

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ALFRETON LEYS JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Alfreton

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112492

Headteacher: Mr C R Hartley

Reporting inspector: O L Thomas  
16041

Dates of inspection: 18 – 20 June 2001

Inspection number: 196438

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Flowery Leys Lane Alfreton Derbyshire
Postcode:	DE55 7HA
Telephone number:	01773 832895
Fax number:	--
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Coleman
Date of previous inspection:	30 June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1604 1	O L Thomas	Registered inspector	Science Art and design Physical education Equal opportunities Special educational needs English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1934 4	D W Jones	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1771 1	J B Thomas	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education	How high are standards?
2257 8	G Jones	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Music	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

The inspection contractor was: Network Management Services  
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Llangynhafal  
Ruthin  
Denbighshire  
LL15 1RU

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

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

**Pages 6 - 10**

Information about the school  
How good the school is  
What the school does well  
What could be improved  
How the school has improved since its last inspection  
Standards  
Pupils' attitudes and values  
Teaching and learning  
Other aspects of the school  
How well the school is led and managed  
Parents' and carers' views of the school

### **PART B: COMMENTARY**

**Pages 11 - 21**

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

**Paragraph No's**

The school's results and pupils' achievements  
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

**1 - 7**

**8 - 12**

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

**13 - 18**

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

**19 - 33**

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

**34 - 41**

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

**42 - 43**

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

**44 - 50**

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

**51**

### **PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

**Pages 22 - 25**

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

**Pages 26 - 37**

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Alfreton Leys Junior School's roll has increased between 1996 to 2000 from 129 to 142. Pupils are taught in five classes – 60 per cent on roll are boys. The school is smaller than other primary schools. The school serves an area of mixed housing but between ten and 20 per cent of pupils are not from the traditional catchment area. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is 33 per cent which is above average. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. Nineteen per cent of pupils are identified on the register of special educational need; the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need at 3.3 per cent is above national average. There has been one permanent exclusion in the last year. Pupil mobility evens itself out with ten pupils in and ten out other than at the normal time of admission. Attainment of pupils on entry is below average.

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

This is an effective school, which through good teaching enables pupils to make good and at times very good progress in the basic skills. Although standards do not yet reach national expectations they are growing closer to them and the picture for the forthcoming years looks rosier because of the effective leadership by the Headteacher. There is a strong team spirit amongst staff. Pupils enjoy their school life and the oldest have acquired high levels of consideration for each other. The relevant curriculum is enhanced by extensive sporting activities, which support pupils' self-esteem. To become even more effective challenges remain in that, the pupils' good achievements are not celebrated effectively through displays to support their learning and the marking of work is not precise enough to help pupils understand how to get better and raise their aspirations for quality. Given the pupils' low attainment on entry and the rapid progress many make in the basic skills, the school gives good value for money.

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

- Pupils achieve well and progress is good in English, mathematics and science.
- Good quality teaching encourages pupils' learning because of excellent management of behaviour, very effective teaching of basic skills and high levels of care for all pupils.
- The very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships pupils have to school, to each other and to the adults around them.
- The extent of extracurricular activities is very good and impacts well on pupils' personal development and their self-esteem.
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is high quality.
- Procedures for monitoring behaviour, attendance and attainment are very good.
- Specific grants are used very well to support pupils' learning.

### **What could be improved**

- Standards of attainment in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- The pupils' awareness of life in a multicultural society.
- Marking and checking of pupils' work, to show them how to improve what they do and agree written goals to improve further.
- The monitoring of teaching by the Headteacher and key staff.
- The poor accommodation and storage facilities.
- The quality of presentation in books, displays and teaching areas to celebrate pupils' achievements.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997. Since that time it has addressed most of the key issues at least satisfactorily and the work related to governors' involvement has been good. The governors are now actively involved in school life and have gained a much better understanding of the challenges facing the Headteacher and staff. However, the issue related to monitoring of the curriculum and teaching has not been addressed with sufficient rigour and still requires further action. In spite of efforts by the school to improve the accommodation, much remains to be done, to ensure that pupils enjoy a supportive learning environment where they can learn without distraction and teachers can do their job without regular disruption. The school is well placed to go from strength to strength; continue its efforts to involve parents as fully as possible and reflect more critically on what can be improved so that the quality of education and standards can be raised even further.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	E	E	E	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	E	E	E	E	
Science	E	E	D	D	

*N.B. The similar school comparison is based only on the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

The above table should be treated with considerable caution as it does not give a fair picture of the school's true achievements in raising standards; this is because account is not taken of the very low achievement of many pupils when they entered the school at age seven. Results from national tests at age seven confirm the poor performance of many. The inspection finds a different and more encouraging picture than the above chart would suggest and one, which is echoed by a recent DfEE Achievement Award for improving test performance. Although the current Year 6 pupils are not all on target to achieve the expected Level 4 in the core subjects and consequently standards are below what is expected nationally; about half look likely to meet this goal and all pupils are moving much closer to it with some of them showing an ability to work within the higher Level 5.

Importantly, pupils achieve well because teaching is good, and some achieve very well in English, mathematics and science when their low attainment on entry is taken into account. All groups regardless of gender or social background make good progress. Irregular attendance by some pupils inhibits their ability to move forward systematically in their learning.

Useful tracking of pupils' progress to set realistic targets has resulted in a trend of improvement and this is very evident in Years 4 and 5. This work is important because the

school faces an ongoing challenge to raise quickly the lower than average achievements of pupils on entry to the school.

In information and communication technology pupils do not attain as expected in any aspect of the subject. In the non-core subjects pupils' knowledge is mainly as expected but there are often weaknesses in their skills and depth of understanding. The exceptions are design and technology where pupils are not having sufficient access, therefore they cannot attain as expected and in music standards have declined since the last inspection. Pupils attain well in games and gymnastics skills.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Very good; a strength of the school. Many pupils learn to enjoy learning and show very good attitudes. They are keen to be involved in the activities and cooperate very well with each other.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils know what is expected of them and most live up to these high expectations very well.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. A strong emphasis is placed on helping pupils to get on with each other and they show great care for the feelings of others.
Attendance	Satisfactory attendance overall with examples of parents who do not ensure that their pupils attend regularly in spite of the school's best efforts.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged 7-11 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	Good

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

Teaching is never less than good in this school and in the upper juniors it is very good indeed. Four per cent was excellent, 19 per cent very good and 77 per cent good. It is because of the consistently good quality teaching that pupils in this school move forward so well in their learning. The teachers work well together, know the pupils' needs, cater for them thoughtfully and ensure learning is the business of the day. Teachers do well to cope with the disruptions caused by the accommodation, and pupils have learned to accept it – however, it is nevertheless a barrier to concentration. When a group of Year 6 pupils were asked 'Is there anything you would like to see changed about your school?' they unanimously replied, 'closed classrooms and more space'. When asked what would they not change, the reply was, 'the teachers'. The inspectors agree with them.

Literacy and numeracy are well taught and effectively supported by non-teaching support assistants. The school meets the needs of all pupils well regardless of ability, background or gender. Pupils with personal or emotional difficulties are exceptionally well supported.



Specialist and small group teaching is well used to raise standards. To rise to the highest levels of practice, teachers need to reflect on the quality of the environment they offer, improve the precision with which they mark and intervene in pupils' work to show them how to get better, placing more of an onus on the pupils themselves to improve.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a very relevant curriculum to meet pupils' needs; however, ICT does not meet requirements and the curriculum is not supported by a strategy to combat racism. Extracurricular activities are very broad. Plans to update provision for the foundation subjects could be accelerated to highlight skills teaching.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; well supported by skilled non-teaching staff and well targeted Individual educational plans. Pupils are monitored well to check progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Moral development is excellent and social development is very good; spiritual and cultural provision although satisfactory could clearly be improved through Collective Worship and within the curriculum to broaden pupils' view of the world and their opportunities to reflect on their role in it as tolerant and responsible citizens.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well indeed. Excellent pastoral care. However, checking of pupils' progress does not lead to them being given clear goals for how to get better. The school works hard to involve parents in what it does – too few respond positively but nevertheless are very appreciative of the quality of education it provides.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is well led and managed soundly. Coordinators have begun to take a greater role in impacting on standards for example, in mathematics and physical education; opportunity for all subject managers to impact on their subjects is too limited.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory overall and good progress since the last inspection.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good overall although monitoring of the curriculum and teaching remains an issue from the last inspection.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Best use is made of specialist teaching and specific grants to impact on standards. The governors are beginning to apply the principles of best value.

