

INSPECTION REPORT

BRIMINGTON JUNIOR SCHOOL

Brimington, Chesterfield

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112517

Headteacher: Mr Brian Dunbar

Reporting inspector: Mr David Carrington
15414

Dates of inspection: 29th October – 1st November 2001

Inspection number: 196440

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:	Spring Vale Road Brimington Chesterfield Derbyshire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Waller
Date of previous inspection:	28 th April 1997

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13395	Mrs Joanna Illingworth	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for pupils The partnership with parents
3751	Mrs Trudy Cotton	Team inspector	English History Special educational needs	
22805	Mrs Jo Greer	Team inspector	Science Art	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Brimington Junior School is located in the large, former coal mining village of Brimington, about 2 miles north east of Chesterfield in Derbyshire. The school is housed in brand new buildings on a very pleasant site at the edge of the village. There are 221 boys and 166 girls in school, most of whom live in Brimington. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is about average, though the proportion with special educational needs is greater than usually found in junior schools. The proportion of pupils with statements is high compared to other schools. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and all the pupils speak English fluently. When pupils start in Year 3 they have broadly average levels of skill, knowledge and understanding.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Brimington Junior School provides an effective education for its pupils. The headteacher is very influential in bringing improvement and has created a staff team that work hard for success. There is shared commitment to improvement and the school is a happy, settled place of learning. Standards are rising at a similar rate to that found nationally and are satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching is good and pupils make steady progress. The school has many strengths but recognises that some aspects would stand enhancement. The match of work to pupils' abilities, provision in information and communication technology (ICT), the development of writing across the curriculum and giving pupils more responsibility for their own learning are the four main things for further development. The school has a good track record in making improvements and is well positioned to continue its advance. It gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are improving steadily and attainment in physical education is above that expected at the age of eleven.
- The quality of teaching is good and pupils build knowledge and skills well.
- Pupils are keen to learn, they behave well and enjoy good relationships with adults and other pupils.
- The curriculum is good and the programme of extra curricular activities and the partnership with the community are both excellent.
- The quality of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good.
- The quality of leadership and management is good.
- The buildings and site are excellent and the school uses its accommodation with flair.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, particularly writing, mathematics and information and communication technology are not high enough.
- The work set for pupils could be more closely matched to their individual needs.
- There is inconsistency in the way pupils are given opportunities to research and investigate for themselves and to take responsibility for their own learning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The 1997 inspection report left the school with four key issues to tackle:

1. Raise teachers' expectations, especially for higher attaining pupils.
2. Extend the involvement of all staff in the monitoring of teaching and standards.
3. Improve school development planning by linking its priorities to the budget and indicating clear criteria for success.

4. Keep a careful watch over the condition of the buildings and check that the impact on teaching and learning does not affect pupils learning substantially.

Since then, the school has made good progress overall with improvement. A brand new school has replaced the outdated and unsatisfactory buildings. This marks excellent improvement for the fourth key issue. Standards have also improved, matching the national trend since 1997. The school is in a good position to maintain good improvement in the future.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	E	D	D
mathematics	D	C	D	D
science	D	A	C	C

Key

very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

Similar schools are those schools with between 8% and 20% of the pupils entitled to free school meals.

There has been some variation in the standards achieved over the last few years, but the overall trend towards rising standards is similar to that found nationally. In the 2001 SATs, Year 6 pupils achieved at levels that were similar to the national picture in science but below this level in English and mathematics. When these results are compared with schools where a similar proportion of pupils is entitled to free school meals, the results were the same. There is little significant difference in the performance of boys and girls, despite the much greater proportion of boys.

There is an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and this is an important factor in the standards achieved. However, these pupils make satisfactory progress because of the additional support provided to meet their needs.

Evidence from the inspection shows that standards in English and mathematics are below average and that those in science are average. Standards are average in other subjects apart from information and communication technology (ICT) where technical difficulties beyond the control of the school mean that pupils do not build all the necessary skills and knowledge. Standards are good in physical education because of the wide range of experiences offered and the often very good coaching given in sports such as basketball and table tennis.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The school has maintained the strengths noted at the previous inspection. The attitudes of pupils are good and they help promote attainment and progress.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The school is an orderly place of learning where pupils behave well. There has been one fixed period exclusion in the last two years. This was fully justified.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are good. Pupils develop into mature and sensible children, though there are times when they could be given more chances to choose resources and the way they record their work.

Attendance	Satisfactory. The attendance rate is very close to the national average. Pupils arrive punctually for school.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 3 - 6
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.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. About two thirds of the teaching observed during the inspection was of good or better quality. Managers have worked hard to improve teaching and most of the unsatisfactory teaching seen at the previous inspection has been eliminated. One percent of teaching was unsatisfactory this time. There are far more strengths than shortcomings in teaching and learning. The teaching of basic skills, the variety of teaching methods, management of pupils, use of resources, quality of homework, and role of support staff are all good. Planning to show how work is to be matched to the needs of different groups, the use of marking and the setting and sharing of targets for learning with pupils could be more consistent. Pupils work successfully and build knowledge, skills and understanding at good rates because of the motivating lessons provided.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and well balanced on the whole. The planned curriculum for ICT cannot be delivered in full because of current technical difficulties with the computers. There is an excellent programme of activities outside lessons and links with the community are outstanding.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The high proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need are given good support when withdrawn from the class. All pupils with special needs are given satisfactory support in class, though this is not sharply focused enough on their individual needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils' social development is very good and pupils work and play well together. Their spiritual and moral development is good; they reflect on what is special and are concerned for the wellbeing of others. Their cultural development is satisfactory. However, there are insufficient opportunities to learn about other cultures, religions and traditions.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The good quality care, support and guidance given to pupils helps them to settle well to their learning and make steady progress. All members of the non-teaching staff contribute most effectively to the wellbeing of the pupils. The school has a good programme of assessment, though the use of the information produced has yet to be consistently focused on the next steps to be taken in learning.
The partnership with parents	Good. Parents hold positive views of the school. There are good links with parents and the school keeps them well-informed about progress. Most parents take a successful role in the education of their children.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher leads the school with determination and rigour. Other staff play an increasing role in the management of the school and there is good shared commitment to improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors have good understanding of the school's strengths and shortcomings and are influential in making improvements. They ensure that statutory requirements are met and that the principles of best value are promoted well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher and senior managers give a strong lead to procedures to check and evaluate school performance. Improvements to standards have resulted from this. The process of setting and sharing targets for pupils is bedding in well but is inconsistent. The role of some subject managers in the evaluation of performance has yet to be extended fully.
The strategic use of resources	Good. There are no shortages of staff or resources and the accommodation is excellent and used imaginatively. The school budget is very well managed and additional funding for raising standards is used well. The school gives good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school is well led and managed. • Staff are easy to talk to when parents have queries or concerns. • Expectations are good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levels of homework are inappropriate. • A few parents have concerns about the information they are given to show how their children are progressing

The inspection team agree with the positive views of parents. In addition, the team judges that levels of homework and the quality of information provided for parents about their children's work are good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. At the time of the previous inspection in 1997, standards were broadly average, with those in mathematics and art being above average and none falling below the expected level for Year 6 pupils. The pupils made satisfactory progress from an average starting level. Girls performed better than the boys did in English, but boys out performed them in science. The small hall adversely affected standards in physical education (PE).
2. This year, standards are judged to be broadly average and pupils make the expected progress from Year 3 to Year 6. In some classes, progress is brisker than in others, but overall, by the age of eleven, pupils achieve their potential. This is the case for all pupils, regardless of background.
3. The 2001 national test results showed standards in English to be below those found nationally in primary schools. They were also below the national level in mathematics, but average in science. When compared with schools where the entitlement to free school meals is similar, the results were the same. The current Year 6 pupils are likely to achieve below average results in English and mathematics. This is due to the high proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs in Year 6. Within English, standards in writing are not as high as they could be. The school has identified improvements in writing as critical for raising standards and has introduced a number of well-judged improvements to the curriculum, teaching and learning in order to move ahead. Next year, standards are likely to be better than they will be at the end of the current school year. The present Year 5 is the strongest year group for a number of years and the school's own analysis shows them to be achieving at good levels. Targets set by the school have been met or exceeded in recent years, and there is no reason why this should not continue over the next two years. The targets set by the school are challenging, but appropriate, and there is good shared determination amongst the staff to meet them.
4. Over the past few years there has been some fluctuation in standards. From 1997 to 1999 standards were below those found nationally, but in 2000, they rose to match the national average. During this period, standards rose at about the same rate as found in most other primary schools. The weakest performance in the national tests has been in English, where standards have been well below average for a number of years. They have tended to be below average in science, but about average in mathematics.
5. The evidence from the current inspection points to a key factor in the trends in progress and standards over the years from 1997. Teachers generally plan their lessons in considerable detail, but they do not always show clearly what they expect different groups of pupils to achieve and in many lessons, the tasks set are similar for all pupils, regardless of how well they have been doing in their work. There are examples of where the work is well matched to the needs of different groups, but this requires greater consistency.
6. Pupils with statements of special educational needs are given good support when withdrawn from lessons and this enables them to make good progress in lessons away from the main class. In class, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, but because their work is sometimes the same as for the higher attaining pupils, there are a few occasions when the progress of pupils with special needs is slowed because it is too demanding for them. The school is aware of the differences in progress between withdrawal sessions and whole class or whole set lessons and senior managers are resolved to make the necessary improvements to make progress better for the pupils.
7. Higher attaining pupils make similar rates of progress as other pupils though this could be accelerated. In general, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 5 in the national tests has been about average, though such results have been rather better in science. Greater clarification in the expectations teachers have of higher attainers will enable staff to track their progress more effectively and identify whether these pupils always do as well as they are able.

