationally accredited 'baseline assessment'. Over the past few years, the attainment of the youngest children entering the school has slowly improved, reflecting the gradually changing character of the local area. Data from the most recent assessments shows that attainment on entry is now slightly above average. When data relating to all other year groups is taken as a whole, attainment on entry over time is average.

9. Children quickly settle into school because of the good induction procedures. Overall, they make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage year, although activities are sometimes so tightly structured that children are not given enough opportunities to develop independence and initiative. The lack of a separate play area for these youngest children results in fewer opportunities for outdoor learning than in most schools.

10. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress over time as they move through both key stages. However, progress in Key Stage 1 is good in mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology and geography. Progress is generally better in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2 because the teachers are better at using information gained from their assessments of pupils to plan what they are to do next. A good example of this practice was observed in a Year 1 lesson in which the teacher found out what pupils already knew during her introduction to a science topic about 'light and dark'. This information enabled her to plan future work from the pupils' starting point. The good use of assessment information in Key Stage 1 means that teachers provide work to challenge pupils of different abilities within their classes. This is not always the case in Key Stage 2. In many lessons in this key stage, all pupils complete the same basic tasks, regardless of ability. Teaching tends to be targeted at pupils of average ability, with extra help provided for lower-attainers. This is a likely explanation for the school's disappointing performance in terms of the proportion of pupils achieving above average levels in the national tests. The school has identified the need to provide more challenges for its potentially higher-attaining pupils, and these pupils are taught by the headteacher for part of a morning session each week.

11. A further factor that significantly affects the progress made by pupils at Key Stage 2 is the quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work. In contrast to the good use of constructive comments seen in the books of pupils in Key Stage 1, marking of work in the older classes at Key Stage 2 is brief. The present system of giving a grade for the work fully complies with the school's marking policy, but it is not useful to pupils because the grades awarded do not always reflect the quality of the completed assignment. For instance, when pupils' science books were scrutinised, the grades awarded for some of the best work, produced by higher-attaining pupils, were sometimes lower than those awarded for work of a lower quality produced by pupils of average or lower ability. Teachers' written comments are generally lacking, and therefore pupils are not given a clear idea of what they are doing well, and what needs to be improved.

12. In some subjects, the progress of older pupils is affected by the cramped working conditions and lack of basic facilities such as a mains water supply and practical activity areas. For example, work in art and investigative and experimental activities of any nature are all difficult to do in the 'temporary' classrooms.

13. Pupils make sound progress in developing skills in literacy at Key Stage 1. All pupils listen well, and show understanding by being able to follow instructions. By the age of seven, many pupils speak clearly, and those with higher attainment can often articulate their views at greater length. However, a few pupils have a more limited vocabulary and do not always use Standard English. Skills in speaking develop steadily as pupils grow in confidence and maturity, and by the age of 11 most achieve expected standards, using formal language appropriately and technical terms correctly. However, few 11 year olds have above average skills in speaking. Skills in reading develop satisfactorily in both key stages. Pupils aged seven have a sound understanding of what they read, and reading books are generally well matched to their ability. Those with higher attainment read aloud well, emphasising the meaning and dramatising characters. By the age of 11, pupils read longer texts silently and with good concentration. They understand what they have read, and attempt to read aloud with expression. Knowledge of how to find books in a library is satisfactory, and most pupils are confident in using non-fiction books to find information, which helps them to learn in other subjects. Skills in writing develop satisfactorily in Key Stage 1, but progress slows in Key Stage 2. By the age of seven, basic rules of punctuation and spelling are soundly established, and most pupils are able to express themselves clearly through their writing. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils learn to write for an increasingly wide range of purposes, including letters, stories, book reviews and news reports. However, not enough poetry is attempted, and not enough emphasis is placed on pupils' planning, redrafting and proof-reading their own work. Not all teachers are following the recommended teaching approaches of the National Literacy Strategy, and this also affects pupils' progress in Key Stage 2.

14. Pupils' skills in numeracy develop well at Key Stage 1, because pupils' understanding of number and their skills in using numbers are regularly practised in a range of subjects. Although satisfactory overall, progress slows at Key Stage 2 because not enough emphasis is placed on using and applying mathematical skills and knowledge.

15. Skills of scientific enquiry develop well at Key Stage 1 and satisfactorily at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1 pupils develop a basic understanding of simple scientific principles and learn how to record their answers in a logical way. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 2 are developing a sound understanding of what 'fair testing' means, and are able to make simple

hypotheses which they later test out. The progress of pupils in the older Key Stage 2 classes is uneven, because of the way in which the subject is taught. In general, the youngest and less able pupils in these mixed-age classes make the best progress.

16. Teachers in Key Stage 1 are particularly good at making links between different subjects. The best examples of this practice are seen in Year 2. As a result, pupils are given many opportunities to develop 'core' skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT across the breadth of the curriculum. In Key Stage 2 this practice is not as well developed and, in ICT in particular, the result is a slower than average rate of progress.

17. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, and very good progress when they are withdrawn for individual or small group tuition. Their needs are identified as soon as possible after entry to the school so that clear individual education plans can be designed for them. Targets in these plans are specific and suitably challenging for their academic and personal development. Careful monitoring of their progress leads to regular adjustment of the targets so that good quality learning is sustained. The school has also identified gifted and talented pupils, and a group in each key stage is withdrawn once a week for a challenging extension programme. They make very good progress at these times. Generally, though, there is not enough challenge for older pupils with potentially higher attainment in their normal lessons.

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

18. Pupils enjoy coming to school and being at school. Of those parents who returned their questionnaires, virtually all reported that their children like school and that behaviour is good.

19. Overall, pupils' attitudes to school are good. They display a keen interest in activities and mostly find lessons stimulating, particularly in Key Stage 1. For example, during a Year 2 geography lesson, the teacher shared her knowledge and experience of France during a discussion about Paris. Pupils joined in enthusiastically and were able to make links with their previous work in art, history, and music. Pupils are well motivated, respond well to teachers' questions and concentrate for reasonable periods of time, even when teaching is less inspiring. Many are able to think creatively and solve problems on their own, when given the opportunity to do so. Pupils work well together. Their good collaboration ensures that learning can take place even in cramped conditions, such as in gymnastics lessons in the hall, which involve the use of large apparatus.

20. Overall, the behaviour of pupils is good both in and around the school. Pupils pay careful attention to the school's Code of Conduct, and this has a positive effect on their learning. Behaviour is significantly better in Key Stage 1, and this is closely linked to the consistent high quality of teaching. All pupils understand that their actions affect others and accept responsibility for them, but there are times when pupils do not always listen well to each other during class discussions. Pupils of all ages play well together in the playground. No incidents of inappropriate behaviour were seen during the inspection, and incidents of bullying or aggressive behaviour are rare. No incidents of sexism or racism have been reported and no pupils have been excluded in the past year.

21. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils relate well to each other and to all adults in the school. Pupils are polite, friendly and well mannered. They show respect for one another's values and beliefs, and appreciate the needs and feelings of others.

22. Pupils respond well to opportunities for their personal development. They are trustworthy and eager to take on responsibility, volunteering for numerous duties to aid the smooth running of the school. Some of these include picking up litter, maintaining the school library, being responsible for play equipment during lunch break, and helping to distribute registers before the start of the school day. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning by planning and organising their own work, particularly in Key Stage 2.

23. The rate of attendance is just satisfactory. Levels of attendance for the year May 1999 to May 2000, at 92.5 per cent, were below the national average of 94.4 per cent. However, the figures for the current year show an increase to 93.6 per cent. Although it is too soon for national comparisons, it is likely that the school may still fall below the national average. Analysis of this year's attendance shows that the majority of absences were recorded by two pupils from a traveller family, a pupil with severe health problems, and an unusually high proportion of pupils who were unwell during two weeks in February. The school does have concerns about some pupils whose progress and learning are interrupted due to holidays being taken during the school term. The school has no unauthorised absences. Registration is taken quickly and efficiently. The great majority of pupils arrive at school on time and lessons start promptly.

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

24. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, with good teaching or better in half of all lessons, and very good or excellent in a quarter. Teaching was unsatisfactory in three lessons, all in Key Stage 2. Standards have improved since the last inspection because of higher proportions of very good and excellent teaching. Teaching is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage, good at Key Stage 1, and satisfactory at Key Stage 2.

25. A significant strength of the teaching is the good relationships teachers have with their pupils. This begins in the Foundation Stage, where the teacher has a good rapport with the children while setting clear expectations for their behaviour. As a result, children behave well and make good progress in their social development. Throughout the school, lessons are generally harmonious and purposeful so that learning is a pleasurable experience.

26. Teachers have at least sound subject knowledge across the curriculum, and base their teaching on nationally recommended schemes of work. Basic skills in reading and mathematics are well taught in Key Stage 1, reflecting the guidance of the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in reaching above average standards in these subjects, as well as in science, art and design, design and technology and geography. It is a strong feature of many lessons through the school that teachers show their own enthusiasm for the subject being taught, and this has a powerful effect on pupils' interest and motivation. It was to be seen, for example, in teachers' skilful dramatic readings of stories and poetry in several classes, including the foundation class and

Year 6. It was also evident in the teacher's showing of her photograph album to illustrate a visit to France in a Year 2 geography lesson. Teachers' expertise in information and communication technology is limited but still satisfactory, and further training has been arranged.

27. Teachers' lesson plans in all classes are successful in identifying specific targets for each lesson and in detailing the main activities. Where appropriate, lesson plans also identify the role of teaching assistants, so helping them to play an effective part in supporting pupils' learning. In an excellent English lesson in Year 3, the determination with which the targets were taught, and the care given to checking pupils' progress through the lesson, led to a high quality of learning by pupils at all levels. Generally, though, planning in Key Stage 1 is significantly better than in Key Stage 2 because it identifies different tasks for groups at different levels of attainment. What is expected of each group is clearly specified and is appropriately challenging for their level of attainment, so that pupils in each group make good progress. It is the closer match of tasks to pupils' needs that underpins the more effective teaching in Key Stage 1. By contrast, planning in Key Stage 2 does not take such close account of the needs of different attainment groups, and this is a weakness. The tasks set are generally most appropriate for pupils with average attainment. Those with below average attainment are generally given extra help, but those with higher attainment are not consistently given work at the higher levels identified for their age in the National Curriculum. Lack of suitable challenge was the cause of pupils' inattention during the main task in an unsatisfactory mathematics lesson in Key Stage 2. More opportunities are needed for older pupils to carry out individual enquiries and organise their results in a variety of ways. Some use is made of the Internet as a research tool, and use of the library is being developed as its stock is expanded.