## 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>• That their children enjoy school.</li><li>• The progress children make.</li><li>• The behaviour is good.</li><li>• The good quality teaching.</li><li>• That children are expected to work hard.</li><li>• That the school is well led and managed.</li><li>• The school helps children to become mature and responsible.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The amount of homework.</li><li>• Information about their children's progress.</li></ul>

Forty per cent of parents responded to the questionnaire and 12 parents attended the pre-inspection meeting.

The inspectors agree with the positive views of parents. In respect of homework provision, it is satisfactory and teachers encourage pupils to carry it out but not all do, notably when the tasks require parental involvement. The parents receive the required annual report, there are parents' evenings and staff are receptive to talking to parents about their children's progress. Annual progress reports do not share with parents clearly enough how their children can improve.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. On entry to the school at the age of seven the attainment levels of the majority of its pupils are low in comparison to both national expectations and similar schools. Results from national tests at age seven confirm the poor performance of many. This, therefore, sets the school a real challenge in trying to ensure that most pupils attain nationally expected levels by the age of 11. There are many gaps in pupils' knowledge and basic skills of literacy and numeracy, which ultimately affects all that they do. It is for this reason that greater explanation of pupils' results in the tests is needed because if this low starting point is not considered when comparisons are made, it undermines the good level of added value which Alfreton Leys Junior School offers its pupils. Bearing this in mind the following encouraging picture emerges to acknowledge that the school does well.

2. In the most recent national tests for 11 year olds in Year 2000 the pupils' performance improved on the previous year by 30 per cent in English, 16 per cent in mathematics and 25 per cent in science. This meant that the school had moved considerably closer to the proportion of pupils attaining at the expected Level 4 in English, mathematics and science. The school is striving to improve gaps in pupils' learning from Key Stage 1, pupils' confidence when taking tests and raise the low number who attain the higher Level 5. The school's achievements in raising test performance has been recognized by a DfEE Achievement Award.

3. The school has been tracking pupils' progress in order to set realistic targets to raise standards. Improvement is being achieved notably in Years 4 and 5 but the school faces an ongoing challenge to raise quickly the lower than average achievements of pupils on entry to the school. The analysis of national and standardised tests is an effective tool and used well to identify gaps, leaps and plateaus in pupils' performance. The school is less successful in checking on outcomes of daily work via marking and intervention to set small but measurable goals for improvement by the pupils themselves.

4. The inspection, which judges pupils' attainment with a broader brush than the tests, finds the current Year 6 pupils are not all on target to achieve the expected Level 4 in the core subjects and consequently standards are below what is expected nationally in English, mathematics and science. However, about half look likely to meet this goal and all pupils are moving much closer to it with some of them now showing an ability to work within the higher Level 5. This picture, although not as good as last year, reflects good achievement and progress as these pupils were well below national expectations on entry to the school at seven and there is a complex mix of characters within the class with broad and diverse personal and social needs.

5. In English, mathematics and science pupils achieve well because teaching is good, and some achieve very well in all three subjects when their low attainment on entry is taken into account. All groups regardless of gender or social background make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the careful plotted work offered to them and the high quality support from the education care officers. The few higher attaining pupils are coming on well and growing in confidence. The school is now in a position to move away from consolidation and reinforcement for these pupils and onto challenge and more emphasis on problem solving and investigation. The achievements of some pupils are inhibited by their irregular attendance in spite of the

school's efforts and this focuses on some lack of parental responsibility in supporting pupils' achievements.

6. In the other subjects pupils attain satisfactorily in acquiring knowledge but subject skills and depth of understanding are lagging behind mainly due to gaps in their prior learning. In information and communication technology pupils do not attain as expected in any aspect of the subject. In design and technology and music attainment is below expected levels. Pupils attain well in games and gymnastics skills.

7. Given their low starting points pupils achieve well in this school because the Headteacher and staff are committed to improving standards and supporting all aspects of personal development.

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

8. The pupils' attitude to their school, their behaviour and personal development are very good. Their attendance is satisfactory.

9. The pupils have a strong affection for their school and its staff, and they are eager to attend and take part in the learning experience. Across all classes they are seen to enjoy stimulation and challenge and they contribute with enthusiasm to discussion and activities. This enthusiasm extends through all areas of the curricular and extracurricular activities. In a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 3 they were developing their ability in multiplication. Their attitude contributed to the progress of the lesson, with higher ability pupils working well with less able partners. During a lesson for pupils in Year 6 they were practising mental recall of percentage and fractions. Their rapid responses were tribute to their motivation, interest and listening skills. Although eager to contribute their answers, they showed good self-discipline.

10. These are lively, self-confident children who respond well to the school's demands for high standards of behaviour and conduct. In all areas of their school life they conduct themselves sensibly and with regard for others. They are courteous and respectful. They know and understand the requirements for good behaviour and they recognise and respect the benefits that result from sensible conduct.

11. Pupils have a deep regard for their teachers with whom they have close but respectful relationships and a strong bond of trust. They are openly supportive with one another both in lessons and during play and team games. They are generally mature enough to recognise the implications of bullying which, they disapprove of and support the school's stance against such behaviour. They show a strong sense of caring and no instinct for discrimination.

12. The school has maintained the high level for this aspect found during the previous inspection. Attendance likewise remains at the satisfactory level recorded during the previous inspection despite the school's best efforts to encourage greater consistency from some parents.

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

13. Teaching was at least good in all lessons; no teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. All of the high quality attributes described in its last inspection report have been sustained or improved. Teachers work hard and this pays results in the standards they help the pupils to achieve. They are committed to improving standards whilst giving

pupils a broad and relevant curriculum to meet their needs; this is helped along by how well their pupils achieve not only academically but also in relation to their personal, social and emotional development. Interaction with pupils is very good. Standards are being driven forward in this school and pupils achieving well from a low starting base because teachers brook no nonsense and time is used very productively to keep pupils working hard whilst maintaining high levels of care and understanding for personalities and their particular needs. The strong partnership and working relationship between teachers and education care officers (ECO's), who work alongside teachers and pupils, give valuable, high quality support to pupils which impacts well on their academic and personal development. Pupils learn well because teachers have excellent expectations for behaviour, for them to listen, join in and do their best.

14. The ability to teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy well and link how pupils might use them in the other subjects is a strong factor in pupils being able to see the relevance of what they learn and use their knowledge elsewhere, this is coupled with the teachers' ability to make learning interesting for them. For example, in Year 5 pupils were learning about improving fluency and expression when reading poetry aloud; the teacher's creative approach, the way pupils were shown how to read aloud and the lively manner improved pupils' skills well and motivated them to want to get better. The use of specialist teaching enhances pupils' subject skills well in literacy and numeracy and very well in art and physical education.

15. Teachers use time, often limited resources and non-teaching support well to support pupils' learning. They put up with the poor accommodation and have learned to accept it but nevertheless there is no doubt it causes disruption to learning and frustration. Although the accommodation is unwieldy and difficult to cope with the use of it could be better. There are lost opportunities where improvements could be readily made. Not enough thought has been given to storage; pockets of clutter overshadow the few open spaces available. The use of displays and how they may support pupils' daily learning or celebrate achievement has not been thought through. Too often displays are flat, lack lustre and do nothing to help pupils acquire, reinforce and extend language related to topics and themes. This weakness also affects spiritual development in that, examples of displays for pupils to reflect on natural objects, human achievement and the wonder of the world and see the highest examples of quality are not on the school's agenda and need to be.