There is resolve in school to ensure provision for pupils with particular talents or gifts as well as the higher attainers produces the best possible results.

8. Although there are more boys than girls in school, there are not many differences in the standards that the different genders achieve. The greatest difference is in the mathematics test results, although in their lesson observations, inspectors did not identify any significant factors in this picture. In lessons, boys and girls tend to show similar levels of interest and motivation and they make similar rates of progress.
9. The school's efforts to boost standards have been successful. Pupils make the best progress in Years 5 and 6 because teaching and learning are of better quality in these years. In addition, pupils settle quickly in Year 3 and the teachers in that year get to know their needs quite speedily. There are three classes (one each in Years 3, 4 and 5) where the teaching is shared between two teachers. In general, this sharing of teaching is working satisfactorily and pupils have similar chances to succeed regardless of which teacher is in charge. The most recent job share arrangements are bedding in effectively and school managers are monitoring the outcomes of this carefully to ensure consistent progress is made.
10. Inspectors judge that standards are satisfactory in subjects outside English, mathematics and science. Standards are good in PE because there is firm emphasis on skills development and the self-evaluation of performance by pupils. The brand new buildings have also had a good effect on standards in PE as there is now ample space in the hall and the level of resourcing for the subject is much improved. In other subjects, the degree to which pupils have opportunities to show independence and self-reliance in learning is not consistent and this affects the successes they have in developing the skills of research, investigation and problem solving. In ICT, technical difficulties outside the control of the school affects the amount of practice pupils have had to develop the necessary skills and knowledge. Where practice is frequent, because the school can provide the necessary opportunities, progress is sound and standards are at the level expected. Where there have been such technical difficulties, standards are below the expected level and progress is more halting, particularly in the communications aspect. School managers are aware of this situation, the efficiency of the computer network is being improved and the school's good track record in existing improvements to ICT suggest that continued advancement is likely.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. It has maintained the strengths that were very evident four years ago, despite having on roll some pupils with significant behaviour problems. Attitudes, values and personal development are good overall and, together with satisfactory attendance, enhance pupils' academic attainment.
12. The previous inspection found that positive attitudes made a significant contribution to learning and progress in the school. Pupils wanted to learn, and they worked hard even when tasks were undemanding. This continues to be the case today. With very few exceptions, pupils enjoy coming to school, are interested in their work, and are keen to play an active part in lessons. They settle down quickly in class and concentrate well. They persevere with tasks that they find difficult, and are proud of their achievements. They are prepared to sit quietly and listen carefully to their teachers and to work well on writing tasks. However, most pupils prefer to be engaged in practical activities. They very much enjoy investigations and experiments. When pupils in Year 4 were asked to create electrical circuits in a science lesson, they showed great enthusiasm for the task and loved experimenting with different combinations of wires in order to get a bulb to light up. When given the chance pupils are capable of taking responsibility for their own learning. For example, they can work successfully on their own in lessons without having to turn frequently to teachers for support. There are some immature and difficult pupils who are reluctant to settle to task and cannot sustain their concentration for long. However, they are a small minority, and their attitudes do not impair the learning and progress of the majority because of the effective way in which staff generally manage their classes.
13. Pupils show commitment to the school and interest in learning outside ordinary lessons. They are offered an excellent choice of extra-curricular activities, which they greatly appreciate. The take-

up rate is high, and many pupils are involved in clubs and classes during the lunch hour and after school.

14. The school is an orderly community and this in turn provides an environment that is conducive to learning. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils behave well in lessons and assemblies, and when outside the classroom. On the face of things, the rate of exclusion has increased in the last four years. In practice, one pupil in Year 6 was excluded for one fixed period last year, although such poor behaviour is highly untypical of the school as a whole. Pupils are polite, open and friendly, and have good relations with members of staff and one another. The vast majority treat teachers with respect, allowing them to teach without interruption and following their instructions. This enhances the quality of lessons. A small number of pupils behaves poorly in lessons, but their challenging behaviour is usually well managed and their presence does not hold back the progress of the majority.
15. Outside the classroom pupils are responsible and self-disciplined. They use equipment sensibly in the playground, and are orderly and well mannered when eating lunch. They socialise well. Pupils of all ages and both sexes mix well together, and although they say that there is some bullying, there was no sign of any during the inspection. Both parents and children say that oppressive and aggressive behaviour is not a feature of life in school.
16. The quality of relationships is good, and helps to promote high standards of behaviour. Pupils are considerate. They respect one another's feelings and beliefs, and are mindful of the needs of other people. For example, they help pupils with particular educational needs to take part in line dancing during the lunch hour. In lessons, pupils work effectively together in pairs or small groups. They support one another well, offering advice and encouragement when someone finds a task difficult.
17. Pupils' personal development is good, and pupils get very good opportunities to accept responsibility and exercise their initiative in the general life of the school. As a result, most pupils are confident, self-reliant and mature. In all year groups they can be trusted to act sensibly without being closely supervised, as when they attend the breakfast club before the start of school. They are keen to take on responsibility. They enjoy acting as monitors, or as "buddies" and paired readers. Pupils of all ages are keen to help people who are less fortunate than they are. The interest, effort and initiative that they show in raising money for charity are a strength of the school. For example, they greeted with enthusiasm the "shoe box" appeal that was launched during the inspection, and set themselves an ambitious but realistic target for the number of boxes to collect. Pupils' independence as learners is less well developed. They are capable of working independently when they get the chance, but receive relatively limited opportunities to do so in lessons.
18. Attendance is satisfactory, being broadly in line with the national average for primary schools. Pupils are keen to come to school and arrive in good time for their lessons. There are no significant differences in the attendance of different groups of pupils. A few individuals have poor records of attendance, but the incidence of unauthorised absence is very low.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. During the last inspection, teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall with good teaching in art and for pupils with special educational needs. There were however, important weaknesses, including the relatively low level of expectation and inconsistencies in the provision of work that matched the ability of different groups of pupils. The pace of lessons, teachers' subject knowledge and the range of teaching methods were identified as strengths.
20. Since 1997 there have been a number of new teaching appointments and a well prioritised programme of staff training has been put into place. New staff are well prepared for their role as teachers at Brimington Junior School. This means that they quickly become part of the staff team and show their individual talents as effective teachers. Longer serving teachers are valued for their strong contributions to the quality of teaching in school and all teachers are concerned to provide good quality learning for the pupils. During the current inspection, the quality of teaching was judged to be good. Of the 86 lessons observed, about two thirds were of good or better

teaching quality. There was one lesson that showed unsatisfactory teaching. This was in PE and related to weaknesses in class control and discipline. There was also one mathematics lesson where teaching was judged to be excellent because the lesson stimulated the pupils to extremely effective learning.