28. Pupils with special needs are very well taught when they are withdrawn for sessions as individuals or in small groups with a specialist teacher. The work is planned in detail to meet their needs. The atmosphere is calm, quiet and reassuring, which helps them to concentrate without fear of failure. When these pupils return to normal lessons, teachers use the targets in their individual education plans to ensure they have appropriate tasks and support. Their progress is carefully monitored and adjustments made to their individual education plans so that future lessons meet their needs. The very small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language are also well catered for and make good progress. The school has also begun a register of gifted and talented pupils. A group in each key stage is withdrawn once a week for a challenging extension programme taught by the headteacher, who has had professional training for the purpose. They make very good progress at these times. Generally, though, there is not enough challenge in their normal lessons for older pupils with higher attainment.

29. Activities are well managed in most lessons. Discussions are used well to open the lesson, and teachers use searching questions to check prior learning and probe understanding. The board is used well to focus attention, and in some instances pupils write their answers on their own mini-boards, which allow the teacher to quickly check that all have understood. Resources are generally well chosen to illustrate key principles of the subject, though not enough resources and materials were available to keep pupils on task in an unsatisfactory art lesson in Key Stage 2. Routines are well established so that pupils know what is expected of them and can help in the orderly running of the class. As a result, changes of activity are efficient and time is used effectively for the most part, though a queue of pupils waiting for the

teacher's attention led to unsatisfactory behaviour in a mathematics lesson in Key Stage 2. The routines and rotas of the literacy hour are followed more exactly in Key Stage 1, and these pupils are more confident in working independently than many older pupils in Key Stage 2. Overall, pupils behave well during independent work, so they sustain a satisfactory pace and produce work of a consistent standard.

30. Many lessons end with a review of pupils' learning, and this is effectively used at times. For example, in the withdrawal group for talented and gifted pupils, two pupils took on the role of spokesperson for their group and explained their group's reasoning to the class. Since the task had been very complex, their summary was a challenging exercise. In other lessons, though, not enough time is allowed for such an explanation of learning or for pupils' misunderstandings to be corrected. There is wide variation in the standard of teachers' marking. At best, teachers respond sensitively to pupils' ideas, give encouragement, and identify the main weaknesses that need attention. On occasions, though, work is given a grade with no explanation, and pupils do not therefore know clearly enough what standards they are reaching. Generally, much of the impact of marking is lost because pupils are not routinely required to do corrections or other follow-up work at Key Stage 2.

31. Learning in school is extended through a satisfactory timetable of homework, which increases through the school. The main focus is on basic skills in English and mathematics, and teachers set additional tasks on occasion to allow keen pupils to take their learning further.

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

32. The curriculum offered by the school is appropriately broad and balanced. It meets National Curriculum requirements and the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The range and quality of the curriculum have improved since the last inspection, and there are now schemes of work for all subjects. These have been developed from national guidance and help pupils to make progress in their academic and personal development. Provision for design and technology has improved and is now a strength of the school. An Early Years' policy has been devised and implemented. This is being further developed in line with the Early Learning Goals which pupils are expected to attain by the end of Reception year. Each subject is allocated sufficient curriculum time. The school has made the decision to allocate extra time to physical education, in order to develop the pupils' physical skills as well as their academic learning.

33. Provision for pupils with special needs has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Each pupil has an individual education plan which is carefully designed to meet the needs of that pupil, taking account of background, personality and learning style. Close teamwork between class teachers, the special needs teacher and learning support assistants ensures that the targets in pupils' plans are covered in lessons and withdrawal sessions. Class teachers plan appropriate tasks in all subjects so that these pupils play a full part in lessons. They are withdrawn regularly from lessons for brief sessions of intensive instruction. The school changes the timing of withdrawal regularly so that they do not miss teaching in one subject more than others.

34. The National Literacy and Numeracy strategies have been introduced satisfactorily, and are beginning to have a positive effect on raising standards in English and mathematics. Literacy and numeracy skills are extended to some extent in other lessons, for instance in the use of evaluation reports in design and technology or the use of symmetry in art and design. However, these opportunities are not developed in a systematic, planned way across the whole curriculum. For example, there is little evidence of extended writing in any subject.

35. Extra-curricular provision is good, with a growing range of after-school activities that are giving a positive experience to pupils, especially in Years 3 to 6. Regular, weekly activities are largely of a sporting nature and include basketball, line dancing and, according to the season, athletics, cricket and football. Further enhancement of the curriculum is provided through activities such as peripatetic music tuition, musical performances and community projects.

36. The sound curriculum structure helps to ensure equality of opportunity for most pupils. However, evidence from the work completed over the course of the year shows that Year 5 pupils do not have an equal entitlement and that their curriculum depends on their teaching group. Some of these pupils are taught with Year 6 while others are with Year 4. The school has had to deal with the problem of split year groups for a number of years, and teachers' planning ensures that pupils in these year groups do not experience the same curriculum during the subsequent year. As the roll is increasing, the school anticipates that all pupils will be in single age classes next year.

37. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PHSE), is satisfactory. Programmes for developing the pupils' understanding of healthy living and drugs misuse, together with sex education, have become firmly established. These programmes include sessions with the school nurse, the local 'Life Caravan', and a drugs action group, and in science lessons. The PHSE policy is being reviewed and updated by the school.

38. Links with the community are strengths of the school. The school is at the heart of it, and the community centre is on site. The school works very effectively with many local groups, such as the playgroup, and actively seeks further opportunities to extend the community network. These range from a pre-school parent and toddler library club which meets in the Reception class each week to pupils working with a sculptor on the Millennium Sculpture in the village centre. There has been participation in wider community events, such as pupils singing with the BBC Philharmonic as part of a National Forest project. These have helped to raise the expectations of pupils beyond their immediate environment.

39. The school is part of a local cluster of schools which works with pupils on a 'bridging project'. This is effective in enabling a smooth transition between primary and secondary schools and it involves project work in the locality.

40. The school has maintained its satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development. The statutory requirements for collective worship are met. Assemblies and the programme for religious education give pupils opportunities to reflect on their own lives and those of others. However, there is no consistent provision across the curriculum. Sometimes plenary sessions, when learning is reviewed at the end of lessons, are short, and opportunities for pupils to reflect on their work are therefore missed.

41. Provision for pupils' moral development has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. The Code of Conduct, 'Be Tidy, Be Independent, Be Well Mannered, Be Helpful' is clearly displayed throughout the school and pupils are rewarded for their efforts each week in a Friday assembly. An entry into the Discipline Book is discussed fully with the pupil concerned, and contact is made with parents. Pupils' moral development is reinforced through assemblies and personal and social education lessons. For example, in a Year 5 and 6 lesson, pupils were given the task of discussing the moral dilemma of a girl who found herself committed to two different events on the same day, so that she would have to let people down whichever she chose. Pupils were faced with thinking about which one she should choose and what would be the repercussions. Pupils are encouraged to be self-disciplined; the nature of the layout of the school site means that high expectations are placed on the older pupils to behave sensibly when moving between buildings.

42. The arrangements for pupils' social development are good and have improved since the last inspection. Pupils are encouraged to relate positively to one another. Pupils of all ages are given a range of responsibilities to help teachers and aid the smooth running of the school. They take part in fund raising for national and local charities. The school's strong links with the community provide good opportunities for pupils' social development. At present, they give Christmas performances for the adjoining playgroup and for the elderly. Pupils have been involved in local issues such as drawing up ideas for the local playground, and taking part in an arts project to create a sculpture for the village centre. School visits, both day and residential, offer very good opportunities for personal development. However, teachers do not provide enough opportunities, particularly in Key Stage 2, for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and to show initiative.

43. Provision for pupils' cultural development remains satisfactory. The school effectively promotes many aspects of pupils' own cultural traditions. Pupils' awareness of the theatre is developed through visiting theatre groups. Their understanding of music is enhanced through activities such as listening to a different composer each week in assembly and the opportunity to take part in producing a compact disc with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra. Their appreciation of different styles of artists, visits to art galleries and a visit from an artist in residence help them to develop their knowledge and skills in art. A visit to the Belgrave Road in Leicester, and an Indian dance demonstration, gave pupils good opportunities to learn about another culture and traditions. However, there is only limited evidence of planned opportunities for pupils to learn of other cultural traditions, particularly those of non-western societies.

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

44. The school has sustained the high standards of care for its pupils. Child protection procedures are firmly in place and training of staff is up to date. Any pupils who are causing concern are carefully monitored. All members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are trained in first aid procedures, and three hold a full certificate. Regular safety audits and risk assessments are carried out and carefully recorded in detail. The school site, both inside and out, is kept clean and tidy and provides a safe environment for pupils.

45. Procedures to monitor and promote good attendance are excellent. Parents are made aware of the need for regular attendance and are encouraged not to take their child out of school during term time for their annual holiday. The headteacher regularly monitors registers for patterns of absence and has very good knowledge of the attendance of individual pupils. The school secretary endeavours to make 'first day contact' when the reason for a child's absence is unknown. Attendance in registers is regularly totalled, both as a class and for individual pupils.

46. There are very good arrangements for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The school's Code of Conduct is clear and precise and is prominently displayed throughout the school. At each Friday assembly, pupils' names are attached under the four relevant branches of the 'Golden Tree', which bear the four codes of conduct. Names are entered into the 'Golden Book', and there are 'Best Yet' weekly awards and commendations. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour are carefully recorded and monitored. Very good procedures are in place to deal with any incidents of bullying should they occur. The school takes such incidents seriously, and they are dealt with quickly and effectively.