16. Teachers use assessments satisfactorily but there is scope for them to be more rigorous in marking work and sharing with pupils how they need to get better. Pupils have too little involvement in improving their own work and recognising their responsibility in getting better at what they do. When pupils are working teachers do not place enough emphasis on intervening to help them in presenting work to a good standard; this diminishes its impact, pupils' efforts and the abilities of both to see swiftly where improvements are needed in depth and quality. There is scope for teachers to use what they know about pupils to challenge the higher attaining pupils to use their skills in problem solving particularly in mathematics and science.

17. When homework is given it supports learning well. The availability of homework is inconsistent and this is something which parents would like to see improved.

18. These areas identified for teachers to further support learning must be seen in the context of the good quality of education which the school overall provides and the tremendous commitment staff have to their pupils. The strong team spirit and desire to improve pupils' lot is a major resource to drive standards and pupils' learning onward and upward.

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

19. The quality and range of learning opportunities offered to pupils are good. The school offers a curriculum, which is mainly balanced and relevant to the needs of the pupils. It meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, with the exception of the complete coverage of elements in the information and communication technology curriculum and in design and technology and music. However, the school has not yet looked closely enough at the documentation surrounding the national initiative of "Curriculum 2000" in order to see if it needs to change any of its planning for the foundation subjects. The curriculum includes well-structured provision for the required elements of personal, social and health education. Visiting speakers advise on issues of health and safety in order that pupils can make informed choices about their life style. The school works hard to make lessons relevant to the backgrounds of all pupils at the school and succeeds very well in its efforts. This is better than the position that pertained at the last inspection.

20. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. In many lessons they are supported by trained and well prepared support adults who provide these pupils with a means to make good progress. When support is not available pupils' progress is consequently not as good.

21. The school uses the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies very effectively to teach pupils and support learning. In the upper part of the school this is particularly noticeable.

22. The cross-curricular nature of much of the topic work in the school not only adds interest to the learning, but helps pupils understand the close links between various elements of the curriculum. However, the promotion of subject knowledge and to a lesser extent subject understanding is better developed than subject skills. This can be seen in design and technology, information and communication technology, geography and history for example. The emphasis placed on English and mathematics, well supported by the two national strategies, has helped create an improvement in both teaching and learning through better curriculum planning. There is now an opportunity to look again at the other subjects on the curriculum in order to provide a more even balance between the teaching of knowledge, understanding and skills.

23. Classrooms are not yet providing good enough support for the curriculum through displays. The good use of the specialisms which several teachers have in English, mathematics, music and information and communication technology, whilst providing pupils with good teaching, do not then have a positive enough effect on the classroom environment. There seems some confusion as to which teacher should provide lively and informative displays to support learning within these areas of specialist teaching. As a result, displays often do not show the names of contributors, what the work illustrates, how it was completed and by what means. This gives little support to the curriculum and little support to pupils' self- esteem and personal development.

24. Currently insufficient emphasis is being placed on pupils following their own avenues of study, personal topics or research. This is particularly noticeable in elements of mathematics and science where pupils do not follow open-ended questions. Equally in religious education, whilst pupils learn a good deal about religion, they do not learn as much from religion as they might.

25. The school's policies and schemes of work ensure that boys and girls from different backgrounds and with different levels of attainment all have full access to the school's curriculum. As a result, all pupils make similar good progress in their learning. Booster classes, additional literacy support and a special mathematics scheme for more able pupils in Year 5, all support pupils' particular needs.

26. With the exception of literacy and numeracy, the school lacks an overview or map of the curriculum in which all subjects for all classes during all terms can be seen at a glance, thus ensuring that planning allows the step-by-step build up of knowledge, understanding and skills across the school. For example, in both design and technology and in information and communication technology, whilst individual teachers have an adequate idea of the elements they need to teach, an overview, which puts this into a school perspective, is missing. This would allow the Headteacher to check short-term planning against an overall picture. In this way, it would be possible to note the development of research, observation or problem solving, not currently well planned for.

27. There is a very good range of extracurricular activities to enhance pupils' learning, which is focused on music and sport. The school is particularly successful in competitive sport. These activities have a very positive effect on raising pupils' self-esteem, giving them a strong bond for their school and providing opportunities to meet other children. In sport particularly the pupils excel in competition across a range of activities that include football for boys and girls, athletics, hockey, cross country running, basketball, cricket and tennis. They attend 'Go for Health' sessions, held to promote healthy eating. In music they play recorders; they have presented a Christmas concert and sung for members of a local residential home. The school also provides visits, by which learning can be further brought to life. Year 3 pupils make a visit to Elvaston Castle and look at life in Victorian times. Year 4 pupils visit York to see the Viking experience and note at first hand the ships, culture and clothes of people in those times, while Year 5 pupils visit Eyam to understand the terror of the Plague. All promote a better understanding of the subject matter under discussion. Almost all parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire expressed positive opinions about this element of their children's education.

28. The school has good links with the community, although business links are not well developed. The school Friends Association provides many social and fund raising events, which bring in visitors from both the school and beyond, with some pupils making visits to a home for people with learning disabilities, especially at Christmas time. The school has good links with other schools in its area. There is a firm link with the secondary school to which many pupils transfer and growing links with the infant schools that send children to The Leys. The school provides opportunities for secondary age students to carry out work experience at the school and a small number of students in teacher training visit the school.

29. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is inconsistent. Provision for pupils' moral development is excellent and for their social development, very good. Provision for their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils' multicultural awareness and preparation for living in world where racism has no place are unsatisfactory.

30. The development of spiritual values is not supported by an ethos that celebrates awe and wonder, nor teaches a distinctive Christian faith. The very positive role model provided by teaching staff in so many areas of the pupils' learning is denied them for this aspect. The school does not use collective worship for reflection or as a foundation to

provide pupils with an appreciation for the concept of faith. The quality of worship seen barely met requirements.

31. The school's high expectations for behaviour and good conduct are encouraged and supported through consistent behaviour management strategies and strong pastoral relationships. The pupils have a positive view of the benefits of good behaviour and recognise its contribution to the learning environment and the quality of their relationships. They understand right from wrong and are able to reflect on and consider the effects of their own poor behaviour on themselves and others.

32. The pupils are friendly, considerate and outgoing, they enjoy good relationships with each other and their teachers. Many show an instinct for caring for others and they have contributed to a number of charities as well as showing support to members of their own community. Through their extracurricular activities in sport and visits to places of educational interest, pupils' self-esteem, personal development and understanding for social conventions are enhanced. When they are given responsibilities they provide calm and sensible support to their teachers and other members of staff. The cooperation and sharing that the pupils display during lessons enhances the lesson progress.

33. The pupils are actively involved in their own community and have enjoyed outside visits to places such as Elvaston Castle and Woollaston Hall, which have broadened their understanding of their own culture. Some have studied aspects of Victorian life to contrast with their own. However, the extent of pupils' knowledge of the beliefs and customs of other cultures is limited to their studies in religious education, where they have compared Christianity with other world religions, and reading material available in school. The curriculum does not include sufficient material to help pupils develop tolerance and respect for others; this is compounded by the lack of a clear strategy to combat racism even though at the moment the school lacks ethnic diversity it is not preparing pupils well enough for the multicultural world in which they will grow and live.

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

34. The school makes very good provision for procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils welfare, educational and personal support and guidance, procedures for monitoring and improving attendance, procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour and procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Good provision is made for the monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development, use of assessment information to guide curricular planning, procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress and procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. The findings of this inspection accord with the positive features found during the previous inspection and in many aspects are improved.

35. The very good personal support and guidance provided by the school have a significant positive impact on pupils' self esteem and educational progress. The school is a safe, secure environment where the pupils' commitment to learning benefits from the excellent pastoral relationships that exist. However, although staff have knowledge of child protection procedures, there is a need for this to be updated.

36. The school has good procedures for monitoring the academic performance and personal development of its pupils. Procedures for monitoring academic progress are well constructed but are not always consistently applied across the school.