21. Generally, teachers have the knowledge required to teach all subjects effectively. Since expectations are good and the methods chosen are effective in promoting learning, pupils build skills and knowledge at a good rate. The teaching of basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT is good and the literacy and numeracy strategies are having a good impact on standards and progress in English and mathematics. The management of pupils is effective in promoting settled learning in lessons and time and resources are put to good use in encouraging good effort and productive working.
22. The support staff give good service in the interests of the pupils with whom they work. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well when they are withdrawn from lessons and this enables them to work well towards the targets in their individual study programmes. Outside expertise is used well to help support pupils with statements of need and so they make good progress with their reading, writing and numeracy when withdrawn. Within the classroom, although different levels of work are planned, as yet work is not specific enough to meet all the pupils' individual learning needs. There is not always enough extra adult support in classrooms to help with the high number of pupils with special educational needs in each class, many of whom have difficulty with literacy and numeracy skills. School managers are committed to a review of support staffing to ensure that the hard work of teachers to provide for pupils with special educational needs is as effective as possible.
23. There remain two related aspects of teaching for continued improvement. Teachers show much commitment in producing useful lesson plans. However, the explicit identification in planning of the specific knowledge, skills and understanding to be learned in lessons is not consistent and in many lessons the same work is set for pupils of all abilities. The school has introduced the setting of pupils for mathematics in all years and for English in Years 5 and 6. Senior managers accept the need now to refine planning to clarify the expectations for each ability group to ensure the best fit of activities to pupils' needs. There is some good practice in school that enhanced monitoring of teaching will reveal. The school does not, therefore, have far to look for models of good practice in planning.
24. The second linked aspect for development concerns the process of target setting, sharing and review. The school has made a good start to its target setting process and clear expectations are recorded for individual pupils. The objectives for learning are shared with pupils at the start of many lessons, though occasionally these are rather formal. Only infrequently are pupils given opportunities to evaluate and review their own learning at the end of the session. The marking of pupils' work does not always flag clearly the ways for them to improve in relation to the targets set. Again, school managers acknowledge that improvement can be made and have identified this clearly in the current school improvement plan.
25. Because of effective teaching, the pupils learn well. They work cheerfully and with good effort in most lessons and often produce good amounts of work. Pupils have satisfactory knowledge of their own learning, but this would be enhanced by the developments in target setting outlined above. In general, pupils are interested in their work; they concentrate fully and show a mature approach to their work. Learning would be enhanced if pupils had more responsibility for their own learning. There are a few occasions when teachers talk for too long or select the methods, materials or data for the pupils to use. The pupils show through their attitudes, behaviour and relationships that they are trustworthy and sensible workers. The school builds well on these traits in order to improve pupils' personal development as self-reliant workers.
26. Several lessons were observed that showed very good teaching quality. As an example, a Year 6 art and design lesson shows the qualities of teaching that create good opportunities for learning. In this lesson, the pupils were enthused to work creatively, imaginatively and with originality as they made animal designs based on a collage of leaves. The teacher emphasised to the pupils that they should be self-critical about their own designs, rather than depend on the judgement of others. This strengthened the pupils' independence and self-reliance in learning. Additionally, the pupils themselves had to select the resources, techniques and methods to produce their planned

results. The inspector observed that the pupils were making reasoned choices and that the teacher did not restrict the development of the pupils' own ideas. The lesson ended with opportunities for pupils to examine, discuss and evaluate other pupils' work. There are elements of this lesson that serve as a good model in the school's bid to enhance teaching and learning further.

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

27. The school has made steady improvement overall in curriculum provision since the last inspection. Teachers have worked hard to implement fully the national initiatives for teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is effectively planned, with regular review and an agreed school 'curriculum map' is in place allocating themes/units of work to each year group. This provides useful continuity in learning. The curriculum coordinator guides team planning, however the match of work to the different needs of groups of pupils is not consistent in short term planning. This is an aspect for improvement. Because of problems outside the school's control, there have been some difficulties in ensuring that ICT hardware is fully functioning and this has impeded the progress pupils make in this subject. However, everything is close to being in place for continued enhancement of the ICT curriculum. The new buildings and expansive site have meant good improvement to PE coverage over recent years.
28. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum in all subjects, including religious education. The quality and range of curriculum opportunities are rich and good overall. All policies and schemes of work are in place based on national guidelines and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and this ensures good coverage of the curriculum.
29. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory in the school. Some pupils have additional, good quality tuition in small groups for literacy and numeracy. Teachers use the individual education plans in the lesson planning so that pupils' special needs are met and these pupils make satisfactory progress as a result. There is a new policy in place for the higher attaining, gifted and talented that is being trialled in order to ensure consistency of provision for such pupils. Curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and the requirements of the code of practice are fully met.
30. The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are good and are securely in place. Homework is set to reinforce pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Planning sometimes lacks clear identification of different work for pupils in separate ability groups, especially for pupils who are higher attaining or lower attaining pupils..
31. The school's programme for sex education and matters relating to health education are given proper emphasis. Health education includes the required emphasis upon the misuse of drugs. Sex education is seen as part of the wider health education programme and the school ensures that the pupils are provided with the knowledge and awareness, which helps them to make informed choices as they assume greater independence. Overall the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. The development of good relationships and consideration for others is embedded in the life and work of the school. The school ensures the development of positive attitudes and high self-esteem. Circle time, the act or worship, visiting speakers and looking after the outside environment all promote pupils' personal development effectively. The pupils' rise well to these expectations.
32. The school has excellent links with the local community and Year 6 are given a wonderful view into the world of work. There are strong links with local Church of England, Methodist and Apostolic churches and senior citizens' homes. A building project has been carried out with Sheffield University and an exciting Victorian Town Project resulted from gas company sponsorship. Outstanding relationships exist with the elderly people from the community, the local traders and with parents.

33. There are good links with the immediate schools in the area and very clear links with the cluster partnership. There is a very good transition programme in place with secondary schools. This is well established and includes musical, sporting and curriculum links. Liaison with infant schools is satisfactory and developing. The range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school is excellent. Visits to places of educational value, including the residential visits to Whitehall and Shropshire, make valuable contributions to the curriculum and the children's personal development. There is a very wide range of extra-curricular activities that includes musical, sporting and general interest activities such as table tennis, chess, recorder playing, choir, gymnastics, football, netball, trailblazers and rounders.
34. The school makes very good provision for the pupils' social development, good provision for spiritual and moral development while provision for their cultural development is satisfactory. This is similar to the findings of the last report.
35. There are effective guidelines in place which promote these aspects of school life and pupils respond very well to the guidance and suggestions they are given. The school places great emphasis on respect for others and encourages pupils to think about how they use the resources, both human and physical, with care and consideration.
36. The daily act of collective worship meets statutory requirements. The whole school can now meet for worship, because of the much improved accommodation that is now large enough for the whole school to meet together. This is a great improvement from the last report. There is a theme and pupils are reminded daily to think about theme and be ready to assist the leader. The school provides a time of reflection through prayer, concentrating thoughts on the spiritual, moral and social issues raised through assembly. Pupils respond well to such opportunities and show thoughtfulness and empathy about the life of other people. The use of local and national appeals widens pupils thinking and they listen well to stories and offer ideas on ways that they can help. Pupils respond well to the different types of music and sing with feeling using the words to reflect and respond. Pupils respond very well to opportunities to celebrate a festival in a Year 5 lesson, after considering the reason why Jews celebrate Hanukkah, they lit the Hanukkah candle reflecting the need for them to bring light into the world. Good use is made of local Christian groups who provide speakers and leaders to develop an after school activity based on Christian teaching.
37. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Parents are happy that the school promotes the principles of what is right and wrong. Staff work well together and provide strategies so that pupils have a clear understanding about the way they should behave. There are established codes of behaviour and the rewards and sanctions are understood by pupils. Good behaviour is rewarded through a system of certificates.
38. The social development of pupils is a very good strength of the school. Standards of behaviour are good. Class rules are well established and good behaviour is rewarded. The lunchtime behaviour is very good and pupils respect the rules of the playground and when they are eating in the dining areas. Opportunities are given for Year 6 pupils to accept responsibility as monitors and library assistants. They take their responsibilities very seriously and their authority is respected by other pupils. Pupils are courteous and well mannered at all times. There is provision for all pupils to attend lunchtime activities that encourage them to socialise together and develop leisure activities that they can use outside school. There is very good provision for Year 5 and 6 to take part in residential visits, to compete in sports technical and creative challenges which enables them to build up a team spirit and work together.
39. The school provides opportunities for cultural development in both curricular and extra curricular activities. Pupils have good opportunities to enhance their understanding of their own culture though there are not enough chances for them to share the attractiveness of the culture of other people. All subjects of the curriculum make some contribution towards this. There are visits to places of interest, museums the local church and the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. Pupils are aware that their support for children in Romania and eastern European countries is appreciated because they consider what it is that is similar and the differences they experience in their lives. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in music, drama and sporting activities. They take part in inter-school challenges through the business partnership that focuses on the technological aspects of DT and ICT.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school provides good support and guidance for its pupils, as it did at the time of the last inspection, and has effective procedures for promoting good attendance and behaviour. These in turn foster good learning and sound achievements. Parents are happy with the standard of care. Almost all say that their children like the school and are helped to become more mature and responsible during their time there.
41. Arrangements for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. The school ensures that new pupils are well prepared for their induction into Year 3. They therefore get to know one another and settle down quickly in their new classes. All year groups receive equally good care. Members of staff are open and approachable. They have good relations with pupils and know them really well as individuals. They track their progress informally, and are sensitive and responsive to their needs. There are also good formal systems for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. Class teachers have a good overview of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and progress from records of their achievements and merit awards. Individuals with problems are identified and given good support. If necessary the school brings in experts from outside agency in order to help them. There is good general support for pupils in the form of the school's programme of personal, social and health education. This covers topics that are relevant to pupils' personal development, for example relationships, and encourages pupils to be open about their worries. The programme also promotes essential social skills such as listening to one another and taking turns.
42. The school's arrangements for monitoring and promoting attendance are very good. Teachers hold roll calls at the beginning of school sessions and fill in registers in accordance with legal requirements. Class registers therefore provide accurate records of attendance. The information in them is entered in to the school's computer system, where it is analysed and used to monitor attendance very effectively. The performance of individual pupils is carefully tracked. Excellent attendance is rewarded and instances of persistent absence are properly followed up. Unexplained absences are investigated very promptly where the pupil's attendance is already giving cause for concern. Currently, Brimington Junior School has joined with other local schools on a new initiative to improve attendance. This seeks to bring home to parents the vital importance of good attendance to their children's learning and progress.
43. In 1997, the school's policies on discipline were successful in supporting good behaviour. The school has sustained these strengths. Pupils are clear as to what is expected of them. They know the code of conduct and the consequences of breaching it. They understand the system of rewards and respond positively to it. They appreciate receiving awards for good conduct for and taking on responsibilities. Pupils' behaviour is carefully recorded and monitored. Patterns of poor behaviour are identified and dealt with appropriately. For example, the school uses the "Small Steps to Success" programme to improve the behaviour and social skills of the most difficult pupils and to help them to achieve their targets. There are good whole school policies for dealing with aggression and bullying. Levels of supervision are good, and supervisors are well trained in behaviour management. Pupils make a major contribution to the school's provision in this area. They successfully operate an anti-bullying club and befriend their peers who feel isolated and lonely. Parents think that the procedures are effective. They say that bullying is rare, and on the few occasions when it does occur the school takes effective steps to stop it.
44. Good procedures for child protection are thorough and meet local and national requirements. The designated child protection officer has had good training in the role, and other members of staff know of the correct procedures to follow in the event of an incident. The school is health and safety conscious. It has very good arrangements for risk assessments, and for regular checks of the premises and equipment. First aid cover is good. Overall, the school makes good provision for pupils' welfare. The breakfast club is a particular strength. Pupils who leave home early are able to start their day at school with a good breakfast in very pleasant surroundings.
45. The school has a sound assessment policy that is particularly effective in English and mathematics. Standardised tests are used rigorously to monitor attainment and progress in these subjects. Results are used to identify gifted and talented pupils, set targets for learning and for