47. Overall, the procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. The school has recently introduced a system to record and monitor individual achievement and progress for each cohort of pupils, though this has not been in place long enough for the data produced to be analysed. Pupils' personal development is mostly monitored in an informal way; this is based on the good knowledge the headteacher and all teachers have of the pupils.

48. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. Very detailed information is collected from statutory and optional tests, and the performance of individual pupils and of year groups is carefully tracked, particularly in numeracy and literacy.

49. Attainment targets for all subjects are recorded for each pupil. Pupils' work is sampled, identifying ability and gender. This enables the school to establish whole school targets and identify any areas of the curriculum which need developing, in order to inform the school's strategic plan for improvement. However, marking at the end of Key Stage 2, in the form of ticks and grades, is not constructive and there is no evidence to show that pupils are responding to this evaluation of their work. This practice does not help pupils to make good progress in their learning.

50. The assessment information is used well in Key Stage 1, for those pupils with special educational needs and for the younger pupils in Key Stage 2. As a consequence, these pupils make good progress in many subjects, but the same is not happening for the older pupils in Key Stage 2. Not all of these pupils are being challenged properly in class lessons, as work is not being matched to their abilities. Therefore, the use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is unsatisfactory overall.

51. The school provides a good standard of care for pupils who have special educational needs. Teachers and other adults give these pupils positive encouragement, to promote their self-esteem so that they play a full part in all aspects of school life. There is regular contact

with external professional support services to help and assess pupils with special needs, and to advise the school on best practice. A wide range of assessment procedures is used to identify the needs of these pupils and to monitor their progress. Records are detailed, well informed and very carefully maintained.

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

52. The partnership with the school has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. Overall, the views of parents and carers who returned their questionnaires and those who attended the meeting were very positive, but a number of parents felt that the school did not offer an interesting range of activities outside lessons. Inspection evidence does not support this view. The range of activities available to pupils outside lessons is better than in most schools of this size.

53. The quality of information provided for parents is very good overall. Parents receive a detailed and informative booklet prior to their child starting school. The school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are of very good quality and give clear, well presented information. Regular newsletters keep parents well informed about day-to-day matters, and the very good information parents receive about what their children are to learn enables them to help them in their learning. Parents receive an annual report of their children's progress at the end of the school year and an interim report in the spring term. The annual reports vary in quality; some are very informative, but others are rather bland and do not provide concise information about pupils' attainment.

54. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning at home, mainly through helping them with their reading, spellings, number work and occasional projects. The school is well supported by the parent-teacher association, which makes a significant contribution to the life and work of the school.

55. The school takes good care to inform parents of children with special needs about its policy and practice. Parents are invited to annual reviews to discuss their child's progress, and whenever they have concerns they are able to discuss these with the school at an appropriate time. The governor for special needs takes an active role in liaising between parents and the school.

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

56. The headteacher provides very strong leadership. He has made a significant impact within the relatively short time since his appointment, and has a very clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school further. He is very ably supported by his deputy, who shares his commitment to high achievement. Together, they manage the school effectively and ensure that the school's stated aims are fully reflected in its work. Parents are greatly appreciative of the work of the headteacher and of his accessibility. Almost all those who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that the school is well led and managed.

57. Following the previous inspection, a detailed action plan was prepared in response to the key issues identified for future development. The school has successfully addressed these key issues as follows:

58. Key Issue 1: *‘Raise the standard of attainment and improve pupils’ progress in design and technology throughout the school by ensuring that teachers have a clear understanding of the programmes of study and that lessons have clear objectives linked to the programmes. ‘*

59. Standards in design and technology are now above average at the end of both key stages, and pupils make good progress. This significant improvement has been brought about through a programme of staff training, the implementation of a new policy and scheme of work, the purchase of better resources, and careful monitoring and evaluation of pupils’ work.

60. Key Issue 2: *‘Develop an Early Years’ policy, taking into account the Schools’ Curriculum and Assessment Authority recommendations for the desirable learning outcomes for pupils who are under five. ‘*

61. A policy was agreed and put into place shortly after the inspection. This has since been reviewed to reflect the national changes in the curriculum for children under five. A programme of staff training and visits to other schools has helped to underpin the school’s response to this key issue.

62. Key Issue 3: *‘Provide opportunities and resources to develop physical skills for pupils who are under five. ‘*

63. Within the constraints presented by the design of the premises, the school has done its best to respond to this key issue. New outdoor play equipment has been purchased and is used on the playground in timetabled sessions. The school does not have a separate play area for children under five and is therefore unable to fully integrate outdoor activities into its curriculum in the way suggested in national guidance. The new building programme, planned for the autumn term, will offer an opportunity to remedy this situation.

64. Key Issue 4: *‘Develop schemes of work for all subjects which ensure equitable access and opportunity for all pupils. ‘*

65. There are now satisfactory schemes of work in place in all subjects. These schemes clearly set out what is to be taught in each year group in Key Stage 1 and 2. However, issues of equality of opportunity are not being fully addressed in Year 5, where the year group is split between two classes.

66. Most of the governors are closely connected with the school and are very committed and supportive. They know the school very well, and have a sound understanding of its strengths and weaknesses through their regular visits and through their day-to-day contact with parents and staff. Governors visit formally on a regular basis, and these visits have a clear focus linked to each individual governor’s area of curricular responsibility. Governors

successfully fulfil their role as ‘critical friend’ to the school through their monitoring of the school’s work in their committees and in regular meetings of the full governing body. The school’s finances are carefully monitored and governors are beginning to apply the principles of ‘best value’ satisfactorily when making decisions.

67. The school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for special educational needs and complies with the official Code of Practice. There is a named governor for special needs, who makes formal reports to the governing body on all relevant matters. The new part-time teacher is an experienced specialist who is making a very good contribution to the provision for special needs pupils. All other statutory requirements are fully met.

68. The school strategic plan and the annual improvement plan are of very high quality and clearly map out future development. The strategic plan covers a five-year period, provides a good analysis of the school’s context and sets out precise and measurable targets for the future. The annual improvement plan contains good detail of the school’s targets, and sets out a clear time-scale for each initiative. Details of the personnel responsible, the likely cost, and the way in which success in reaching the target is to be measured are all carefully tabulated.

69. The quality of teaching is monitored regularly by the headteacher. His observations are carefully recorded and form the basis of professional development meetings with teaching staff. Information gained from his work in different classes gives the headteacher a very good view of the strengths to be shared and weaknesses to be remedied. However, not all subject co-ordinators monitor their subjects in a systematic way within the time available to them.

70. The day-to-day management of the school is effective. The school secretary is hardworking and efficient and enables teachers to focus on their work in the classrooms rather than spend time on routine administrative tasks.

71. Finances are carefully managed. Accounts are regularly scrutinised to ensure that spending limits are followed, and funds for specific purposes, such as the additional money for special educational needs, are used well. The headteacher inherited a very large carry forward figure, amounting to 25 per cent of the annual budget. These funds had previously been put aside for an improvement project, but will now be used as the governors’ contribution towards the major building programme due to start in the autumn term.

72. The school makes good use of its resources. Staff are effectively deployed and all available space is used well. The premises are well maintained and are cleaned to a good standard. However, the premises have several shortcomings, which the school works hard to overcome. Accommodation in the ‘temporary’ classrooms is cramped, and there are no sinks or practical work areas in these two rooms. This limits the choices available to teachers when teaching many subjects. There is no separate outdoor play area for children in the Foundation Stage and therefore outdoor learning cannot be fully integrated into the curriculum for the youngest children. The school hall is not large enough for vigorous indoor activities for the oldest pupils, and floor space is very limited when gymnastics apparatus is in use. There is

good accommodation for pupils with special needs and those with higher attainment when they are withdrawn for intensive instruction. Good use is also made of the adjoining community centre. The quantities of books and equipment are generally satisfactory. They are in good condition and are easily accessible. However, resources for ICT are barely adequate.

73. The very clear commitment to further improvement shown by the headteacher, deputy and governors is evident in the number of good initiatives, such as the cohort assessment sheets, designed to raise standards.

74. A wide range of indicators, including the quality of teaching, the quality of leadership and the good improvement made since the last inspection, show that the school is effective and, when its expenditure per pupil is considered, it provides sound value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

75. In order for the school to improve further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- Improve standards in English and information and communication technology (ICT).

In English by:

- \* ensuring that the recommended approaches of the National Literacy Strategy are followed consistently throughout the school;
- \* ensuring that the policy for the teaching of handwriting is implemented in full;
- \* ensuring that reading and writing tasks in all subjects are designed to match the language needs of all pupils, particularly those with potentially higher attainment;
- \* ensuring that pupils learn to take responsibility for planning and proof reading their own work.