37. Since the last inspection, the school is now making better use of its test results in order to support curriculum planning by highlighting the needs of individuals or groups of pupils and by noting weaknesses in teaching and learning when it analyses the National Curriculum test results. For example, tests are used to decide which pupils need extra support in the run up to the National Curriculum tests and which pupils need additional literacy support. Results are not, as yet, well enough used by individual teachers to determine on a daily basis, what activities the various groups of pupils in classes will complete in order to push forward their learning. Too often pupils of different abilities are given the same work to complete. The only difference is the amount of work they complete or the length of time it takes them to complete it.

38. The well-devised recording charts the school uses to show pupils' achievements in tests over a longer period of time, give a clear indication of the progress those pupils make. At the same time, it allows the school to make predictions for their future success and to check how well they achieve this. This also gives a useful indication of the success of their own teaching and of the curriculum in general. Currently, however, the school is not far enough forward in the way it sets learning goals or targets for its pupils. In a number of cases, marking of work is not as well completed as it should be and often fails to point out to pupils how they might improve their work. This could give a clear opportunity for teachers to set, alongside pupils, targets for their future development. These are not currently being written either in their books or elsewhere. As a result, pupils do not have a regular focal point so that they might see what they need to do on a daily basis, in order to get better. By being rather more involved in this part of their work, pupils' personal development would be enhanced, as would their self-esteem and personal aspirations.

39. Although parents expressed support for the way they are informed about their children's progress at school, the inspection finds that reports are satisfactory but do not detail how parents can help their pupils make better progress.

40. Individual subjects such as English, mathematics and science, show good development of tests and assessments against which to check the progress pupils' make. The same is not yet the case for the core subject of information technology. A selection of completed work is kept in pupils' own profiles. In other subjects, teachers adopt a "best fit" policy well, as they decide at the end of each year, the levels reached by their pupils. This process is well supported by useful material showing the specific levels of the National Curriculum against which judgements are made.

41. All the above information gathered by the school, provides useful additional support as the school seeks to improve overall standards throughout the school. At the same time it shows in some detail the way the school has been able to provide a firm "value added" element to pupils' learning. For example, recent calculations have showed that the school has helped over half of its pupils raise their standards by two National Curriculum levels and a significant number by three levels.

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

42. Overall the school makes good provision to work in partnership with parents through the effectiveness of its links and the quality of information provided for parents including information about pupils' progress and this quality is sustained from the previous

inspection. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school and the contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home are satisfactory.

43. Those parents who responded to pre-inspection enquiry record significant approval for their relations with the school and the quality of education provided for their children. The school's formal provision of information on activities and their children's progress as well as opportunities for informal contact meets with their satisfaction. Little evidence was seen of parents' contribution in school and their involvement with homework is inconsistent. The small but active parent-teacher association organises events and raises funds for the school.

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

44. Overall, the leadership by the Headteacher and key staff, in partnership with the governing body who play an active part in the life of the school, is good. Criticised in the last report for not fulfilling its role, the governing body is now successful in influencing the direction of the school, acting as critical friend and holding the school to account. Through participation in strategic planning and the process of school review, governors are beginning to apply the principles of best value. They meet their statutory obligations except for the delivery of information and communication technology.

45. The very positive effort of the school, reported on in 1997 has been sustained. The whole staff work extremely well together. There is a strong team spirit amongst staff who work hard under the effective leadership of the Headteacher to; "foster and sustain a calm, quiet, orderly environment where children are encouraged to treat each other with respect and where they can feel they belong", an aim which, in practice, is a strength of the school.

46. The school development plan, previously described as a discussion document and identified as an area for improvement has been successfully developed. Strategic planning now involves the Headteacher, staff and governors in the process of identifying appropriate priorities and targets, taking the necessary action and reviewing and evaluating the progress made in meeting them. For example, in the planning, funding and organization of the introduction and implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, staff consensus being reached and resulting in the purchase of appropriate resources, the use of specialist teaching and a regular teaching commitment by the Headteacher to reduce the size of teaching groups in Year 5. All of which have had a positive impact on the pupil's progress. Resources and staffing are satisfactory. Accommodation is poor but overall, the strategic use of resources, accommodation and staffing is good. However, storage facilities need to be improved to help staff and pupils access resources more readily and displays and teaching areas used more effectively to celebrate pupils' achievements and to raise pupils' aspirations for quality.

47. The school's provision for management of its financial resources is good. Educational priorities are clearly identified and costed against budget spending. This includes provision to improve resources for information and communication technology with particular emphasis on the use of personal computers to support the development of numeracy and literacy. The standards funding is used well to develop teaching skills and support targeted issues such as special educational needs, National Numeracy and Literacy Strategy. The focus for this spending is clearly highlighted in the school's development plan. The delegation of spending is monitored with appropriate controls. The school uses a number of outlets for purchases based on best value principle and these are remitted through computer linking to the Local Education Authority's finance monitoring. Specific grants are used effectively, particularly where extra support staff are provided,

whose high quality input has a positive effect on the pupils' academic and personal development.

48. The setting of targets for improvement in standards, identified previously as a key issue, have been put in place. Extensive work has been carried out to establish measurable goals for improved performance by pupils. The school now uses assessment and performance data well to predict potential, focus effort and support improvement. The monitoring and evaluation of national test results and internal test scores are keen, and helping raise overall achievement.

49. Although the process of performance management has been established, no systematic monitoring of teaching and learning by the Headteacher and key staff has been put in to place since the last inspection. Monitoring has not been specific enough to identify and accelerate a number of areas for development that require firm management as highlighted elsewhere in the report, for example, the marking of pupils' work which involves them in the process.

50. The day-to-day financial and accommodation procedures are good, routines are efficient and unobtrusive. The secretary gives valuable support to the Headteacher and staff. Given the prior attainment of pupils, the good progress made and the quality of teaching, the school gives good value for money.

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

51. **The governors, Headteacher and staff now need to:**

**Improve standards of attainment in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology by ensuring that:**

- the implementation of the school's own priorities for these subjects are accelerated;
- staff competence and resources for ICT are improved;
- the use of subject skills are planned for more thoughtfully to enable pupils to apply what they know;
- the specific weaknesses in the subjects identified within the subject paragraphs of this report are given swift attention;
- work is carefully matched to the range of pupils' needs.

*References to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph no's: 5,6,16,19,22,24,26,38,53,56,57,60,64,67,68,72,75,84,85,96,97,103 and 104.*

**Improve the pupils' awareness of life in a multicultural society by ensuring that:**

- teachers plan more specifically for pupils' cultural and multicultural awareness;
- planning, delivery and pupils' understanding are assessed;
- that the range of school resources is reviewed to ensure they reflect the diversity of our society;
- the school has a strategy to how they will combat racism or discrimination of any kind;
- the school is vigilant in ensuring that its revised aims are rigorously implemented.

*References to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph no's: 29,33 and 118.*

**Improve the marking and checking of pupils' work, to show them how to improve what they do and agree written goals to get better by ensuring that:**

- teachers mark pupils' work with an emphasis on sharing with them how to improve it;
- pupils are set targets for improvement and these are regularly checked for success;
- outcomes of tests are diagnosed carefully by **all** staff to recognise what pupils know, understand and can do.

*References to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph no's:3,16,38,58 and 70.*

**Improve the monitoring of teaching by the Headteacher and key staff by ensuring that:**

- the Headteacher has sufficient time to fulfill his management role;
- clear criteria for monitoring curriculum delivery are used which all staff are aware of;
- targets are set for improvement and actions evaluated for success;
- governors take an active role in evaluating the issues raised from monitoring.

*References to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph no's:49 and 74.*

**Work towards improving the poor accommodation and storage facilities to ensure that:**

- governors, staff and parents continue their best efforts to seek improvements to the poor accommodation;
- the staff team critically reflect on how the very best use can be made of what is available to minimize disruption;
- plans are developed to improve storage facilities in classrooms as funding allows.

*References to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph no's: 15,46,78,83 and 87.*

**Improve the quality of presentation in books, displays and teaching areas by ensuring that;**

- the pupils' achievements are celebrated in attractive displays which highlight relevant vocabulary and key questions to support learning;
- there is a higher expectation for the presentation and organisation of pupils' efforts;
- all work is dated;
- pupils are encouraged to take a greater pride in their books and work folders to raise their own aspirations for high quality.