setting ability groups. There is no standardised test for science. At present pupils are tested informally using school devised tests at the end of each topic. The science coordinator is working towards a more rigorous assessment procedure. In other subjects pupils are assessed informally at the end of each lesson or group of lessons against the learning objectives. School managers have identified improvements to assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science as being their next priority in developing a consistent system of assessment of core skills and knowledge that is linked strongly to the target setting process. The school has a useful comprehensive individual record that provides the next teacher with helpful information about individual pupil's achievements.

46. Results of national tests are rigorously analysed to identify any trends. If the analysis identifies significant lack of understanding by pupils, the curriculum is modified to counter this. The coordinator maintains comprehensive information gained from analyses of all formal and national test results. She works hard to ensure that the procedures are manageable and that they are clearly understood by all teachers.
47. Curriculum planning identifies specific learning objectives, but these are not linked to the levels of attainment for the subject. Whilst separate work for different ability groups is built into planning in some subjects, in many lessons work is not matched closely enough to meet individual needs, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Whilst learning objectives are usually shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons, these are not always in "pupil friendly" language. The objectives are not consistently revisited at the end of lessons so pupils do not always know how well they are learning.
48. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. It has maintained the high standard of care that existed four years ago and introduced new measures such as the initiative to improve attendance.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. The previous inspection judged that the school had satisfactory links with parents, who were generally supportive of the school. There was no judgement on their contribution to pupils' learning at home.
50. The survey of parental views that preceded this inspection shows that parents continue to be supportive. They have favourable opinions of the school and of the standard of education that it provides. A majority of parents think that the quality of teaching is good, that members of staff expect pupils to work hard, and that children are helped to become more mature and responsible. Most parents also feel that the school is approachable and works closely with them. A minority says that children do not get the right amount of work to do at home. Some parents are also unhappy with the information that they receive about pupils' progress. The quality of information for parents is good overall. The written reports that are sent home at the end of the school year have some shortcomings. There are no references to National Curriculum levels in the text, and it is difficult to judge standards of attainment from teachers' comments. Reports on the core subjects of the curriculum include targets for improvement, but these are sometimes imprecise and do not always give parents clear guidance on how they can help their child to do better. However, other channels of information compensate for weaknesses in written reports. The written reports are discussed with the parents that attend the end of year parents' meetings. Staff provide day-to-day information on what pupils are doing, and encourage parents to become involved in children's learning at home. The school has also produced a booklet called "Helping at Home". This gives parents very good guidance on how to help pupils with reading, handwriting and spelling. Overall, the school keeps parents well informed as to how their children are doing, and therefore enables them to support pupils' learning.
51. Information on the organisation and running the school is good. The annual report of the governing body meets legal requirements and gives a good account of the progress made during the year. The school prospectus is informative on the school's aims and objectives and curriculum, but has some minor omissions, such as attendance statistics.

52. The school's links with parents and carers are satisfactory. Nearly all families are supportive and make some contribution to their children's learning. No parent has refused to sign the home/school agreement, although some have not returned it. Most have signed it and do their best to keep to it. They take an interest in their children's work, attend consultation evenings and back the school over behaviour and discipline. They also give good support to school trips and events, including fund raising events. However, the Parents, Friends and Teachers Association, which organises the school's May Fair amongst other educational and social events, is largely led by members of staff. Parental involvement with pupils' learning at home is variable. It ranges from parents who are unable to help with reading through to those who hear their children read every day and regularly write comments in their reading records. Parents' participation in learning in school is relatively limited. Some act as volunteer supervisors on trips or work in the school library, but very few regularly help in the classroom. On the positive side parent governors make some very valuable inputs to lessons and the school's curriculum. An example of his work was observed during the inspection when he showed Year 6 pupils how to create and run a potato clock.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. In 1997, leadership and management were judged to be satisfactory overall. Within this, some elements were identified as requiring improvement and three key issues centred directly on management. These were the involvement of subject coordinators in greater monitoring of standards and quality of education, improvements to the process of school development planning and the careful watch over the condition of the outdated and cramped buildings to ensure there was minimum impact on teaching and learning. The headteacher and senior managers have made good improvement overall to these issues and whilst some work remains to bring even greater involvement of coordinators in the evaluation of school performance, there has been outstanding success in providing brand new buildings that are used with no little flair.

54. The head teacher gives very successful leadership to the school. All staff hold him in high regard and they pay testament to his effectiveness as the chief agent of improvement in school. The headteacher is supported well by the deputy headteacher and senior managers. Together, they form a good team who are committed to improvement and who steer the school decisively.

55. The middle management team of subject coordinators also work well in providing good opportunities for learning. Subject coordinators work hard to ensure that each subject is managed well and that successes are celebrated and weaknesses overcome. There are still things to do to broaden coordinators' roles as agents for improvement to standards throughout the school – by direct monitoring of standards, teaching and learning for example – but all staff are resolved to do this and are ready for the challenges that might emerge.

56. The special educational needs coordinator works hard and is committed to provide best support. She has spearheaded new initiatives to improve provision including the trialling of new formats for the individual work programmes for pupils with special educational needs. She has some time available for managing the provision, though the current high number of special needs pupils in school and local education authority sponsored changes to the provision for statemented pupils will place increasing pressures on this time. Senior managers are watching the situation carefully and have appropriate plans to modify the management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs in the near future, including the more careful match of work to their individual needs.

57. School governors are well involved in the work of the school and are supportive and influential. Governors ensure that statutory obligations are met and that all the necessary information is published. They have very good understanding of the strengths and shortcomings of the school and they ask the necessary questions to ensure that the school remains on track for improvement. Governors also make sure that the school upholds the principles of best value very well – they make comparisons to ensure that the school performs competitively on all fronts and provides challenge for the pupils. They analyse test data thoroughly and use the progress made by pupils as the benchmark by which to evaluate the success of key decisions.