In ICT by:

- \* ensuring that key skills are directly taught to pupils in all classes;
  - \* providing more opportunities for pupils to practice and develop their skills through work in other subjects.
- 
- Make better use of assessment information, so that teachers at Key Stage 2 plan work which matches the needs of pupils at different levels of attainment within their classes.
  - Review the marking policy and ensure that it is used consistently to let pupils know what they are doing well and what needs to be improved further.
  - Review the arrangements for outdoor play for children in the Foundation Stage.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

|                                                                      |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Number of lessons observed                                           | 50 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 28 |

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

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 4         | 20        | 26   | 44           | 6              | 0    | 0         |

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

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

| <b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>                                    | <b>Nursery</b> | <b>YR – Y6</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)      | N/A            | 164            |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | N/A            | 22             |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

| <b>Special educational needs</b>                                    | <b>Nursery</b> | <b>YR – Y6</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | N/A            | 5              |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | N/A            | 37             |

| <b>English as an additional language</b>                | <b>No of pupils</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 2                   |

| <b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>                                | <b>No of pupils</b> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 15                  |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 5                   |

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

|                           | <b>%</b> |
|---------------------------|----------|
| School data               | 7.5      |
| National comparative data | 5.2      |

#### **Unauthorised absence**

|                           | <b>%</b> |
|---------------------------|----------|
| School data               | 0        |
| National comparative data | 0.5      |

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

### *Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1*

Only the totals are reported at Key Stage 1. This is because the number of girls in the group tested was very small and therefore the performance of individuals could be easily identified.

|                                                                                         |             |             |              |              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year: | <b>Year</b> | <b>Boys</b> | <b>Girls</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|                                                                                         | 2000        | 18          | 8            | 26           |

| <b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b> |          | <b>Reading</b> | <b>Writing</b> | <b>Mathematics</b> |
|----------------------------------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above    | Boys     | Not reported   | Not reported   | Not reported       |
|                                              | Girls    | Not reported   | Not reported   | Not reported       |
|                                              | Total    | 22             | 24             | 26                 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above  | School   | 85 (96)        | 92 (100)       | 100 (96)           |
|                                              | National | 83 (82)        | 84 (83)        | 90 (87)            |

| <b>Teachers' Assessments</b>                |          | <b>English</b> | <b>Mathematics</b> | <b>Science</b> |
|---------------------------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above   | Boys     | Not reported   | Not reported       | Not reported   |
|                                             | Girls    | Not reported   | Not reported       | Not reported   |
|                                             | Total    | 23             | 25                 | 23             |
| Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | School   | 88 (100)       | 96 (100)           | 88 (100)       |
|                                             | National | 84 (82)        | 88 (86)            | 88 (87)        |

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

### *Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2*

|                                                                                         |             |             |              |              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year: | <b>Year</b> | <b>Boys</b> | <b>Girls</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|                                                                                         | 2000        | 11          | 12           | 23           |

| <b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b> |          | <b>English</b> | <b>Mathematics</b> | <b>Science</b> |
|----------------------------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above    | Boys     | 5              | 4                  | 6              |
|                                              | Girls    | 10             | 10                 | 11             |
|                                              | Total    | 15             | 14                 | 17             |
| Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above  | School   | 65 (65)        | 61 (78)            | 74 (96)        |
|                                              | National | 75 (70)        | 72 (69)            | 85 (78)        |

| <b>Teachers' Assessments</b>                |          | <b>English</b> | <b>Mathematics</b> | <b>Science</b> |
|---------------------------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above   | Boys     | 4              | 4                  | 6              |
|                                             | Girls    | 9              | 9                  | 11             |
|                                             | Total    | 13             | 13                 | 17             |
| Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above | School   | 57 (65)        | 57 (70)            | 74 (83)        |
|                                             | National | 70 (68)        | 72 (69)            | 79 (75)        |

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

***Ethnic background of pupils***

|                                 | <b>No of pupils</b> |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage      | 0                   |
| Black – African heritage        | 0                   |
| Black – other                   | 0                   |
| Indian                          | 0                   |
| Pakistani                       | 0                   |
| Bangladeshi                     | 0                   |
| Chinese                         | 2                   |
| White                           | 138                 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 0                   |

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

***Teachers and classes*****Qualified teachers and classes:****YR – Y6**

|                                          |      |
|------------------------------------------|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 7.1  |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 23.1 |
| Average class size                       | 27.3 |

**Education support staff:****YR – Y6**

|                                         |    |
|-----------------------------------------|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 2  |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 45 |

***Exclusions in the last school year***

|                              | <b>Fixed period</b> | <b>Permanent</b> |
|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage   | 0                   | 0                |
| Black – African heritage     | 0                   | 0                |
| Black – other                | 0                   | 0                |
| Indian                       | 0                   | 0                |
| Pakistani                    | 0                   | 0                |
| Bangladeshi                  | 0                   | 0                |
| Chinese                      | 0                   | 0                |
| White                        | 0                   | 0                |
| Other minority ethnic groups | 0                   | 0                |

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

***Financial information***

|                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Financial year | <b>1999 - 2000</b> |
|----------------|--------------------|

|                                            | <b>£</b>   |
|--------------------------------------------|------------|
| Total income                               | 327,952.00 |
| Total expenditure                          | 331,691.00 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 2,242.00   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 85,694.00  |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 81,955.00  |

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

### Questionnaire return rate

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 164 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 97  |

### Percentage of responses in each category (rounded to the nearest whole number)

|                                                                                    | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.                                                             | 57             | 41            | 2                | 0                 | 0          |
| My child is making good progress in school.                                        | 58             | 40            | 2                | 0                 | 0          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.                                                   | 53             | 46            | 0                | 0                 | 1          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 42             | 50            | 6                | 2                 | 0          |
| The teaching is good.                                                              | 62             | 36            | 1                | 0                 | 0          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 46             | 52            | 2                | 0                 | 0          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 72             | 26            | 1                | 0                 | 1          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 77             | 22            | 0                | 1                 | 0          |
| The school works closely with parents.                                             | 45             | 47            | 7                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school is well led and managed.                                                | 62             | 36            | 2                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 66             | 32            | 2                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 43             | 34            | 15               | 3                 | 5          |

Fifty-nine per cent of parents or carers returned their questionnaires.

Sixteen people attended the pre-inspection meeting with the Registered Inspector. The views expressed at this meeting were overwhelmingly positive and supportive of the school.

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

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

76. The provision for the children aged under five in the reception class is satisfactory, with the exception of outdoor physical development.

77. Children are admitted to the reception class full-time either in September or January, according to the proximity of their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection about one third of the children were aged four. The schools' 'baseline assessment' data on the current five year old group shows that their attainment on entry is slightly above average. The majority of children meet the learning outcomes expected of five year olds, and a substantial number exceed this level of attainment.

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

78. The under fives' personal development is satisfactory. The children learn to play and work together co-operatively; they are happy, confident and evidently enjoy school. They are familiar with everyday routines. For example, they know that they should help to clear away at the end of a session and be quiet during 'story time'. The majority of children concentrate well, but because the activities are so tightly structured they are not given opportunities to develop independence and initiative. Children understand the need to take turns and share, and are confident in working alone or in pairs.

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

79. There have been improvements in provision for language and literacy since the last inspection. Children can write their own names and are developing a good knowledge of letter sounds. However, there are not enough opportunities for children to make independent attempts at early writing. By the age of five, children make steady progress in understanding rhyming words as well as reading and writing simple sentences and phrases. As they become older, the children become more articulate, speak confidently, and are able to express their ideas in detail. Because of a lack of 'role-play' opportunities, however, their imagination and language skills are not extended. Children listen well and can follow simple instructions accurately. By the summer term, language lessons are based on the National Literacy strategy. Activities are carefully planned, and enable the majority of pupils to make satisfactory progress in acquiring early reading and writing skills. The potentially higher-attaining pupils, however, are not challenged enough, and their progress is impeded. By the age of five all children are accustomed to handling books appropriately and understand that printed words convey meaning.

## **Mathematical development**

80. When working individually, most children make satisfactory progress in learning early number skills. They can add and take away from ten, and many can count and understand numbers to twenty. However, whole class number activities are less demanding. Most children can apply their developing number skills in other activities, for instance by counting the number of times they rise in the air on the see-saw. Many children are beginning to solve simple problems without the need for practical activities to help them to see what they need to do.

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

81. By the time they enter the reception class, most children are aware of their surroundings and are eager to discuss the things they see. The curriculum is planned to enable them to make gains in their knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, they know that plants grow from seeds and need light, warmth and water to grow. In information and communication technology they can use a computer mouse to control a screen cursor and can type their names in a list.

## **Physical development**

82. Children make satisfactory progress in their physical development. They learn to handle pencils correctly and develop good pencil control. They use a range of tools in drawing, painting and making things, and their cutting skills are good. In the playground, children develop their ability to use space. They can demonstrate well co-ordinated physical skills in using large toys and balls. However, because there is no separate outdoor area for children under five, sessions are limited to timetabled slots on the school playground. These lessons are disrupted by the entry of vehicles onto the playground each day. The children have a highly developed sense of safety on these occasions; they instantly stop, then calmly collect at a safe distance.

## **Creative development**

83. Children make satisfactory progress in their creative development. They can paint and model with a high degree of hand control. However, because children have limited opportunities to make choices, for example in mixing colours for a painting of a teddy bear, the development of independence and imagination are restricted. Children can sing in tune and keep time accurately with unpitched musical instruments.

84. The quality of teaching with the under fives is satisfactory. The staff are enthusiastic and friendly in their manner with the children, who are made to feel valued and important. Activities are planned thoroughly and are carried out successfully. The staff have created well-organised and attractive areas in the classroom, and everyday routines are well

established. Tasks are set up efficiently and resources are well managed. However, higher-attaining children are not always challenged by the activities planned, and assessment is not always consistently used to target activities to children's specific needs. The teacher and classroom assistant work well together and provide a purposeful working atmosphere.

## **ENGLISH**

85. Since the last inspection, the school's national test results have been significantly better for pupils aged seven than for those aged 11. In 2000, the proportion of seven year olds achieving the national target of Level 2 in reading was about average, but an above average proportion achieved the higher Level 3. Overall, the school's results in reading were above the national average and broadly in line with the average of similar schools, with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. In writing, the proportion reaching the expected Level 2 was above average, but no pupils reached the higher Level 3. Overall, results in writing were average in comparison with those of all schools nationally and of schools in similar circumstances. When results over time are compared, scores achieved in writing were below the national average in 1997, but since then results in reading and writing have been either average or above average.

86. By contrast, the school's results in the English tests for pupils aged 11 have been below or well below the national average and the average of similar schools in each year since 1997. In 2000, the results were well below the average of schools nationally and of similar schools, and very few pupils reached the higher Level 5. This was disappointing in view of considerable efforts to raise standards, but the school's analysis shows the results were affected by a larger than usual number of boys who had special needs in language. It also shows that pupils who attended the school from the start of their education performed significantly better in the tests than those who transferred into the school later.

87. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are improving and that the much higher performance targets set for 11 year olds are likely to have been met in the most recent national tests. The attainment of pupils presently in Year 2 is similar to the national average, but more pupils are performing at the higher level in writing than in 2000. Early indications from the most recent national tests are that the scores achieved in the reading tests are at least as good as in 2000 and that results of the writing tests are better. However, no national comparisons can yet be made. Standards of pupils presently in Year 6 are better than in 2000. The proportion reaching the expected level or above in reading is average. The proportion reaching the expected level in speaking and writing is average, but fewer than average reach the higher level. Standards in listening are above average throughout the school, reflecting the good behaviour and interest in learning of pupils in most lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are given tasks that match their needs and extra help so that they make good progress in reading and writing for real purposes.

88. Pupils in all years pay close attention to instruction in the literacy hour and take an active part in discussions. Increasing numbers of pupils enter the school as confident speakers, and they make good progress because of the careful coaching they are given. As a result, pupils in the reception class performed well in leading an assembly during the inspection, speaking clearly, loudly and on cue in a complex presentation of their recent work.

By age seven, many pupils speak clearly in Standard English, and those with higher attainment extend their answers at length in response to teachers' encouragement. Some, however, have a limited vocabulary, and the accuracy of their writing is affected by characteristics of the local dialect. Fewer pupils at age eleven have higher attainment, though their willingness to join in class discussions means these are productive occasions for exploring and developing ideas, which helps their learning in other subjects. They use more formal language appropriately and technical terms correctly. There are some opportunities for drama, and many pupils become confident in speaking to larger audiences for a widening range of purposes.

89. Pupils in all classes show a good level of interest in reading. They make a good start because teaching is well focused, and clearly graded materials secure their progress in the early stages. The skill of sounding out new words to find their meaning develops well. As they gain in confidence, pupils are given increasing experience of free choice books to develop their interest. Pupils with special needs or lower attainment continue to read graded materials, with additional instruction through the school so that they make good progress. Pupils aged seven have a sound understanding of what they read, and reading books are generally well matched to their ability. Those with higher attainment read aloud well, emphasising the meaning and dramatising characters. By age 11, pupils read longer texts silently and with good concentration. They understand what they have read, and attempt to read aloud with expression. Knowledge of how to find books in a library is satisfactory. Most pupils are confident in using non-fiction books to find information, and this helps them to learn in other subjects. They are allowed to choose their own books from the library and class collections, which helps to promote their interest. Most pupils have a strong interest in reading, and there is a useful system for ensuring that they read across a wide range of different styles. However, it is possible for pupils with potentially higher attainment to choose books whose language or ideas are not challenging at the higher level for their age. Pupils identified as gifted and talented are withdrawn for specialist teaching for one lesson each week. They are given tasks that promote high level skills in working out the meaning of difficult texts, though such a high level of challenge is not continued in their normal classwork.

90. By age seven, basic rules of punctuation and spelling are soundly established. Most pupils write clear factual accounts of personal experiences and imaginative stories based on models such as traditional tales. Standards of handwriting vary widely through the school, reflecting a lack of a consistent policy in the past. A determined approach in Key Stage 1 is now resulting in neat and well-formed letters. However, pupils do not achieve a legible joined style until Year 3, and the approach to teaching handwriting needs to be reviewed. Through Key Stage 2, pupils learn to write for an increasingly wide range of purposes, including letters, book reviews and news reports. There are examples of poetry, but fewer than generally found. Story writing continues to be a major focus, and many pupils make good use of techniques to catch the reader's attention, such as dramatic speech and unusual imaginative vocabulary. There are good examples of such techniques in the stories about the plague by higher-attainers in Years 4 and 5. Standards of presentation in exercise books are good, and some pieces of work in each year are word-processed. Information is clearly expressed in factual accounts in other subjects, but the tasks set are generally narrowly defined and pupils' responses are brief. As a result, they do not have enough practice over time in planning the structure of complex ideas and writing accurately under the pressure of a deadline. Tasks set for pupils with potentially higher attainment do not develop their skills in using the formal language, complex sentence patterns, and paragraph structures expected at

the higher level. Pupils need more opportunities to take responsibility for planning, redrafting and proof-reading their own work.

91. Teaching is good in Key Stage 1, with one very good lesson observed. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, with one excellent lesson. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. Teachers' planning is guided by the targets of the National Literacy Strategy, and targets are shared with pupils at the start of lessons so that they have a clear sense of purpose. Books and poetry are well chosen to catch pupils' interest and demonstrate important features of language. Teachers read aloud well to hold pupils' interest. This was a key feature of a very good lesson in Year 2, where pupils were held spellbound by a skilful dramatic reading of several poems. They delighted in the creativity of language and tried hard to imitate this in writing their own poems. Teaching of language features is well focused, using a wide range of techniques. In an excellent lesson with Year 3 pupils, the teacher achieved high quality learning through an energetic delivery, persistent expectations for all to take part, many opportunities for pupils to practise the language target, and the use of searching questions to check understanding. The task that followed gave pupils the opportunity to use their new learning for a real purpose. Management of activities is generally good, and pupils behave well at all stages of lessons. Standards of marking are not consistent in identifying the main strengths and weaknesses in written work. Generally, much of the impact of marking is lost because pupils are not routinely required to do corrections or other follow-up work.

92. Not all teachers are following the recommended teaching approaches of the National Literacy Strategy, and this leads to weaknesses that affect pupils' progress, particularly in Key Stage 2. Most significant is the failure to use information on pupils' needs, gained from marking, test results and reading records, to plan suitable work for groups at different levels of attainment. Older pupils with potentially higher attainment are most affected, and not enough is expected of them in the tasks they are set in reading, writing and speaking. When pupils work on their own, teachers spend too much time supervising the whole class instead of working intensively with each group on a rota, as recommended. As a result, groups miss the regular input of teaching closely focused on their needs which was intended by the strategy. Additionally, pupils working on their own who call for help and receive it will do not learn to work independently at their best pace or take responsibility for checking their own work for accuracy. In many lessons, the final whole-class review is not given the full time recommended, so pupils' learning is not checked and reinforced carefully enough.

93. Management of the subject is good. There has been a determined effort to raise standards through the development of more detailed assessment procedures and substantial in-service training for teachers. Standards are rising as a result, though inconsistencies in practice continue to affect pupils' progress through the school. There has been a significant improvement in provision for pupils with special needs. Their needs are identified as soon as possible to ensure that they have greatest opportunity to improve. They are very well taught by a specialist teacher when withdrawn for regular support as individuals or in small groups. Other pupils having difficulties are withdrawn for a well-planned programme of additional literacy support. Pupils identified as talented and gifted are also withdrawn for high quality specialist teaching with a significant language element. There is effective use of whole-school productions and class assemblies to raise standards in speaking and to offer a high level challenge to all pupils. There is some use of displays and class anthologies to celebrate best work and motivate high standards, but this could be further developed. Resources for reading are satisfactory, and there are plans to develop the library and increase its use through research

tasks in other subjects. Pupils' interest in the subject is stimulated well through a good range of visits and visitors.

## **MATHEMATICS**

94. Standards in mathematics are above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2.

95. In the national tests for seven year olds in 2000 all pupils achieved Level 2, but the proportion at Level 3 was well below average. Overall, results were average when compared with those of all schools nationally and with the results of similar schools. In the most recent tests, all pupils achieved Level 2 and a higher proportion were at Level 3, though no national comparisons can yet be drawn from these results. By comparison, the national test results for 11 year olds in 2000 were disappointing. In these tests, the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 or better was well below average, and the proportion at Level 5 was below average. When Key Stage 2 results over the past three years are considered, standards have gradually declined, from well above average in 1998 to average in 1999 and below average in 2000. Early indications are that the test results for this year are significantly better than in 2000 and are likely to be about average, but no national comparisons can be made at this point.

96. In recent years the school has worked hard to raise standards, including focusing on developing the pupils' mental skills, the use of 'booster' classes and the headteacher's work with higher-attaining pupils. A wider variety of teaching strategies is now employed. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive effect on improving standards.

97. Progress is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Not enough emphasis is placed on using and applying the mathematical skills and knowledge at Key Stage 2, and this has an impact on progress. Mental arithmetic forms a regular routine in numeracy lessons, but opportunities to promote the pupils' numeracy skills are not developed in a systematic, planned way across the whole curriculum. A good pace to learning is maintained and pupils are generally highly motivated during these sessions. At Key Stage 1 there were many good examples of pupils working on tasks which challenged them fully. For instance, in a Year 1 class, higher-attaining pupils were challenged to make the numbers 1, 2 and 3, placed on each side of a triangle, add up to the same total. They were expected to select their own 'target' number for the answer, which resulted in their deeper understanding of number bonds. All pupils in Years 1 and 2 are expected to work at a demanding level, but targeted appropriately at their different abilities.

98. Pupils in Year 4 have rapid recall of multiplication facts and are proficient in adding and subtracting decimals. By Year 6, most pupils have skills appropriate to their age when working with numbers, and have reasonable knowledge of key facts. For example, they know that the circumference of a circle is approximately three times the diameter, and they can enter formulae into a spreadsheet on the computer to calculate costs for a school camping trip. However, there is limited coverage of data handling and shape, space and measures throughout the school.

99. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are consistently good, and often very good. They are well motivated in most instances and can sustain their concentration well throughout the

planned tasks. Pupils respond well to questioning and answer confidently when referring to facts previously learned. They enjoy their lessons and respond well in mental arithmetic sessions.

100. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in mathematics. They are frequently well supported by class assistants who have a secure understanding of the task, and this affords the pupils individual attention based on their particular needs. However, in some classes at Key Stage 2 work is too difficult and the pupils become confused if adult help is not available.

101. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. The very good quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is having a positive effect on standards. In the two lessons observed in Years 1 and 2 teaching was very good in one and excellent in the other. In Key Stage 2 the teaching was never less than satisfactory. In Key Stage 1 teachers have high expectations of their pupils, and lessons are well planned, organised and managed. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 2 the teacher used a variety of strategies to teach how to subtract 9, 19 and 29. The pace of teaching was brisk and challenging and resulted in a high level of motivation, and consequently pupils of all abilities learned very well. Where teaching was less effective the work was uninspiring or lacked challenge for higher-attaining pupils. For instance, in a lesson on decimals in Year 5, several pupils rapidly completed the worksheet given to them and then spent the remaining time chatting about other matters. In Key Stage 2, the introductory and main activities are appropriately timed, but the plenary sessions, in which learning is reviewed, are frequently ineffective as they can be too short or merely a sharing of work done. Although teachers conscientiously mark pupils' work at Key Stage 2, the marking lacks constructive comments and there is no indication to pupils of what they have to do to improve. In contrast, marking at Key Stage 1 is clearly linked to the lesson objectives and contains useful comments for pupils. In the lessons that were satisfactory, teachers did not always give pupils enough opportunity to explain their reasoning. Too much time was spent on work closely prescribed by the teachers and as a result there were too few opportunities for pupils to work independently.

102. Strong leadership from the headteacher and deputy headteacher, clear guidance for staff, and enthusiasm for the subject have contributed to the improvements achieved in mathematics. The national Numeracy Strategy has been implemented successfully and all staff have received the appropriate training. A sound policy is in place, which provides clear guidance for teachers. Procedures for monitoring and assessment are established, although as yet the analysis of information gained from assessment is not sufficiently developed in Key Stage 2.

103. Resources for mathematics are sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum, and are well used to support learning. An appropriate emphasis is given to the use of calculators. However, computers are not sufficiently used as an integral part of lessons, partly because the machines are too old to make use of modern software and are currently restricted to one per class.

## SCIENCE

104. Standards in science are above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and average at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards reported at the time of the previous inspection have been sustained at the end of Key Stage 1, but have declined at the end of Key Stage 2.

105. The results of the national tests for the Year 2000 show that the proportions of 11 year olds achieving the national target of Level 4 and the higher Level 5 were well below the national average and the average for schools in similar circumstances. An analysis of the school's results in the Key Stage 2 science tests over the past four years shows that the school's performance has slightly declined against a background of nationally improving results. Data provided by the school indicates that the test results for 2001 are likely to be much better than those for 2000, although no national comparisons can be made. The proportion of Year 6 pupils in line to achieve or exceed Level 4 is about in line with the national average for last year. However, when the group of pupils tested is relatively small, as is the case with the current Year 6, the performance of a single pupil can have a disproportionate effect on the overall result.

106. Results at the end of Key Stage 1 are based on teachers' assessments of pupils' performance. Assessments for the Year 2000 show that the proportion of pupils achieving the national target of Level 2 was below average, but the proportion achieving the higher Level 3 was above average. Data provided by the school shows that almost all pupils achieved Level 2 in the most recent assessments, and the proportion of pupils at Level 3 is about the same as in the previous year. However, at this stage, no national comparisons can be made.

107. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make good progress because they are well taught. By the age of seven, pupils have a good understanding of topics across the breadth of the science curriculum and are developing a good scientific vocabulary. For example, they are able to make elementary classifications of fruit and vegetables and have a basic understanding of the sorts of foods that constitute a healthy diet. They know about the uses and dangers of electricity and can construct simple circuits. They know that some materials can change in appearance, such as water when it is frozen, and that some changes are irreversible. The quality of teacher's marking, particularly in Year 2, is an important factor in the progress made by pupils. Comments made by teachers in pupils' books are useful in pointing out what is done well and what needs to be improved. A scrutiny of pupils' books showed good evidence that teachers' comments are regularly acted on and result in improved work. The emphasis placed on practical work, together with a lot of discussion between teachers and pupils, enables teachers to provide suitable challenges for higher-attainers.

108. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2, though high-attaining pupils are not challenged enough in some classes. During the course of the inspection, pupils in Year 3 were well taught and made good progress in lessons. However, over time, progress in this year group is slower because of the effects of changes in staffing in previous terms. Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are steadily developed as they progress through Years 4, 5 and 6, but in these year groups work is not always closely matched to the different abilities of pupils. In general, the youngest pupils make the best progress in the mixed-age classes in Key Stage 2. A scrutiny of previously completed work showed that the same work is frequently set for pupils of all abilities, and when teachers do attempt to modify tasks, the quality of the tasks set for older or higher-attaining pupils is inadequate. For example, in one

class all pupils were given the same series of pictures and text illustrating the lifecycle of plants. The task for the younger pupils was to sort the pictures into the correct order and to paste them into their books, while older pupils were expected to draw their own illustrations and write in their own text, which they did by copying from the pictures provided. The way in which older pupils' work is marked does not help them to make progress. The work is ticked and graded, with almost no comments added by teachers, consequently pupils have no clear indication of precisely what they need to do to improve further. By the age of 11 most pupils achieve nationally expected levels in work about life processes and living things, materials and their properties, and physical processes. However, work in investigative and experimental science is difficult to do successfully in the 'temporary' classrooms because of the cramped working conditions and the lack of practical work areas.

109. Overall, pupils' response to science lessons is good. They are well behaved and listen carefully to what their teachers have to say. Standards of presentation of work are generally above average.

110. Two science lessons were observed at each key stage. Evidence from the lessons and the scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work indicates that teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. One of the lessons at Key Stage 1 was good and the other was very good. The very good lesson explored the differences between plants and animals. In this lesson, the teacher's good subject knowledge helped her to sustain a high quality dialogue with the pupils and this resulted in some very thoughtful exchanges. For instance, pupils discussed with keen interest whether or not plants could feel. The teacher had high expectations of what pupils could achieve and enjoyed a relaxed, but disciplined, relationship with the class. As a result, the teacher was able to add humour to the lesson without the pupils becoming over-excited. One of the lessons observed at Key Stage 2 was of good quality and the other was satisfactory. The good quality lesson, with the youngest Key Stage 2 pupils, focused on investigative work using a variety of different magnets. In this lesson, the teacher's skills in questioning helped pupils to clarify their ideas. Pupils responded well to the high level of challenge presented by the activity and by the end of the lesson most had a reasonable understanding of the principles of 'fair testing' and could explain what they would do to make a test fair. They used scientific terms such as 'attract' and 'repel' correctly, and were able to first make reasonable predictions and then successfully test their ideas.

111. The curriculum for science is broad, and achieves a good balance between the different elements of the subject. It clearly sets out what is to be taught to each different year group, though it does not make clear provision for the current situation in which some of the pupils in Year 5 are taught alongside Year 6 while others are grouped with Year 4. The pupils in this split year group do not enjoy equality of curriculum provision, and the work completed by the Year 5 pupils in the two classes is very different. The situation is further complicated by the fact that pupils in Year 4 are currently following the Year 5 curriculum planning, since the whole class is taught the same work. Given the increase in the number on roll, the situation is unlikely to be repeated in the future. However, the difficulties created by the present arrangements may be difficult to resolve in the coming year. The school has recently introduced 'cohort assessment sheets' on which teachers are recording their assessments of

pupils' progress in the different elements of the curriculum. These are intended to be used as a tool for analysing the effectiveness of the school's provision and focusing on areas to be improved. At the time of the inspection, the assessment data recorded on the sheets had not been analysed, and therefore the effectiveness of the system cannot be judged.

112. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership overall, but does not have enough opportunity to monitor closely the effectiveness of the curriculum or the standards achieved in other classes.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

113. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1, and seven year olds achieve standards that are above average at the end of the key stage. Progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 2, and 11 year olds achieve average standards by the end of the key stage. Since the previous inspection in 1997, standards in art have improved at Key Stage 1 and are about the same at Key Stage 2.

114. Noteworthy features of art are the use made by teachers of the work of famous artists as a stimulus for pupils, and the contribution by pupils to a 'Sculpture for Ellistown' in brick and tile, which stands at the main road junction in the village.

115. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress because of the good teaching, the good range of experiences, and the way in which work in art is very well integrated into work in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 produced 'Blob and Blow' pictures, linked to their science work about pushing and pulling, and good use was made of a graphics program on the computer to produce linear designs. Abstract impressionist work by Jackson Pollock and geometric designs by Sonia Delaunay provide colourful stimuli for pupils. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils produce work that shows good use of colour, good proportion and careful execution. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is more variable and the cramped working conditions and lack of practical work areas in the 'temporary' classrooms make it more difficult for pupils to develop their skills. Nevertheless, pupils in Year 6 produce work of a satisfactory standard overall. At the time of the inspection most of the work on display was on a theme of landscapes, townscapes and seascapes. Good use was made of tone to convey the impression of distance in paintings based on a photograph of Monument Valley. Similarly, layers of white tissue on black silhouettes created the illusion of distance. A seascape by Vincent Van Gogh and a painting of a haymaking scene by Pieter Brueghel provided stimuli for effective three-dimensional work.

116. Pupils enjoy their work in art. They listen carefully to their teachers, share materials sensibly and concentrate well. Pupils generally take a pride in their work and try hard. Behaviour in lessons is generally good.

117. The single lesson observed at Key Stage 1 was of good quality. One of the two lessons at Key Stage 2 was of sound quality and the other was unsatisfactory. The good lesson observed was one of a series in which pupils worked at one of a number of different activities each week. The teacher began by showing the class the results achieved in one of the tasks during the previous week, and asked the pupils who had completed the activity to pass on

advice about the techniques required, based on their experience. This advice proved to be very useful and improved the quality of pupils' learning. Activities were very well prepared and provided achievable challenges for all pupils. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, the work planned was not well matched to the different abilities of pupils in the class.

118. The scheme of work has been recently introduced. A good feature of the scheme is the way in which the step-by-step development of skills in different elements of the subject is clearly mapped out. Cohort assessment sheets are also fairly new. The intention of the sheets is to use an analysis of teachers' assessments of pupils to identify areas of the curriculum that need further improvement. At the time of inspection, parts of the assessment sheets had been completed, but the information contained on the sheets had not been evaluated.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

119. Standards in design and technology are above average at the end of both key stages. This is a significant improvement in attainment since the previous inspection. Although only a small number of lessons were observed during the week of the inspection, evidence of previous work, discussion with teachers and pupils, and an analysis of pupils' work on display indicate that standards are good. The policy and scheme of work provide good support for teachers.