*References to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph no's: 15, 23, 58 and 70.*

*Other minor weaknesses can be found be paragraph no's: 5,35.39.89.105,115 and 116.*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	26
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	19	77	0	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	142
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	40

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
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	27

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	94
National comparative data	94

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.9
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	21	19	40

<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	14	15	18
	Girls	14	10	13
	Total	28	25	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (43)	63 (47)	78 (53)
	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	15	15	16
	Girls	12	11	12
	Total	27	26	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (27)	65 (33)	70 (33)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	142
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	28.4

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

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	123

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	316,685
Total expenditure	304,643
Expenditure per pupil	2,005
Balance brought forward from previous year	-1,227
Balance carried forward to next year	10,815



Parents' Questionnaire – response percentages

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Total issued: 143  
 Returned: 58  
 Percentage: 40.6

		<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Tend to agree</b>	<b>Tend to disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
1	My child likes school	66	34	0	0	0
2	My child is making good progress in school	67	33	0	0	0
3	Behaviour in the school is good	53	47	0	0	0
4	My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	31	55	12	0	2
5	The teaching is good	72	26	2	0	0
6	I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	48	40	12	0	0
7	I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	78	21	2	0	0
8	The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	84	16	0	0	0
9	The school works closely with parents	47	47	7	0	0
10	The school is well led and managed	71	28	2	0	0
11	The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	67	31	0	0	2
12	The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons	79	14	3	0	3

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

### **ENGLISH**

52. In the Year 2000 national tests in English there was a significant shift upwards in pupils' performance with 70 per cent of that cohort attaining at the nationally expected Level 4; moving them much closer to the 75 per cent of pupils who attained as expected in Year 6 nationally. It was partly due to the success in English that the school received a DfEE Achievement Award recently. The proportion of pupils attaining at the higher Level 5 was half of that found nationally and the proportion attaining at the lower Level 3 was about the same as found elsewhere although those pupils who attained below Level 3 was higher. This improving picture is positive because when the results for the same pupils at the age of seven are studied it shows unequivocally that they were well below average on entry into Leys Junior School in the important skills of reading and writing. Therefore these pupils achieved well.

53. The inspection finds that about half of the current Year 6 is on target to attain Level 4 and this is lower than previously but explained because these pupils' attainment on entry at seven was very low. They have had many gaps to fill in their learning and the task has been difficult so it is their achievement from entry, which gives the truer picture, and this has been good.

54. Pupils achieve well in speaking, very well in listening and well in reading and writing. Those pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual educational plans which are mainly focused on spelling, reading and writing. The few higher attaining pupils are beginning to improve well and the range of work suits their needs.

55. Teaching in this area is good and pupils make good progress towards achieving standards, which are broadly average in speaking, and listening by the age of 11 with some weaknesses notably in the range of vocabulary used by pupils to describe their experiences and work. In Year 3 pupils discuss the worries of Stranger Danger, they are clear about what to do and share their ideas with the class; all have confidence to talk to a known audience. In Year 4 pupils are able to give reasons for their answers and to express their feelings about friendships. In Year 5 pupils build well on their previous work by learning to read poetry aloud with suitable rhythm and expression. By the age of 11, they are more articulate in expressing their views. They gain a better understanding of Standard English, considering how they use informal language and how the Queen might say something. Pupils have gained greater confidence in speaking to an audience when they practise a play scene from MacBeth. They have rehearsed the 'Witches scene' and perform their version to the class, using appropriate tone and expression. The class listens quite spellbound and show very good consideration for the efforts of the presenters. Pupils have developed very good listening skills and understand the importance of respect for what others have to say, when they forget the teacher quickly reminds them; nothing that any pupil has to say is devalued.

56. On entry to the school pupils' reading skills are below average and although improved they are still so by the age of 11 although the focus on teaching reading is good and pupils fill gaps in their reading knowledge and skills quickly. Support staff who regularly read in partnership with pupils and check their understanding helps their learning very well. In Year 3 pupils improve their ability to read aloud and follow carefully how the teacher reads letters with different intonation to a range of audiences; they are quick to pick up on

this. Their learning is improved about syllables and they acquire an understanding of compound words. The activity extends pupils' phonic skills and thinking when they have to find as many words as possible within the compound word, which make sense; they use dictionaries adequately to check their answers and spellings. Year 4 pupils read satisfactorily for their ages; they learn about story characters and research the text to find words and phrases, which sum up their personalities. By the end of their lesson pupils have also learned about suffixes, which sound similar but are spelt differently. This work requires them to listen acutely and take care with pronunciation. Pupils in Year 5 are taught poetry very well and they enjoy it, appreciating the teacher's lively reading. They try to emulate how he does it, quickly picking up on speed as the train being described moves away from the station, changing emphasis, loudness and flow as they read. Pupils use their knowledge of word meanings to alter the rhythm as they read. In Year 6 most pupils do not read as expected nationally; but all have a grasp of common words and can blend letters. The few higher attainers read well showing all the signs of an accomplished reader. For example, in comprehension work they are challenged to find which sentences in a difficult text imply the boy was frightened. One pupil records, 'All the while the wretched boy struggled to be free'. The pupils enjoy tremendously reading the Witches scene from Mac Beth and acting it out. They learn to compare old English with contemporary and progress well in identifying differences. Pupils regularly complete book reviews and a range of exercises to improve their understanding. The weaknesses in reading are a lack of confidence when reading aloud, fluency and understanding. Pupils own limited vocabulary hinders their knowledge of text and word meanings.

57. The teaching and improvement of writing is good and has been a focus in the school, pupils are improving their skills and achieving well by the age of 11 given their levels of attainment at the age of seven but most still do not reach nationally expected levels. In Year 3 great store is placed on spelling, writing in sentences and punctuating correctly. Pupils are encouraged to write for a range of purposes as they move through the school. For example, in Year 3 they write from the perspective of the Three Little Pigs whilst the work is at a simple level it nevertheless fulfils the task and shows structure. By the age of 11, pupils write book reviews giving detail about the main points, characters and express preferences; some make quite a critical analysis of the book. The range of purposes for writing is broad. For example, they write a biography of David Livingstone, find facts about why alcohol is bad for you, write playscripts, newspaper articles and draft poems about the weather. Weaknesses in pupils' writing are in the presentation of their work which detracts from the quality, too few write well using a joined script, note taking is weak, as is the use of paragraphs in free writing, and the depth of extended and imaginative writing is limited. The skills pupils have acquired during literacy hour are not always readily transferred to their daily work. Pupils are not consistently set goals for how to improve their writing.

58. Teaching is good, never less so and very good in the upper juniors. This results in pupils enjoying their learning and having positive attitudes to the very relevant activities offered. It is because of the high quality teaching that pupils make such good progress in their learning in the basic skills of literacy and the reason why they are moving closer to national expectations. The teaching reinforces knowledge of letters, words, spellings and Standard English well. Pupils are encouraged to use their literacy in the other subjects and there are some valuable resources prepared by teachers to suit the pupils' needs accurately. The literacy hour is well planned and follows the recommended framework but teachers wisely adapt parts to suit the pupils' needs. Lessons have good pace and time is checked carefully to ensure all elements of the hour are included although the time available for plenary sessions is at times too limited to assess learning well and uncover pupils' misconceptions or errors. Teachers have secure subject knowledge but the school capitalises on specialist teaching and very effective non-teaching support to impact on

pupils' subject knowledge, interest and concentration. Teachers do not however, make the best use of marking and intervention in work to help pupils improve what they do nor do they set clear targets for them to check their own work for errors or how it can be improved. The classrooms are not used as literate environments to surround pupils with words to support learning with books and examples of their own and others' high quality writing. Teachers need to highlight for pupils about endeavouring to aspire to the very best in all that they do.

59. English is very well managed, resources have improved but could still be better and the subject delivery fully meets national requirements. The provision for English has improved since the last inspection.