58. The school uses available finance well. The school improvement plan is well presented to show how the priorities of the school are very well tied into finance. These priorities are the right ones for the school and give good focus to the work of improvement. Successful action is taken to meet the targets in the plan because all staff are committed to improvement and there is good educational direction. Additional funding, for boosting standards for example, is spent wisely. Because governors and senior managers make careful checks to ensure that the school compares well with other schools, the principles of best value are promoted very successfully. The school has a very positive carry forward figure because of the efficiencies brought by the new buildings. This money is earmarked for improvements to staffing, the further development of the accommodation and provision in ICT in order to continue the enhancement of the good provision for pupils.
59. The school has a sufficient number of appropriately qualified teachers to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. There are three job share situations that are working successfully in the interests of the pupils. Good liaison between the partners ensures there is no disruption to pupils' learning. Additional teachers employed to support booster classes for older pupils are effective in raising standards. Support staff are suitably deployed and all non-teaching staff, including the caretaker and cleaners, caterers and lunchtime assistants, plus the volunteers who work in school, make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and personal and social development. They all contribute most effectively to the positive ethos of the school.
60. Resource levels are good, though delays outside the school's control in the commissioning of a fully operational computer network have had an impact on standards in the subject. Staff have worked very hard to give the pupils as much appropriate experience working with computers as the level of resourcing allowed. Teachers are very positive about the prospects for improvement in ICT, as these technological difficulties are resolved.
61. The state of the accommodation was a key issue at the previous inspection. The new building provides excellent accommodation. It has been designed with care to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. It provides an ideal environment in which pupils can learn and teachers work. Siting the computer suite with the library means pupils can readily compare research methods. Outdoor play areas have been imaginatively designed to provide space for energetic play and quiet recreation. There is good playing field provision. Pupils' involvement in the ongoing development of the building continues to be very positive. They have decorated the bright splash back tiles in the craft areas, nurture plants for the grounds and have designed the orienteering course. In all, the excellent accommodation is used most imaginatively.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. Brimington Junior School has made good progress with improvement and provides effectively for the needs of the pupils. There are three key things for completion. School managers have included these in their most recent school improvement plan. The inspection team confirms these priorities and asks that the team in school:
1. **Continues to raise standards in English, particularly writing, mathematics and information and communication technology.**
See paragraphs: 3-10, 27, 75-79, 81, 110 and 113-115.
 2. **Maintains efforts to ensure that the work set for pupils is more closely matched to their individual needs.**
See paragraphs: 6-7, 22, 29-30, 47, 56, 65, 68, 70, 85-6, 108 and 133.
 3. **Gives pupils more consistent opportunities to research and investigate for themselves and to take responsibility for their own learning.**
See paragraphs: 10, 12, 17, 25-6, 72, 81, 87, 109, 113, 123 and 133.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	86
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	13	41	30	1	0	0
Percentage	1	15	48	35	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	387
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	64

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	20
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	90

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	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	49	48	97

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	30	29	44
	Girls	41	36	46
	Total	71	65	90
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (62)	67 (65)	93 (87)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	29	31	43
	Girls	41	41	45
	Total	70	72	88
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (68)	74 (77)	91 (87)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	385
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.3
Average class size	29.8

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	156

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0.0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	680 775
Total expenditure	654 365
Expenditure per pupil	1 620
Balance brought forward from previous year	87 771
Balance carried forward to next year	114 181

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	387
Number of questionnaires returned	156

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My Child likes school	58	38	2	0	2
My child is making good progress in school	46	47	3	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good	31	56	3	0	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	18	54	15	3	10
The teaching is good	49	45	1	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	28	51	9	4	8
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	59	34	2	3	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	63	33	1	0	4
The school works closely with parents	34	51	7	1	7
The school is well led and managed	56	36	1	0	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	48	46	0	2	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons	44	44	3	0	8

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

ENGLISH

63. Over time, pupils have attained well below the levels reached by other eleven year olds in the national tests in English. When compared with similar schools, standards are below average. However, results in the 2001 tests show improvement, with twenty-five per cent of pupils now reaching the higher levels in English. In particular, standards in writing are rising, because of a clearer structure for assessing and developing pupils' work in each year group. The range and quality of books also has improved, and this is enabling more pupils to read at higher levels with deeper understanding. The findings of this inspection mirror the results of the 2001 national tests in English, and judge standards to be below those achieved nationally by eleven year olds.
64. Pupils start the junior school with broadly average skills with reading; generally skills with writing are below average. Those pupils who are reading and writing well continue to do so in the junior school. Throughout the school, a significant number of pupils still need to gain confidence and competence with their speaking skills and so attainment is below average by eleven years of age. In each year group there is a high number of pupils with special educational needs. For instance, in the Year 6 classes, ten pupils have statemented provision. These high numbers affect the results of the national tests in English. Listening skills are average.
65. Most school groups make sound progress in English. For instance, there are twenty pupils with statemented provision, who make good progress in withdrawal groups, with work which is targeted to meet their individual needs. However, the match of work for other pupils with special educational needs in lessons in the classroom is not always specific enough to meet their needs. In Year 6, teachers make good use of assessment and information from test results to guide provision in lessons in 'booster groups'. This in turn helps raise expectations and improve progress. Girls tend to achieve at higher levels than boys do, but in the higher and average attaining groups; both contribute equally in lessons.
66. The literacy strategy is well established in each year group, with the plenary sessions (feedback time) successfully used to share achievement. Teachers also use their expertise with exploring books in class time to enable pupils to develop a clear understanding of words and sentences. As yet, the flexibility to develop certain aspects of literacy, when the need arises, is not evident in lessons. For instance, in most classes, pupils are still developing competence with their speaking skills, but need the time and opportunity to do so. In a similar way, less competent readers need both support and time to be able to develop greater accuracy and fluency with their reading. However, basic skills with spelling, grammar and punctuation are taught soundly in each year group and are used with growing consistency by pupils in their work.
67. Often opportunities to write in other subjects are missed and this limits the chance to experiment with different types and purposes for writing. An example is the lack of space on some worksheets in history lessons, which confines writing to two or three lines, or writing in science, which often follows a similar shared format. Due to technical problems, work linked to information and communication technology has been affected. When computers are accessible, as in a Year 6 lesson, then pupils are able to shape and edit their writing, using keyboard skills effectively.
68. Although older pupils begin to contribute more readily in lessons, skills with speaking are still below average by the age of eleven. The main thrust for developing speaking skills is through teachers' use of questioning and this at times reduces the opportunity for pupils to initiate talk and to work in collaboration in smaller groups. Teachers work hard to encourage all groups to contribute in lessons, but the majority of higher attaining learners tend to take the lead. This is very evident in younger junior classes, where less able and average pupils are less likely to join without the teachers' encouragement. Some good teaching in drama in Year 5, promotes

effective ways to develop speaking and listening skills and helps bring a Bible story to life. Pupils make good progress as they use their speaking skills to negotiate their roles in their group production; perform confidently for a wider audience and develop interviewing techniques successfully. All groups achieve well, but girls tend to be less confident than boys when performing for a whole class group.

69. Standards in reading are below average by the age of eleven years. Boys and girls enjoy reading both at home and in school and the number of pupils reaching the higher levels with their reading is growing. More capable readers achieve well. In Year 3, they read accurately and fluently and with some expression. They enjoy talking about the characters in their books and use their skills with letters and sounds to spell unknown words, such as, *palaeontologist*. Pupils understand fiction and non-fiction books and suggest the use of the index or contents page to find specific facts. By Year 6, higher attaining readers read in a mature way, often reading between the lines and expressing personal tastes in reading. One pupil states that Ann Fine 'has a brilliant imagination and writes stories that just flow', whilst another describes how the setting for a story in *Goosebumps*, gives clues to the conflict which follows.
70. Pupils reading at broadly average levels and below lack fluency with their reading. Many of the younger readers use a limited range of strategies to find out unknown words and are too dependent on using letters and their sounds to make sense of words. The pattern is similar with some older readers – few use the whole sentence to make a good guess. Many pupils identified with special educational needs find reading independently a struggle. Whilst those with statements for their need benefit from the skills of specialist teachers, there is less structured support for others with difficulties. Some good input from the additional literacy support staff working with pupils achieving just below average is helping these pupils to improve their reading skills.
71. The school has worked very hard to raise standards in writing and this is paying dividends.. Despite standards being below average by the end of the junior classes, progress is at least steady across the school. Good teaching of story structure is enabling pupils to successfully shape their ideas and thoughts in writing. Younger pupils in Year 3, learn how to write dialogue in their stories and use punctuation correctly in their work. In other years pupils study traditional story structure and identify key elements. They keep the reader in mind and use more descriptive language. By Year 6, pupils regularly read through and edit their work, improving settings and developing plot. Work is well punctuated and grammatically correct. Teachers plan for writing for different purposes. In Year 4, pupils explore writing instructions and are keen to identify the ingredients needed and suggest sub – headings, bold print and bullet points for cues. In Year 5, time for extended writing time is well used as pupils draw from their knowledge in a history lesson to enhance their accounts of life in a poor family in Victorian times. Work is generally neat and tidy and pupils work hard to improve their spelling skills, which are at present below average. The opportunity for incidental writing varies in each year group –because of the literacy hour structure, the teacher can do most of the writing. Some lessons make good use of white boards for pupils to jot down their ideas, attempt to spell new words or to sequence their ideas. As yet this practice is inconsistent.
72. Pupils are well behaved and keen to learn. They share targets for their learning and are proud of the progress they make. Without the teacher's encouragement, it is mostly pupils who learn at a faster rate, who show initiative in lessons.
73. The quality of teaching is good in English and this is helping standards to rise. Lessons are well paced and managed and because pupils' contributions are valued the climate for learning is good. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and use questions well to develop learning. However, the range of strategies teachers use to develop speaking skills are limited, with fewer collaborative, role play and dramatic activities evident in lessons. Marking is consistent and at it best is very positive, providing clear guidance on how to improve skills. There is, however, less focus on the assessment and provision for pupils who need to develop greater skill and fluency with reading.
74. The subject is well managed by the hard working coordinator and there is a clear, shared focus for the way forward. Reading resources, especially for use in the literacy hour, are good

and provide a stimulus to read. There has been a clearly thought out strategy to improve writing, which has worked well.