120. Pupils generate their own ideas and analyse and amend their designs, bearing in mind the intended purpose of the article planned. For example, pupils in Year 5 designed and made musical instruments for younger children to use. Their designs took account of safety of materials and use. When making, the pupils amended the design as difficulties of construction became apparent. Their evaluations took account of these amendments and their implications for future work. There is an emphasis on design, making, and evaluation throughout the school, and pupils successfully develop their skills as they progress from Year 1 to Year 6. This was seen in the way in which wooden frames were constructed from Year 2 to Year 6. Pupils make good progress over time as well as within lessons.

121. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good overall. On occasions they are excellent. Pupils enjoy lessons and can sustain their concentration well. They respond well to questioning and readily recall previous learning, thus developing their skills and understanding. Pupils know about the importance of hygiene, for example washing hands thoroughly before handling food, and of safety in the way in which they handle tools.

122. The range of evidence considered indicates that, overall, the quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Two lessons were observed during the inspection, one in each key stage. The single lesson in Key Stage 1 was very good and the lesson in Key Stage 2 was satisfactory. Teaching at Key Stage 1 was very good because of the clarity of the teacher's explanations, the very good use of what had been previously learned as a reference point for pupils, and the quality of the teacher's questioning. The way in which the teacher phrased her questions challenged pupils to clarify their thinking and to give reasons for their choice of materials. At both key stages design techniques are taught systematically. Teachers shared the learning objectives with the pupils, and review them as work is evaluated.

123. The co-ordinator has used her training well, by passing skills on to other members of staff. Teachers have high expectations of the quality of making throughout the school, and pupils achieve very high standards of precision and finish to their products.

124. The resources for teaching design and technology are adequate. They are of good quality and, in the lessons observed, were well used. Pupils experience all elements of the subject, including the use of control technology through the use of a commercially produced construction kit. However, the use of computers to support learning in the subject is limited.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

125. Pupils aged seven reach standards that are better than expected for their age. The standards achieved by this age group have improved since the last inspection, when they were judged to be satisfactory. The improvement has come about because teachers present topics in a stimulating way and have high expectations for their pupils' performance. Pupils aged 11 make satisfactory progress and reach the standards expected for their age. Standards have been maintained at this level since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. They follow the same curriculum, and teachers give them effective support by matching work to their needs.

126. In Key Stage 1, pupils successfully interpret maps, atlases and globes to find their own home in relation to the school and the world beyond. Tropical jungles are studied as a contrasting location, and the excitement of the topic is reflected in the descriptive writing of higher-attaining pupils. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of some of the physical features and elements of the culture of France. Study of housing and amenities around the school results in a good range of ways of recording evidence, including drawings, lists, tallies and maps. Pupils make good progress in interpreting maps in both key stages. By age 11, pupils understand major symbols of Ordnance Survey maps and locate key features, using detailed grid references. They have a good understanding of longitude and latitude, and are generally accurate in finding a range of specific features, using an atlas. They understand major features of their own locality and produce good work in contrasting it with locations in other countries, such as Pakistan. They study the main physical features of Greece and Egypt in conjunction with their study of ancient cultures in history. Although some topics are covered in too little depth and detail, the study of rivers is extended well. Pupils suggest ways of improving the environment, for instance in avoiding flooding, and carry out personal research into uses of water in the home.

127. Observations of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicate that, overall, teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. During the inspection only one lesson was seen in each key stage. In both lessons, the teachers showed good subject knowledge, using technical terms appropriately and focusing pupils' attention with well-chosen resources. Pupils showed strong interest in the topics studied and pride in their factual knowledge. The single lesson observed in Key Stage 1 was of very good quality. In this lesson, in Year 2, the teacher made highly effective use of her own experience of France to deepen pupils' understanding. This included a mental maths session in French and revision of elements of French culture studied in other subjects, including art and music, followed by study of a street map of Paris. Pupils reflected the teacher's enthusiasm and were keen to contribute to the discussion, so that they made very good progress in their understanding. The

main activity of a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 was to locate a number of features in a world atlas, such as cities, rivers and mountains, using the references for the latitude and longitude of each feature. All pupils were given the same task, but they worked well together and concentrated hard to find the correct answers. Pupils across the range of attainment in the class got some answers wrong, and not enough time was spent at the end of the lesson in finding out why this was, so the opportunity was missed to consolidate pupils' understanding. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that pupils across the range of attainment in Key Stage 2 classes are often given the same task. Such tasks are usually most appropriate for pupils with average attainment, while those below average are given extra help. The result over time is that not enough is asked of older pupils with higher attainment. Though they reach the standard expected for their age group, they do not tackle work that is at a higher level.

128. There is a satisfactory arrangement for the management of the subject in the absence of the co-ordinator. The scheme of work has recently been revised in line with official guidance. Assessment procedures are good in that they identify the key skills, knowledge and understanding to be taught in each topic and specify the level reached by each pupil. Nevertheless, not enough use is made of assessment information in planning work suitable for individuals at different levels of attainment. Resources are satisfactory, and the improvement in the range of maps has led to good standards in map work. Effective use is made of visits into the local community to give pupils practical experience in applying their knowledge and skills. Good use is made of classroom displays to stimulate interest in other countries. The subject makes a sound contribution to pupils' cultural development.

## **HISTORY**

129. By the end of each key stage, pupils reach standards that are appropriate for their age, and standards have been maintained at this level since the last inspection. Pupils with special needs make sound progress. They are given suitable tasks and receive extra help so that they play a full part in class discussions and activities.

130. Pupils aged seven have a clear sense of what has changed over time in the context of their own families and the local community. Using the evidence of factual accounts, pictures and photographs, they identify similarities and differences between modes of transport today and those of a hundred years ago. They study the lives of famous people, such as Grace Darling, and pupils with higher attainment write detailed accounts to explain her contribution to history.

131. In Key Stage 2, the work of all pupils becomes progressively more precise and accurate in recording and interpreting evidence. By age 11, pupils have a sound understanding of the ancient civilisations of Egypt, Greece and the Aztecs, and of British history since the Roman and Saxon invaders, including the Tudors, Victorians, and Britain since the Second World War. They identify and interpret evidence from a range of sources, including documents and objects from the periods studied. Their story-writing skills are put to good use at times, for instance when they project into the mind of an Aztec seeing a Spanish soldier for the first

time. Their accounts generally show a good grasp of factual detail. However, pupils with potentially higher attainment are not given enough opportunities to work at a higher level, for instance comparing evidence from different sources or identifying causes and effects of events over time.

132. Observations of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicate that teaching is satisfactory overall and that pupils make sound progress. Of the two lessons seen, one was good and the other very good. Both lessons were planned in detail with clear objectives. Factual information was taught with a determination which ensured that pupils concentrated hard and learned well. In the very good lesson in Year 2, an element of drama brought the pomp and ceremony of a royal coronation to life, so that pupils appreciated the formal language expected when addressing the Queen. High expectations for learning new facts were a strong feature of the good lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5, and learning in class was extended with a homework task.

133. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The scheme of work has been revised following recent nationally recommended guidelines, and is planned to provide progression in understanding from simple to more sophisticated concepts. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory, though not enough use is made of the information in planning suitable work for older pupils at different levels of attainment. The subject makes a sound contribution to pupils' cultural development, with effective use of visits to sites of historic interest. Teachers make good use of displays of books, pictures and artefacts to stimulate interest in the subject.

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

134. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their skills in ICT in Key Stage 1. By the end of the key stage, they achieve the standards expected nationally of seven year olds. In Key Stage 2, pupils' progress is unsatisfactory because they receive less direct teaching of skills and because they do not use computers often enough. By the end of the key stage, pupils achieve standards below those expected nationally of 11 year olds. Standards in ICT at the end of Key Stage 1 are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection, but standards have declined at the end of Key Stage 2. National requirements have increased significantly in recent years and, at Key Stage 2, the school has not managed to keep pace with these changes. The school has identified ICT as one of its priorities for improvement, and plans have been agreed for the conversion of a classroom into an ICT suite as part of the building programme due to begin in the autumn term.

135. Only three ICT lessons were observed during the course of the inspection, two whole-class lessons at Key Stage 1 and a lesson with a small group of pupils at Key Stage 2. Judgements are based on these lessons, together with evidence from a scrutiny of previously completed work and curriculum planning, discussions with pupils and the subject co-ordinator, and observations of pupils using ICT as part of their work in other subjects.

136. Pupils make sound progress in Key Stage 1 because they are well taught in whole-class lessons and are then given opportunities to practise the particular skills learned. Not all teachers in Key Stage 2 follow this approach, and ICT lessons do not feature on the timetables in some classes.

137. Pupils are given a firm foundation for future learning in Year 1. About half the pupils in this year group consistently use the correct terminology when discussing the use of the computer. Some make a reasonable attempt at explaining the function of the hard drive by saying that *'it has a brain inside it'*. Most know the functions of the 'enter', 'space', 'backspace' and 'cursor' keys and use the keyboard confidently. By the time that they reach the end of Year 2, pupils have skills appropriate for their age across the breadth of the subject, and use their class computer regularly to develop and practise their skills through their work in other subjects. For example, they use graphics software to create artwork in the style of Piet Mondrian, databases to produce graphs as part of their science work about flowers, and the Internet to help them with simple research.

138. During the course of the inspection, computers were not used as often in the Key Stage 2 classes as they were at Key Stage 1. Older pupils interviewed confirmed this view, saying that they generally do not use computers on a regular, weekly basis. Even though pupils experience the breadth of the National Curriculum programme of study for ICT, they do so infrequently and through lack of practice they quickly forget what they have learned. For example, pupils in Year 6 had most recently worked on producing computer presentations about their chosen topics. These involved merging text and graphics and using different ways of moving the text on to the screen, and were of a satisfactory standard. However, when asked to demonstrate some of the basic features of the keyboard, the pupils selected were unable to do so. They acknowledged that they had been taught the skills in the past, but said that they did not get to use the computers often enough to practise what they had learned. Lack of regular whole-class teaching of skills also results in slow progress through the planned curriculum. For instance, pupils in Year 4 were observed using 'floor turtles'. These were made to move in different directions through instructions programmed into a keypad. This work, while providing a challenge which reflected the pupils' stage of learning, is most often seen being carried out by pupils a year or more younger.