## **MATHEMATICS**

60. Whilst the school has made steady progress in improving its standards in mathematics since the last inspection, results of the Year 2000 National Curriculum tests show that standards are still below national expectations. Inspection evidence confirms the continuing improvements in standards and shows that in many classes, although a majority of pupils are achieving the nationally expected levels for their age, not enough pupils are achieving higher grades. Equally, when looking at previously completed work even those pupils who achieve well in lessons do not always remember the skills, knowledge and understanding they have gained when returning to the work a short while later.

61. The current Year 6 pupils, who entered the school with poor mathematical ability, are likely not to provide the school with a continuation of the improving figures. However, the following years would suggest a further continuation of the current upward trend in results.

62. Part of the school's success has been the effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy. This has helped improve the quality of both teaching and learning. Teachers use it successfully to link with their commercial scheme of work to structure their lessons. These start with the development of pupils' mental skills and strategies have a central session for exploring new work and close with a summary of what has been learned in the lessons.

63. In a Year 3 lesson pupils explored multiples of two, five and ten, whilst in a Year 4 lesson the teacher made good use of a counting stick to encourage quick response to her mental arithmetic questions. In Year 5 pupils use a pack of question cards with which they have to listen to questions and check whether they have the correct answers on their own cards. Year 6 questions are tailored to the individual abilities of the pupils and are, therefore, more challenging. Although these mental activities were well organised and gave pupils opportunities to use their mental recall powers to good effect, they did not sufficiently extend their speaking skills by asking them to explain their thinking or strategies to the class, when they had made difficult calculations.

64. In a similar way, pupils' use of their mathematical knowledge and understanding is not put to effective use in investigating open-ended problems. Pupils are given opportunities to solve problems based on real life situations such as shopping and timetables. They are not, however, given enough opportunities to use different approaches, develop strategies both working within mathematics and in applying what they already know to the problems with which they are faced. There are individual good examples of where this does happen, as noted in previously completed work in Year 3 and Year 5. Here pupils investigated consecutive numbers and odd numbers finding out what happens when two or three are added together. Having done this, they then try to see if a particular

pattern emerges which can be used for other numbers. Too often, however, the core book is adhered to rather too rigidly instead of teachers using their own knowledge to provide exciting and testing challenges for the pupils.

65. The good use of the National Numeracy Strategy has provided an impetus to pupils' improvements in arithmetic. Progress in this work across the school is sound. There has been good direct teaching of skills, which pupils are beginning to apply with a sound degree of understanding. In Year 3 pupils understand money and can make calculations of change quite quickly. They practise recognising fractions and are tested on their knowledge. They have good skills at telling the time. In Year 4 pupils now show an understanding of how fractions can be equivalent, using this knowledge to add fractions together. They then calculate fractions of a whole number with sound understanding of the methods they use. By Year 5 they are using their knowledge of fractions and percentages to calculate the sale price of goods, which have been reduced. In Year 6, although further progress is limited, there is sound consolidation of what pupils have previously learned. They are able to multiply and divide decimals by ten and by 100, but work seen in a Year 6 lesson, showed them revising similar work to that carried out at Year 5, for consolidation purposes.

66. The progress pupils make in their understanding of shape, space and measure is satisfactory, with pupils in Year 3 able to use points of the compass to give directions, while Year 4 pupils show good progress in recognising two and three-dimensional shapes and being able to note their properties. They understand the make up of angles in a triangle and have a basic understanding of perimeter and area. Year 5 pupils show good understanding of symmetry in shapes and can point to the radius and diameter of a circle. Pupils in Year 6 can use protractors carefully to measure angles and understand the terms parallel, obtuse and acute.

67. Information and communication technology has not been used sufficiently in the past to improve work on data handling. Currently, the better use of computers is beginning to add more support to this area of study, however, pupils still do not get enough access to computers at times when they would be able to improve their understanding of mathematics and use their information technology skills in support of their learning. Work seen in exercise books shows that most of the data handling work is written in books as opposed to being carried out in lessons with computer support. As a result, not enough pupils reach the required standards in this area of their work.

68. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in classes where extra help is available, for example in the lesson seen for pupils in Year 5. here the support adult was working with a small group of pupils of whom most were on the special educational needs register. They received good support and were able to make good progress in their learning. In a Year 6 lesson the support adult led a small group of pupils with special educational needs during the mental mathematics session and gave high quality support with an appropriate level of challenge as they discuss telling the time. When there is no extra support available, as in a Year 4 lesson, teachers are not always able to set appropriate tasks which do not require regular teacher intervention. As a result, pupils then do not make such good progress.

69. Overall, teaching of mathematics is good, an improvement since the last inspection. Every lesson seen was of at least good quality. Of the five lessons seen, four were good and one, in Year 6, was very good. The key element of success was that teachers showed very good and often excellent management skills, which enabled maximum use of the available time with minimum disruptions to learning. The teaching of basic skills, such as

division and multiplication and the way fractions can be added together, were all carried out very carefully. Where support staff were available they were used very well to support learning and help pupils make good progress. The use of teachers' own specialist abilities in mathematics gives good support to learning, as several teachers exchange classes in order to make best use of their talents.

70. The quality of marking, however, was a weaker element of the work in this subject. Whilst most, but not all work was marked, marking rarely pointed out to pupils how they might do better and make better progress. It also failed to set personal targets for pupils to act upon, in order that they might feel part of their own success. In several classes the over use of worksheets provides teachers with a problem of keeping track of progress, as very many worksheets remain undated from the beginning of the year. This makes checking the progress of pupils almost impossible. A problem, which has emerged in the use of specialist teaching in relation to mathematics, is that, with teachers teaching mathematics in classes other than their own, there is often a lack of good quality interactive displays of mathematics, which would serve to support learning and add interest to the difficult accommodation.

71. Pupils responded well to the good teaching they received. They behaved well in all lessons and were motivated to take part with enthusiasm. They worked well in groups or by themselves and contributed well to all sections of lessons. This had a very positive effect on the progress they made.

72. Assessments are well organised and the results of tests are used well to decide which pupils should have extra support. Although tests show which pupils are in a higher ability group, this information is not always used to best advantage in lessons, with too many incidents noted of all abilities of pupils being given work which is too similar in challenge. This does not push forward the learning of the most able and may be part of the reason for the very low amount of scores in the Year 6 tests being above national expectations.

73. Numeracy skills are used to good effect in elements of pupils' work in science, when they measure and create diagrams and charts from the information they gather during investigations. Homework is soundly used to support learning and consolidate knowledge and understanding.

74. The coordinator, having returned after a lengthy illness, gives good leadership to the subject by her efforts in introducing pupils to good routines of learning in Year 3, setting a firm basis upon which the rest of the school can build. She monitored teaching when the National Numeracy Strategy was first introduced, but as yet has not been able to effect improvement within investigational mathematics and in making work more challenging for the more able pupils due to her absence from school. She is aware of the current needs of the subject.

## **SCIENCE**

75. In the most recent national tests for 11 year olds in the Year 2000, most pupils attained below the expected Level 4 in science. Over time results show that the school's performance from 1997 (the time of the last inspection) to 2000 has been well below the national expectation and below that of similar schools. However, the pupils' low attainment at the age of seven must be taken into account.

76. Inspection findings show that the attainment of the current Year 6 pupils is below national expectations but they have achieved well given their low starting base and made good progress over time. They are able to conduct a fair test, collect data and report their findings with appropriate levels of teacher support. Pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of; lifecycles, seed dispersal by wind and animals, separating mixtures by filtration and evaporation and in linking insulation and conductors to the making of simple electrical circuits. Given their well below average attainment in Year 3 the pupils, including for those pupils with special educational needs have made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of scientific phenomena,

77. The quality of teaching is good and pupils respond enthusiastically to it. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and they are skilled at using this to improve what pupils know and their understanding of the natural and physical world. Activities are presented in a meaningful way with the prime purpose to extend pupils' first hand experience of the world around them. For example, when investigating which bottle makes the highest note when struck. The structure of the activity and quality of exposition, supported by clear written guidelines by the teacher enabled the pupils to complete their enquiry well. Numerous examples of topics, which link the subjects together, are evident in planning and the pupils' work. In studying materials and their properties, the formation of clay, which is used in pottery making in Stoke, paper making in certain parts of America, semi precious stones found around Castleton in Derbyshire and fossils in Wirksworth all contribute to the teacher's commitment to providing a rich and interesting curriculum. In the lessons seen the good teaching was characterised by effective planning, preparation and organisation. Time was efficiently used. The teachers had high expectations for behaviour and these were well met by all pupils. Skilful questioning to assess what pupils know helped to determine reinforcement of teaching points and had a beneficial impact on pupils' achievements.