MATHEMATICS

75. In 1997, standards in mathematics were reported to be good and pupils made satisfactory progress over the four years in school. Teaching was judged to be satisfactory and the subject was managed soundly. The profile of change in standards over the period has followed a shallow "V" shape. From standards being a little above average at the start of the period, they fell in 1998, and for two years they were just below average. Since 2000, standards have risen slightly and are not far short of the average level. Over the period since the previous inspection, satisfactory improvement has been made to mathematics.
76. The evidence from the current inspection shows standards to be just short of the expected level at the age of eleven. In the present Year 6, there is a relatively large proportion of pupils with special educational needs and ten pupils have statements. These factors have an influence on standards and in all, fewer pupils are working at, or above, the expected level than might otherwise be the case. Similarly, not many pupils stand out as particularly high attainers.
77. It is evident that the strongest year group in school is Year 5. Inspection evidence matches the school's analysis that this year group should produce the strongest results in the SATs in recent years when these pupils take the tests in early summer 2003. The scrutiny of these pupils' past work showed that more of them were working above the expected level and fewer were attaining below expectations than in the Year 6 age group.
78. Factors in this pattern of attainment include the differing nature of each year group and some variation in the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics across the school. Progress is satisfactory overall and the booster and springboard classes are having a positive impact on progress. The school's numeracy strategy has been introduced successfully and is effective in boosting standards. In all of these, the firm structure of the curriculum is working to advantage, as teachers have good guidance on the knowledge, skills and understanding to be learned.
79. There are some occasions when the firm curriculum guidelines are not as effectively translated into learning objectives as they might be. In addition, the work set is not yet focused sharply enough on the needs of the three main ability groups in class, so often the work is similar for every pupil. On the other hand, the system of setting pupils for mathematics is working to advantage. School managers are working hard to refine planning to ensure that within the different sets, the work is planned to meet the group's needs and that there is ample challenge for the higher attainers. There is shared determination to move ahead on this matter and prospects for future improvement look bright.
80. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers' expectations are mostly good, overall the methods used and the way basic numeracy skills are taught are both effective and pupils are well managed. The support staff give good assistance to their pupils and lessons are generally brisk and productive working sessions.
81. Pupils enjoy mathematics; they are well behaved, enjoy good relationships with others and hold positive attitudes about the subject. Beyond these things, the amount of personal control they have over their own learning could be greater. In a few lessons, teachers tend to talk for too long and the middle sections of lessons, where the pupils work individually, or less often, in groups, is sometimes squeezed. Managers are aware of the need to give pupils more responsibility and to develop more independence in learning than is currently the case. A promising start has been made to the sharing of learning objectives with the pupils at the start of lessons. There now needs to be greater consistency in the way in which the pupils themselves review and evaluate these at the session end.
82. Mathematics is managed well. The coordinator has clear educational direction and works hard for improvement. She has been successful in drawing other staff into this process and has undertaken some good monitoring of standards, teaching and learning. The outcomes of this

have been used effectively to make improvements. There are good assessment procedures in place and the data produced is analysed thoroughly to set achievable targets for each year group.

83. There are clearly more strengths than areas for development in mathematics and senior managers have every intention of moving ahead on those remaining issues for improvement. The prospects for continued progress are good.

SCIENCE

84. By the end of the juniors, pupils reach the expected standard in knowledge and understanding in science. Most pupils reach the expected level in national tests. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The improvement has exceeded the national trend.
85. Teachers plan practical activities wherever possible so that pupils learn the concepts through investigation and observation. Pupils in Year 3 discover that like poles of magnets repel and opposite poles attract. They investigate the properties of materials to determine which are attracted by magnets and which are not. Year 4 pupils construct electric circuits to make a bulb light and record their circuits using conventional symbols. Year 6 pupils have a secure understanding that to conduct a fair test they must have only one variable. They use this knowledge to investigate the reaction of various substances when added to water to determine whether or not they dissolve. When teaching topics that do not lend themselves to practical investigation, such as the Earth, moon and sun in Year 5, teachers plan activities that engage the pupils' interest. They discuss their preconceptions by brainstorming, watch an appropriate video and keep a record of the moon's changes over a month. Pupils learn well through these activities. Progress through the school is sound but higher attaining pupils could make more progress.
86. Teaching is generally good with some very good lessons seen. Lesson plans show clear learning objectives but there is insufficient attention to planning for the different levels of ability within the class, in particular there is insufficient planned extension for the higher attaining pupils. Whilst teachers share the learning objectives with pupils at the beginning of lessons, they could be expressed in more child-friendly language and are not always revisited at the end of lessons to give pupils a better awareness of their own learning. Resources are prepared and ready at the beginning of lessons. Teachers monitor pupils' understanding carefully during lessons and reinforce learning if needed either during the lesson or revise their plans for future lessons. Most teachers manage pupils well during lessons so that the pace of learning is good. In a few lessons appropriate attitudes to learning are less well established so that inattention and fidgeting slows the pace.
87. The science coordinator has been absent for a long time due to sickness. During this time the rest of the teachers have worked very hard to maintain the standards in subject and have improved pupils' knowledge and understanding significantly. More attention now needs to be paid to the expected quality of presentation in pupils' books and in teaching pupils how to plan and record their investigations independently. Pupils make satisfactory use of tables and different graphs to record results, but are less confident in writing reports of their experiments.
88. A new coordinator has just taken over. She is very keen and has a clear vision of how she wants to develop the subject. Her teaching and enthusiasm augur well for the future. She is aware that the present scheme of work needs to be reviewed and revised. Time is being made available for this to happen. The present assessment procedure is adequate but could be improved to provide better information on how well pupils are learning each year. The coordinator is exploring possible test materials. Resources are sufficient in quality and quantity to meet all topics in the scheme of work. The excellent business links significantly enrich the Year 6 science curriculum, providing relevance to pupils' learning.

ART AND DESIGN

89. Very few lessons were observed during the inspection; judgements are based on evidence from work displayed around the school and photographic records and examples of previously displayed work. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach the standard expected for their age especially in painting and drawing skills. Throughout the school teachers encourage pupils to develop skills in observational drawing. Pupils learn the different techniques for using pencils, crayons, pastels, charcoal, chalk and paint. Progress in skills and techniques are good.
90. Teachers plan opportunities to practise these skills and techniques in a variety of interesting projects. Year 3 pupils painted fish for an underwater scene, creating tints by adding white, learned in a previous lesson. Older pupils practised drawing skills when producing illustrations of Victorian children and Tudor portraits. Year 5 pupils have produced some impressive paintings of glass bottles using water colour very well to create an impression of transparency, others have made good drawings using charcoal and chalk.
91. The curriculum provides opportunities for some three-dimensional work. Younger pupils make small clay animals, older pupils use papier mache to create small decorated pots. Collage is used to decorate masks. Opportunities have yet to be consistently provided for pupils to develop their own creative imagination rather than generally working on tasks prescribed by the teacher. A good example was seen in a Year 6 lesson, where pupils first imagined pictures in the clouds and scenery and then used a wonderful selection of leaves to create an imaginary animal collage. This would have been even better without the constraint of creating an animal. It was clear that a number of pupils were attracted by the colour, pattern or shape of leaves first and then had to decide what animal to create with them rather than being free to use the materials as they wished.
92. Pupils learn about the lives and style of painting of a good range of artists and produce their own paintings using the technique observed. In Year 4 pupils had used Van Gogh's brush technique when painting their own weather pictures. Year 6 pupils produced interesting patterns after studying Kandinsky's work.
93. Resources are good. There is a good range of reference books and reproductions of artists' work. Materials and equipment is sufficient to match the curriculum. The design and location of the building is good. There is spacious light accommodation for producing work. The view from many of the classrooms is inspiring for landscape work.
94. The coordinator has held the post for a little over a year. She has worked hard to provide support for teachers. She has collated good portfolios of pupils' work as a record of projects undertaken and provided helpful examples of techniques. Assessment is limited to the identification of whether pupils have achieved the lesson learning objective. The coordinator is ready and very able to work to enhance assessment in the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