139. Pupils enjoy their work in ICT. They treat the equipment sensibly, are good at taking turns, and work well together with a partner. In the whole-class lessons observed, pupils behaved very well. They were attentive and were keen to respond to teachers' questions.

140. At Key Stage 1 teaching is good. No whole-class teaching was observed at Key Stage 2 and so no judgement can be made. Teachers in Key Stage 1 are skilled in teaching techniques clearly and in planning their day-to-day work in such a way that ICT is an integral part of work in other subjects. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Lessons are conducted at a good pace and teachers ensure that all pupils are involved through the way in which they target their questions.

141. The co-ordinator provides good leadership. She has recently completed a thorough monitoring exercise and has a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve standards. Some of the equipment in use is old and becoming increasingly unreliable.

## **MUSIC**

142. Standards achieved at the end of both key stages are broadly in line with what is expected nationally of pupils aged seven and eleven. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not the principal language spoken, make satisfactory progress. Standards in music have been sustained at the level reported at the time of the previous inspection.

143. A particularly good feature of music throughout the school is the standard of singing, which is above average in both key stages. Throughout the school, pupils of all ages sing tunefully and with enjoyment. The curriculum is enriched by peripatetic instrumental tuition and through opportunities provided for pupils to perform in public. Pupils' awareness of the work of famous composers is developed through listening to music from the 'Composer of the Week' at the beginning and end of assemblies.

144. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Only three lessons were observed during the course of the inspection, one in Key Stage 1 and two in Key Stage 2. The single lesson in Key Stage 1 was taught in Year 2. It was of good quality and resulted in pupils making good progress in developing their skills of performance. Pupils learned well because the teacher's good subject knowledge enabled her to lead the activity with confidence, giving clear instructions to the class and skilfully ensuring that all were involved. The pupils responded very well to the teacher's high expectations of their work and behaviour. They handled the instruments carefully, listened attentively, and concentrated well. Pupils sang tunefully, unaccompanied, and were able to sustain a variety of different rhythmic patterns set out by the teacher. When discussing their work, they confidently used simple musical terms such as 'rhythm' in their responses. One of the lessons observed at Key Stage 2 was of sound quality and the other was unsatisfactory. Pupils in Year 6 were interested and showed great enjoyment in performing their class composition, an atmospheric piece which attempted to create a musical picture of Monument Valley in the USA. The pupils played a variety of tuned and untuned instruments with control and co-ordination appropriate to their age. They concentrated hard, playing on cue as the teacher pointed on a chart to the symbols representing the different instrumental groups. The teacher led the activity well and made effective use of a cassette tape recorder to first record and then to play back the pupils' performance. This resulted in pupils making many thoughtful suggestions as to how the piece could be improved. Unfortunately, the lesson ended early and the pupils were not given the opportunity to incorporate their suggested improvements into a further performance. In the single unsatisfactory lesson, the teacher's poor explanations of the task resulted in pupils being uncertain as to what they were to do, and not enough instruments were provided to keep all pupils actively involved. The result was that pupils became increasingly restless and the teacher eventually spent more time in controlling the class than in teaching the pupils.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

145. Judgements are based on the gymnastics and games lessons observed. The swimming lesson planned during the inspection week had to be cancelled as the instructor was not available. However, swimming records show pupils' achievements in detail and they were carefully studied. One gymnastics lesson and two games lessons for six and seven year-old pupils were seen and one games lesson for nine and ten year olds.

146. Seven year old pupils are attaining standards in line with expectations for their age in gymnastics and games. It is not possible to make a judgement about pupils' standards of attainment by the age of 11, except for swimming, where records show that they are well above national expectations. In the games lesson observed, pupils aged nine and ten attained an appropriate standard for their age.

147. Pupils up to the age of seven, including those who have special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. They develop increasing control and co-ordination when working with large and small apparatus in the school hall and when practising bat and ball skills outside. By Year 2, they are able to move in a variety of ways, using different parts of their bodies, with satisfactory posture and control. They link movements in a sequence, working with some precision as they hold a balance, and land carefully when jumping from apparatus. In games lessons, pupils show a satisfactory level of skill in throwing and bouncing small balls, on their own and when working with a partner. In one lesson seen, Year 1 pupils travelled carefully, and mostly successfully, across the school field, balancing a wobbling ball on a bat in an 'egg and spoon race'. This rounded off an enjoyable lesson where control and co-ordination skills had clearly improved with practice. Such skills have evidently developed to a satisfactory level by the ages of nine and ten. Pupils of this age were seen to practise the skills of bowling, batting and fielding and then to use them in games of rounders. Here, the older pupils successfully organised their own game while the younger half of the class worked more closely with the teacher. The indications are that pupils in the upper half of the school make at least satisfactory progress in physical education and very good progress in their swimming. Overall, both boys and girls, of different levels of ability, achieve well. Positive factors in this are the evident enjoyment of the pupils and the good teaching they receive. Pupils who have a particular interest or ability in games have the opportunity to gain more tuition in the after-school clubs. However, the very small size of the school hall, where many lessons take place, hinders pupils' progress. This is particularly the case with older pupils, as there is too little space for indoor games, and movement is restricted when pupils use large apparatus such as stools, benches and mats.

148. Pupils of all ages enjoy the subject. They approach lessons with enthusiasm and try hard. They listen well and are learning to evaluate their work. Pupils are well behaved and are able to work alone or in groups.

149. The subject is well taught. In the four lessons seen, the standard of teaching was mostly good and never less than satisfactory. Teachers understand the subject and use good teaching methods, teaching the basic skills well. Pupils learn through a variety of interesting and progressively more challenging activities. Lessons are carefully planned and teachers often have high expectations of their pupils, particularly in Year 2. Pupils respond well, generally follow instructions carefully, and strive to improve. Teachers note how well pupils are progressing in the course of a lesson, advising and encouraging them. Teachers are vigilant about safety, particularly when working in the hall. They teach pupils how to organise themselves, and younger pupils were seen to lift apparatus in the proper way, putting it to one side at the end of their lesson.

150. The curriculum is planned to meet national requirements. Dance and athletics are taught and pupils in the older half of the school have experience of outdoor and adventurous activities on residential visits. The oldest pupils have also learned about orienteering on a

recent visit to Beaumanor Hall. The curriculum is enhanced by the after-school football, basketball, running and line-dancing clubs. Older pupils receive expert coaching in basketball by Leicester City Riders and in short cricket by Leicestershire Cricket Club. They take part in league competitions with other schools.

151. There is satisfactory leadership of the subject. The co-ordinator does not have time to see how the subject is taught to classes around the school, but has led the staff in the production of the new policy and scheme of work. The scheme of work is detailed and has been devised by the school following the recommendations of the national Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. A comprehensive system of assessment and recording is well linked to the scheme of work. This assessment system is new and not all teachers are yet using it to record pupils' progress. Resources are sufficient to teach all aspects of the subject. The school makes good use of the playground and school field. Everyone looks forward to the building of the new extension, which will include a larger hall.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

152. By the end of both key stages, pupils reach standards that are appropriate for their age, and standards have been maintained at this level since the last inspection. Pupils with special needs play a full part in lessons. They are given work at an appropriate level and additional support so that they make satisfactory progress.

153. In Key Stage 1, pupils are introduced to stories from the Old and New Testaments, and retell them accurately. Pupils in Year 1 have a good recall of the story of Moses, and extend this to talk about the qualities of a leader. They know stories from other religions, such as that of Rama and Sita. By age seven, they show a sound understanding of the part that religion plays in the daily lives of Christians. They understand reasons for major festivals, and key features of other faiths, including Hinduism and Islam.

154. This study is developed in Key Stage 2, where pupils compare similarities and differences in the religious beliefs and traditions of four world religions, through such themes as festivals, pilgrimages and symbols. By age 11, pupils have a clear perception of the significance of artefacts, symbols, books and places of worship of these religions. For instance, they understand the prayer rituals of Islam, and show respect when handling a prayer mat. An illustrated commentary on a visit to the local church shows good understanding of the significance of features such as the font, and an appreciation that the cross can be represented in different ways. A good feature of the planned curriculum is the encouragement that pupils are given to think for themselves about the broader meanings of life while studying the beliefs of others.

155. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The standard of teaching was satisfactory in three of the lessons seen and good in a fourth. Teachers prepare the content of their lessons thoroughly to give pupils a sound basis of factual knowledge. This knowledge is placed in a framework of moral values, and skilfully related to pupils' personal experiences. Teachers use questioning well to encourage pupils to make connections with their prior learning. Such an opportunity in a Year 1 class led to several pupils giving enthusiastic accounts of the life of Moses. In a good lesson with Year 2, role-play was used very effectively to guide pupils in exploring the meaning of the Parables. Sensitive questioning helped a pupil with special needs

to explain to the class the motives of the character he played. Pupils in both key stages have positive attitudes towards religious education. They show keen interest in artefacts, such as an Islamic prayer mat, and ask thoughtful questions. Written tasks encourage thought, accurate recall of factual information, and the exploration of personal response. However, lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' written work indicate that all pupils in the class are generally given the same written task. Over time, not enough is expected of pupils with potentially higher attainment.

156. There is a satisfactory arrangement for the management of the subject in the absence of the co-ordinator. The newly revised curriculum is based on recent nationally recommended guidelines and meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. The subject is also supported through links with the programme for personal, social and health education, to enable pupils to explore issues of concern. The sequence of topics for assemblies has been well chosen to widen pupils' understanding of other faiths and their experience of worship. The school has strong contacts with the church and the life of the parish. Resources are satisfactory. The school has taken advice on its collection of religious objects, and these are being improved. Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and the ethos of the school.