78. The policy statement and scheme of work provide a well-structured investigative approach to the subject, but in the light of Curriculum 2000 the school recognises the need to update it. The effective assessment procedures highlighted in the previous report have helped the school track the pupils' progress well. The coordinator as yet has not been given the opportunity to monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning, this was highlighted in the past report and not been addressed. Resources are used well, the environment, educational visits and visitors broaden the curriculum. The poor accommodation detracts from the pupils' learning because it is cramped and not suited to practical work without considerable disruption. The delivery of the subject meets statutory requirements and improvements have been made to teaching and planning since the last inspection.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

79. By the age of 11, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations, with examples of high quality work particularly in three-dimensional clay work. This was highlighted in the past report as a strength and remains so. Clay sculptures, photograph frames, stick printing and Mendhi hand patterns are fine examples of a range of good quality art across the age and ability ranges.

80. Pupils make good progress and this has been sustained since the last report. Pupils improve their skills by experimentation and through observation. For example, observational drawings by Year 3 pupils show good use of line, tone and texture and an ability by the pupils to modify and improve their work.

81. In the two lessons observed the teaching was good and very good. The teachers have good subject knowledge, high expectations and an enthusiasm for giving the pupils the skills and confidence to be creative and represent their thoughts and ideas in a variety of ways. Basic skills are well taught and pupils are encouraged to develop their own style. The quality of relationships and the excellent management of pupils' behaviour by the teachers and support staff contribute greatly to their learning and the ethos of lessons.

82. The pupils' respond well to the activities and concentrate and persevere. For example, the landscape pictures produced by Year 3 pupils using crayon, rubbings and paint and the underwater pictures by Year 5 pupils were produced through care, attention and an eye to improve the finished piece.

83. The subject is well managed and resourced. Accommodation difficulties mean that regular movement of classes is required to deliver the subject. Delivery meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

84. No design and technology was being taught in any class in the school during the week of the inspection. Whilst this limits the making of judgements about the subject, it also serves to illustrate that as planning and discussions with pupils show they do not have regular access to the subject, this has a negative effect on the development of their knowledge, understanding and skills and the standards they attain. This is an overall decline since the last inspection.

85. An analysis of planning records in individual classes, a scrutiny of work on display, together with an interview with Year 6 pupils shows that their standards are close to, but below, national expectations. Although individual projects are well considered, resourced and taught, a lack of the development of skills limits the progress pupils make over time. Not enough emphasis has been placed in safeguarding the systematic step-by-step learning of skills relating to designing, making and evaluating over the whole school. The lack of an overall "map" to guide both teaching and learning across the school lessens the impact of individually well planned activities. Year 3 pupils have designed a warning sign for homes. This was carried out linking to their work in science with many making warning signs about the dangers of electricity. Designs are noted in their classroom for an adventure playground. This shows sound links to both literacy and numeracy. In Year 4, evidence is seen of the use of the school's planning sheet related to the designing and making of Viking shields. Whilst these are well designed and made, the display of them in the classroom fails to note who made them, why they were made and with what techniques, thus limiting the effect of the display and a missing an opportunity to promote self-esteem and the personal development of the makers.

86. Work in Year 6 focuses on food technology. This is well supported by extra adults who help on a weekly basis. Pupils have opportunities to make pizza toppings, biscuits and a Victoria sponge. However, pupils have little recollection of completing planning sheets for these activities to show ingredients, methods, weighing skills and literacy skills being practised. Work carried out on fairground rides shows good constructional skills, with pupils creating strong structures of wood. Motors power the rides and links are made to control technology. Quality here is good, with pupils using tools and good joining skills.

87. It is understandable that the school has placed much of its recent work in raising standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and as a result, design and technology has not been developed in the same way. Now that those core subjects are



working well, there is a pressing need to review the school's work in design and technology in order to create a school-wide approach to it, which ensures that skills, knowledge and understanding are all developed systematically over the four year period, continuing where possible to link the work to other curriculum areas. The cramped accommodation restricts the delivery of this practically based subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

88. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and they attain as expected nationally in their knowledge of people, places and themes. Their skills of mapping and organisation and communicating what they know to show in depth understanding are less well developed but adequate overall. Pupils' general knowledge on entry is quite limited. By the age of 11 pupils can use some Ordnance Survey symbols to identify features on a map of the local area. They know the continents of the world, famous rivers and mountain ranges, the oceans of the world and when considering world weather have thought about how climate affects people's lives. They understand the water cycle. Pupils know about places near and far for example, Chembakoli in India. Some good work has been carried out on pollution, litter and saving the world from human impact on the environment.

89. No lessons were seen in geography and so no overall judgement can be made on teaching quality but something can be said about planning which is sound and assessments which take place on modules of work which have been studied are valuable to teachers in finding out what pupils know. As in the other foundation subjects the school has not yet reviewed the curriculum in light of Curriculum 2000 guidance and there is a need to do so.

90. In pupils' books there is some valuable work presented in the form of topics, which incorporate well the use of literacy skills, requiring pupils to read about and record what they know. The format of these whilst useful in seeing the extent of the work covered allows little chance for pupils to record their findings independently.

91. Resources for the subject are sound and the school uses visits to places of interests to enhance the curriculum. Limited use of information and communication technology to support geography or indeed mathematics is made to collect and analyse data. The delivery of the subject meets requirements and the school has overall maintained the provision and standards found at the last inspection, but skills' knowledge is the weaker element.

## **HISTORY**

92. Pupils attain as expected nationally by the age of 11 in their knowledge of historical periods linked to their own heritage and of other cultures for examples, the Romans, Greeks and Egyptians. This is similar to what was found at the last inspection. They know who Tutankhamen was and about the story of finding his tomb. They have used writing well to write their version of Howard Carter's diary. Pupils have studied the Vikings, Victorians and the impact of this era on industry and Britain since 1930's so that they understand how life has quickly changed since their grandparents' time.

93. Assessments at the end of each module give an insight into the lack of pupils' knowledge and skills at the age of seven. Looking carefully at their work over time it is clear they have made good progress and overall achieve well in the subject requirements. A weakness is that in discussions with pupils although they can talk about key people within

periods for example, they know Henry VIII had many wives, their understanding of chronology, in putting history in order over time, is less well developed.

94. No teaching was observed during the inspection but work in books, planning and discussions with pupils suggests teaching must be at least satisfactory and better. In the resource books which teachers prepare for pupils the emphasis is on key questions such as "Why do you think the Vikings liked to attack monasteries?" Pupils say they enjoy history and can recall some topics they have particularly enjoyed, for example, studying the Plague and its link with Eyam in Derbyshire. They enjoy it when their work is complemented by visits to places of interests as some pupils say they only see other places if they go with the school.

95. The delivery of history meets the requirements of the National Curriculum but as with geography and the other foundation subjects the time is right to review what is happening to bring the subject fully in line with Curriculum 2000.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

96. Over the last year, the school has experienced some staffing problems related to the coordination of this subject, which have meant that standards in the subject regressed from their previous good levels, noted at the last inspection. Recently progress has been good in certain areas of work and in certain classes, but overall standards are still below expectations.

97. In Year 3 the class teacher recognises her own lack of skills and whilst looking forward to training, she is not currently able to put into effect much of the necessary work for her pupils. As a result, pupils do not access the required elements of the work and the classroom has no evidence of computer-generated work in it.