95. Pupils make satisfactory progress through the school analysing different types of products and exploring how features can be applied to their designs. Each year group undertakes three design projects per year. This term, pupils in Year 6 looked carefully at a range of slippers before designing and making their own. Pupils developed the skills they began in Year 4 where a range of purses were examined and then they made their own. They used simple stitching and a variety of joining materials to make their design. In Year 5 pupils made a range of musical instruments from different materials and they evaluated the final result carefully to show how the instrument could be improved. They used the results of tests using different bases, materials and beaters to produce a drum. They evaluated the results well, discussing together the strength, how tight the skin must be, and describing the sound it makes as *hollow* or *sharp*.
96. Teaching is satisfactory overall; lessons are well planned and have clear objectives which pupils are expected to achieve. A limited range of lessons were observed during the inspection, mainly in Year 4, where all pupils were beginning a new project that will lead to making a pop-up Christmas card. In this lesson, the pupils listened carefully to what was expected and responded well to the teachers' direct questions about designing and making a

product. They recognised how the process should develop and used words that were relevant to the design and making method. The pupils worked in small groups and discussed how the moving parts in pop up books work. The resources available were good and used well to demonstrate different processes. Sometimes, the pace of learning was slowed because pupils did not immediately respond to the teacher's instructions. The teacher used a variety of questions so that pupils could describe how the parts move, and how they could be applied to a Christmas card design. Many pupils understood the technical vocabulary introduced by the teacher and learned how a pivot works because of good demonstrations. Pupils co-operated well together and explored a variety of ways to assemble a pivot joint. The effective support within the groups enabled all pupils to make steady progress. Pupils with special educational needs were encouraged to take a full part in the lesson. They were able to apply their learning to the beginning of their design, describe ways of joining card and use different mechanisms to achieve the planned result.

97. Pupils' attitudes to design and technology are good and they talk about the subject with enthusiasm. Year 6 pupils recall with confidence how they used gears and levers to make a vehicle move and how to design features that improve speed and resistance. The opportunity to use ICT to assist in the design process is not yet fully developed and pupils are not confident about using programs that could assist the process. They are able to evaluate the significant features of both commercial and their own products using vocabulary that describes the merits and defects of particular designs. They do not always record their evaluations and use the knowledge to improve their design.
98. Design and technology makes a satisfactory contribution to the development of pupils' social skills. They are given opportunity to work together to make decisions and solve problems. Limited opportunities are given to pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and scientific skills. These could be developed further when pupils evaluate their work and make their designs.
99. The coordinator provides good leadership for the subject. She monitors the subject through taking an overview of the planning and monitoring the quality of pupils' work on display throughout the school. There are no opportunities to monitor directly the quality of teaching. The scheme has been reviewed to incorporate the revisions to the National Curriculum and uses national guidance to assist in the delivery of the subject. The resources for the subject are good. They are managed and stored very effectively. The school has developed relationships with local secondary schools and takes part in an annual commercial technology kit challenge. Assessment and recording procedures are in line with school policy and provide evidence of the progress pupils make throughout the school. A portfolio is kept of pupils work and is assessed against national standards. This is a good feature of management.

GEOGRAPHY

100. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. By the age of eleven the pupils reach levels expected for their age. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, which is having a positive impact on the development of pupils' geographical skills. Standards have improved in Years 3,4 and 5 and are now good. There have been improvements to the quality of the curriculum and teaching since the last inspection.
101. Mapping skills are taught well throughout the school. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils showed good knowledge of local places due to good teaching. They covered a good range of work on maps and plans and showed an effective understanding of using a simple colour key for the school plan. As well as the key provided, pupils created their own symbols. They achieved well because the helped them extend their geographical skills.
102. Year 4 pupils have a good understanding of the different types of weather and climate around the world. Well-chosen resources support the teaching, and opportunities to deepen the pupils' knowledge and understanding are used well. Pupils are beginning to use the computer to search for information on climate. They give clear explanations of the characteristics of polar, desert and rainforest regions. They complete good map work to locate where these areas are in the world. Through good teaching pupils are able to use four and five figure grid references on the Ordnance Survey maps accurately. Pupils in a Year 6 class gave good

evaluations of how mining can change the features of places and the lives of the people living there. The teacher used her subject knowledge well to motivate pupils during their discussions. The school is situated in an area, which provides good access to locations that enhance the geography curriculum and teachers use these opportunities well for field study experience.

103. Overall the teaching is good. The main reasons for this are that teacher's subject knowledge and understanding is secure, their expectations are high and the quality of the curriculum is good. This results in well planned lessons, with well-motivated, -challenged and -behaved pupils. Teaching was good in all the lessons seen with pupils making good progress. They respond well and work well together.
104. The coordinator provides good leadership for geography and supports colleagues well. She monitors teacher's planning and the standards of work produced carefully. At present there is no direct monitoring of teaching. The school is developing assessment procedures in order to record pupils' progress. Resources are good and meet the needs of pupils in geography.

HISTORY

105. Attainment has remained broadly the same since the last inspection. By eleven years of age pupils achieve similar standards to those found nationally.
106. In each year group pupils make steady progress and build successfully upon their previous learning. They study British history in depth and in discussions identify with growing clarity different periods of time and relevant dates. Good use is made of first-hand experiences, with visits to places of historical interest, such as a Victorian workhouse and history days in school, related to the Tudors and Aztecs, enlivening learning. Some effective links are made with art and design to develop deeper understanding of the past: for instance, fine pencil drawings of Victorian working children show an insight into their plight and open up study of society at that time.
107. Younger pupils in Year 3 study the Romans are aware that they were invaders and are keen to explain the importance of Roman soldiers and their dress. They research information from history books, with more confident pupils keen to point out interesting facts, such as the formation of a tortoise for protection in battles. Work in Year 6 related to the Greeks and the study of the story of the Trojan Horse, enables pupils to study wider world history, and to consider historical fact from fiction. The reduced range of resources and artefacts in some lessons restricts pupils' full understanding of the topic studied.
108. In discussions with pupils it is clear to see they enjoy history lessons. They concentrate well and work on task. Behaviour in lessons is good and so learning moves on at a brisk pace. Boys and girls work well with each other it is the more confident and capable speakers who tend to respond voluntarily in lessons. Many less confident pupils need encouragement from the teacher to do so.. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to participate in lessons, but at times work is not planned at a level to meet their learning needs.
109. Teaching is sound and has some good aspects. Teachers work hard to make lessons interesting, but there is a lack consistency in the way in which pupils are encouraged to ask and answer historical questions and communicate their findings. Teachers have good subject knowledge and when this is linked to a range of learning activities, then progress is good. A lively lesson aimed at making comparisons between rich and poor in Tudor times is an example. Pupils were given the chance to show initiative, research historical pictures and texts, act in role play and to communicate their findings to the whole class. However, in a few lessons follow up work is too firmly focused on labelling worksheets. This misses the opportunity for pupils to record in a personal way: There is a wide range of ability and need within classes and as yet work is not yet matched closely enough to the different levels in the class. The subject is managed well and the curriculum is well balanced.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

110. In 1997, the standard of pupils' attainment in ICT was in line with national expectations. The new building now has in place an ICT suite that enables a class of pupils to be taught in one group with access to the same programs and hardware. The system is in the process of being networked with computers in each classroom. The school has made very good provision but has experienced major difficulties in networking the system and it is not yet securely in place. Facilities to teach the subject have not been sufficient to maintain the standards reported at the last inspection. Standards are below the expected level by the end of Year 6. The difficulties with the system have contributed significantly to the lack of progress pupils make in all areas of the subject.
111. There were not many opportunities to observe ICT lessons during the inspection, so a judgement about the quality of teaching cannot be made. However, there were opportunities to discuss the use of ICT with pupils; and to observe different groups of pupils who were developing ICT skills with the support of an educational care officer who is a technology assistant. A scrutiny of pupils' work revealed little evidence of their ICT skills. A number of pupils throughout school have used a word processing package and a limited range of CD ROM to find information and to explore problem solving activities.
112. During the week of inspection, groups of pupils from Year 3 and Year 5 developed the skills they had been taught previously and were supported effectively by an education care officer. They followed clear instructions. Pupils with special educational needs were encouraged and well supported by other adults and the technology assistant. By the end of the session all pupils had made good progress changing text, using icons and importing pictures for specific tasks.
113. Year 6 pupils are confident about their use of ICT, the majority have computers at home and are able to access word processing and research packages to support their literacy and other projects. They use desk-top publishing programs successfully and produce posters and memos to encourage fundraising events in school. However they lack the ability, and do not have sufficient knowledge to follow data handling, spreadsheet or control software to any depth. In a session using the ICT suite, they used their skills to draft and edit a piece of imaginative writing. The majority, including those with special needs, used the keyboard efficiently and worked well together using various editing tools, changing fonts and spelling tools to produce lively and interesting pieces of writing.
114. The provision for ICT is much improved than it was at the last inspection. In addition to the suite, every classroom has a least one work station. Teachers have received a considerable amount of training. Through their own efforts, teachers have improved their skills and knowledge about the use and potential of the subject to support learning in all subjects. They are committed to developing its use as soon as the network is in place. There is an effective policy that is supported by a detailed scheme of work based on national guidelines. Teachers' are keen and when supported by the good resources are beginning to develop and use ICT well. The use of a specific support assistant to encourage and support pupils' work will help to raise standards. There is an agreed record keeping system in place covering all strands of the subject. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and are being built into the system so that pupils' progress can be tracked throughout the school. The clear progression already identified will enable pupils to develop skills at a faster rate. The use of the suite and the assistant is timetabled so that all pupils use the facility on a regular basis to develop specific skills. The occasional withdrawal of small groups of pupils from other lessons is disruptive and can limit the effectiveness of the support assistant.
115. The suite is available to be used to support learning in all subjects so that all pupils can develop their knowledge and skills across all subject areas. The school has the equipment to teach measurement and control aspects of the curriculum. These are not used at present and pupils have not had sufficient opportunities to explore their use during the interim period whilst the system is being networked. A positive and effective link with business partners and local secondary school has encouraged pupils to research and explore the use of ICT for specific challenges.