98. Work in Year 4 shows that pupils have access to a good range of modelling software, with which they can take on the role of Vikings, geographers or detectives. These programmes encourage them to work in small groups using their speaking and listening skills well as they are faced with decision-making objectives.

99. Files containing work of pupils in Year 5 show that pupils have had good access to the Internet in order to search websites for information to support history topics. For example, they look for information concerning life in Tudor times. They use their keyboard skills to create databases in order to make graphs of hair or eye colour of their class-mates. In the same way they create graphs and Venn diagrams of temperature information.

100. In discussion, pupils in Year 6 remember using an onscreen "turtle" with which they drew diagrams and geometrical shapes by controlling its movements via instructions. They too use the Internet to assist their search for information about their World War Two project. Their word-processing skills have improved over time and most are now able to change fonts, use colour, highlight and move text and use the built in spell-checker.

101. Opportunities are regularly missed to help pupils use and practise their keyboard skills as part of daily lessons such as literacy and numeracy. Very few computers were noted being used within lessons. However, in an information and communication technology lesson, seen in the small computer bay, pupils were able to make sound and sometimes good progress in their learning. The class teacher had good subject knowledge, putting this to good effect in teaching skills directly and systematically to the pupils. They then went to shared computers, worked well in their pairs using the opportunity to practice

their skills and created questionnaires ready to make a data base. Conditions were very cramped and some pupils had to go to another part of the school to complete their work.

102. Coordination is shared between the Headteacher and a teacher from Year 4. There is no complete scheme of work for all year groups, which identify the knowledge, understanding and skills that need to be taught and learned. This is having a negative effect on the rate of learning. The school has recently improved its resources by trying to have only one type of computer which pupils use. This is an important step forward, as is the idea of a small but well resourced computer bay within which good direct teaching of skills can be carried out. However, as not all teachers are confident in their own abilities, the use of the bay and all the computers is not yet as effective as it might be. Staff training starts shortly.

103. As yet pupils still have limited experience of all the threads of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for the subject. They have very little experience of using equipment such as sensors for measuring changes in temperature or light and have not had opportunities to make multi-media presentations, a pre-requisite for achieving the required standards in Year 6.

104. Much remains to be done to compile and complete a school scheme of work and to ensure that teaching provides pupils with a broad programme of work, which fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. At the same time, assessment procedures are not currently sufficient to plot pupils' progress in the wide range of activities, which have to be planned for them in order to fulfil the National Curriculum requirements. However, the school could easily accomplish this with better use of the work saved in year files. If National Curriculum levels of achievement were added to the stored work then progress could be plotted. This would then bring it into line with the good practice noted in other of the core subjects.

## **MUSIC**

105. The school has found it difficult to maintain the very good standards noted at the last inspection. This has been largely due to the efforts it has placed in supporting the pupils' development of skills and understanding in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Standards in playing recorders are satisfactory, whilst standards in singing, especially in assembly are adequate. Pupils get opportunities to perform, but their opportunities for listening and appraising, especially of multi-cultural music are unsatisfactory. Limited evidence was seen of pupils using compositional skills, although pupils in Year 6 were seen writing rhythms and pulses, using traditional notation. Standards have declined since the last inspection but are broadly as expected.

106. Pupils in Year 3 were seen improving their recorder playing. Both the class teacher and her support adult play along with the pupils, showing good subject skills. Many pupils make sound progress in their playing. They practise simple repeating melodies and over half remember not only the three notes used, but also whether notes on the page are quavers or crotchets. They take their recorders home and many practise diligently.

107. In a Year 6 lesson, taken by the Year 5 teacher, who also has sound subject knowledge, pupils extend their understanding of a pulse whilst changing rhythms alongside it. The work shows development from previous lessons and builds in a systematic way. Pupils share their learning well but do not have sufficient opportunities to comment on each other's efforts in order to improve both their speaking and listening skills. Pupils take a little

while to remember their previous work, but patient teaching brings the class to a satisfactory level of understanding.

108. Across the school lessons are also based on pre-recorded tapes, but their use was not seen during the inspection. Teaching in the two lessons observed, was good. Both showed at least sound subject knowledge in their chosen lessons. They created an atmosphere in which pupils were motivated to learn, without losing their very good control of the lesson. Pupils responded well to the opportunities given to both learn and make music. This was also true of the pupils with special educational needs. They behaved well in both lessons and this supported the good progress they made.

109. As lessons tend to focus mainly on one single activity, such as playing, singing or composing, the elements not touched upon do tend to slip backwards in the minds of the pupils. A more mixed approach, in which several elements of the music curriculum such as listening to music, singing a song to start the lesson then proceeding to the main activity, would ensure that all aspects of music were met on a much more regular basis, helping pupils to make progress on a number of fronts and raise standards.

110. Good opportunities are given for a number of pupils to learn to play the guitar, whilst a recorder club activity takes place during a lunch hour. Both of these have a positive impact on the progress that those particular pupils make in their overall learning. Opportunities for pupils to perform to larger audiences are given occasionally, as in the Christmas concert or when Years 3 and 4 sing carols to a day centre for people with learning difficulties.

111. Currently information and communication technology is not used to support work in music and the barely adequate quality of some of the resources has a limiting effect on learning. Some of the playing activities are restricted due to the close proximity of the music room to other classes at work. The sharing of teachers' expertise, as in the way a Year 5 teacher takes the Year 6 class, makes good use of talents and is effective in providing pupils with good quality teaching.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

112. Standards that were in line with national expectations at the time of the last inspection have been sustained. Good progress has been made in developing the pupils' games and athletic skills and many can swim competently and safely for further than 25 metres.

113. Teaching was good in the three lessons seen. Lessons begin with a warm up and the pupils enjoyed the activity of Captain's Table where they had to run to parts of the room using directional information. Pupils enjoy physical activities, concentrate well and persevere to improve their skills. They cooperate well and enjoy team and group activities showing high levels of self-discipline and social skills in sharing and waiting their turn. In another lesson the relaxed but knowledgeable teaching style enabled pupils to make good progress to improve their skills of batting, catching and bowling. The oldest pupils benefited from good teaching, positive relationships and direct teaching of skills. The teachers have high expectations for the pupils to behave and to organize their own equipment. Discussions with pupils reveal that they gain tremendous pleasure from physical activity.

114. Best use is made of the accommodation, resources and grounds. The subject is well managed and very good use made of specialist teaching. The school offers a very

good range of extracurricular sporting activities and pupils have enjoyed success in their competitive matches with other schools because of the good teaching and skills of the PE coordinator. The delivery of the subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

115. Lessons observed and scrutiny of work completed shows that standards are in line with the requirements of the agreed syllabus in what pupils learn about religion but are weaker in what they learn from it.

116. In the lessons observed pupils showed good levels of knowledge and understanding particularly of the stories from the Old Testament and how this leads to Christianity. They are also introduced to other world religions such as Hinduism and Judaism. Scrutiny of work shows they know about key Christian festivals including Easter and Christmas and compared Christmas with Hanukah in the Jewish calendar. In their studies of Hinduism they have learned that the word Hindu comes from the River Indus, they know the names of the gods and about how a Hindu family might live, they know and understand less about how faith affects their lives.

117. Teaching was good in the two lessons seen. One class of Year 4 pupils were being taught about the story of Abraham and they improved their knowledge by completing missing details from the story. They were using their previous knowledge well and showed good recall and understanding of the main points. In another lesson the teacher's good exposition helped pupils recall what they knew about Hinduism. Their responses were very good and they were eager to show their knowledge; answers were generally accurate. The lesson continued with an introduction to Judaism and its links with Christianity. The teachers show good subject knowledge and lessons were well planned to ensure good structure and progress. The teacher sets targets and learning objectives for the following week's lesson and this supports well the continuity and link between lessons.

118. The quality of provision is similar to that found at the previous inspection. Delivery is in line with the local agreed syllabus but insufficient emphasis is given to pupils' understanding the similarities and differences of the main world religions and also most importantly learning from them about how people's faith guides their actions and lives. Pupils are not really developing a secure sense of respect and tolerance from the work they do but rather a knowledge base of facts.