116. The coordinator has worked very hard to secure the provision and develop the resources. She has developed the curriculum and provided training for all staff. The difficulty the school has experienced in setting up the system has thwarted the plans that had been made to develop all strands of the subject. The difficulties are near to resolution and it is clear that the subject will develop effectively in the near future so that pupils can build skills and knowledge at a faster rate.

MUSIC

117. Pupils attain the standard expected for their age by eleven and enjoy their music making activities. The tuition provided by the coordinator and visiting specialist teachers is a strength of the school and recorder, keyboard, string, brass and choir further enhance the provision for pupils. This enables the musically talented pupils to achieve well. The pupils aged seven to eleven who play musical instruments attain particularly good standards in their ability to read and play music. Standards achieved by pupils in music lessons have improved in the area of composition due to good teaching of skills and effective use of resources.
118. Year 3 pupils sing well showing good control of pitch, dynamics and rhythm. They compose and perform appropriate sounds for the characters in the story *The Mouse and the Doves*. In this lesson, the teacher ensured that there were very good links to literacy. Very good use was made of assessment as their taped performance was listened to, refined, improved and recorded again in the light of the teacher's critical feedback. They sang songs such as 'The Sloop John B' competently to a skilful guitar accompaniment. At other times, effective use is made of music such as the *Carnival of the animals* to develop pupil's listening and appraisal skills.
119. Pupils in all classes learn to create percussion parts to songs and compose simple melodies to accompany text. Teacher's subject knowledge and understanding is good and effective use is made of music to develop their listening and appraisal skills. For example Year 5 pupils likened 'The Neptune' music from the *Planets Suite* to 'gooey, greeny watery music'. Once child said 'It was like vibrations in science last term – the sound seemed to shrink'. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils enjoyed singing and playing a range of clapping, skipping, counting and singing games that were made fun by their teacher. Older pupils develop a growing knowledge of music from other cultures such as African drum music and benefit from live performances of wind and brass ensembles. Year 6 pupils sing rounds in three and four parts and compose music to sound like washing machines at work. They record their efforts and refine their performances as appropriate.
120. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good overall. Music is taught by the coordinator, who is a music specialist, and by class teachers. There are several teachers who have at least good subject knowledge and understanding. A new scheme has been introduced which is already capturing pupils' interest and extending their creative abilities. Throughout the school, teachers regularly provide opportunities for pupils to create or improvise music and to evaluate their performances. This was evident in a Year 5 lesson where pupils used their voices to create the mysterious sounds as they journeyed into space. They discussed their efforts with enthusiasm and their energy was utilised well by the teacher. Musical vocabulary is developed systematically throughout the school.
121. Good improvements have taken place since the last inspection. The quality of teaching the curriculum, the effective use of resources and the consistent development of pupil's musical skills are evident. The coordinator has monitored planning well and she provides good, clear educational direction for the subject. At the moment she has no opportunity to directly monitor teaching. Extra curricular provision is excellent and pupils have the opportunity to learn a wide range of instruments. All pupils in Year 3 learn the recorder and the advanced recorder ensemble has won top awards in a local festival. The talented choir regularly performs in concerts and festivals and there are valuable links with musical children from secondary school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills are developed well.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

122. Standards were average, progress satisfactory and teaching was effective enough in 1997, when the school was inspected last time. School managers have worked well for improvement since then and today standards, progress and teaching have all moved up a notch. They are now all good.

123. Standards are above the expected level by the age of eleven. This is especially the case in Years 5 and 6, where the impact of particularly good teaching is positive and learning accelerates. During this inspection, lessons in games, dance and gymnastics were observed and standards were shown to get better the older the year group. Thus, whilst the youngest pupils move with confidence, they are not always fleet of foot and do not always use space wisely. By Years 3 and 4, this has improved and pupils are beginning to think more about their performance. In Years 5 and 6, pupils work energetically and they make sustained efforts to improve. They show greater poise in movement, hold balances confidently and play invasive games with good appreciation of tactics and teamwork. Overall, progress is good from shaky beginnings to performance of considerable quality. For the future, school managers accept the need to give pupils more opportunities to evaluate their own work, rather than have it evaluated by the teacher. This will contribute to heightened responsibility and independence in learning.
124. There is firm evidence that standards in swimming are of similar calibre. Most pupils attain the desirable skill and confidence levels by the time they leave school, as demonstrated by comprehensive records of assessment. The school rightly places water safety as the key priority in assigning opportunities for swimming. The school is able to provide some good experiences in athletics and outdoor pursuits and the pupils do well in these. The programme of sporting activities outside lessons is excellent and the school teams and individual players do very well in these sports and games. Thus, the school has a very well deserved reputation for attainment in table tennis, basket ball, football, netball and several other sports. The links with the community are excellent in promoting such success and individual volunteers do sterling work in taking things forward.
125. PE teaching is good. Staff have good subject knowledge, they teach skills with confidence and success and the pace of lessons is brisk. One unsatisfactory lesson was observed in PE. This was a very teacher dominated lesson where the excitability of the pupils was not managed successfully enough and learning was fragmented. On the other hand, most PE lessons were of good teaching quality individually and skills were consolidated and extended at a productive rate.
126. The curriculum for PE is good and covers all necessary experiences. The level and quality of resources and accommodation is excellent. Although the hall is rather small, it is of adequate size for the largest classes (physically and numerically!) and the outdoor facilities are second to none. Resources and the accommodation are used imaginatively to give good opportunities for learning. For example, the orienteering trail established by the coordinator gives pupils opportunities that are denied in other schools.
127. The subject is managed well by the two coordinators. They have enthusiasm, energy and insight in equal measure and they are influential in making improvements. They are ready for the challenge of producing a skills centred assessment programme for the subject and the involvement in greater direct monitoring of teaching, learning and standards. PE has a good track record. It also has a good future.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

128. By the time they leave the school, pupils attain standards that are in line with the expectations of the Derbyshire agreed syllabus for religious education. The progress all pupils make, including those with special educational needs is satisfactory. This is a similar picture to that of the last inspection. There has been very little change in the provision since then.
129. Religious education contributes significantly to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils have an insight into other beliefs which makes a contribution to their cultural awareness. Assemblies include stories about the life of Jesus and pupils are aware of the difference between parables and miracles. They understand the message and suggest ways they can contribute to improve the lives that who are not as fortunate as themselves.
130. The quality of pupils' learning in all year groups is generally satisfactory; most pupils by the end of Year 6 are able to identify important features and explain the traditions of four of the

world's major faiths. They understand the significance of the five pillars of Islam and know some of the features about each. They recognise the importance of numbers and have discussed the significance of the five K's of Sikhism and the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament. They recognise the importance of the Old Testament to the Christian traditions and the significance of Judaism to other beliefs. They recognise and can explain key elements and major festivals of the Christian faith.

131. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. Teachers are confident in their knowledge of the religious education syllabus and the aspects of different religions. In a very good Year 5 lesson pupils listen intently to the well told story of Judah the Macabee. The teacher used well directed questions to explore how pupils felt and responded to the story; developing the significance of the story to the Jewish festival of Hanukah. Pupils used role play very well using their speaking and listening skills to good effect when reporting a conversation between key characters, exploring how they felt and the impact of victory upon them. They listened carefully to each other and made positive suggestions to extend their thinking. Pupils with special educational needs worked hard and contributed well to the lesson. The lesson was well planned and moved at a fast pace so that pupils were interested and well motivated because the activities were challenging and exciting.
132. The curriculum is clearly planned and the coordinator has developed a detailed scheme to ensure that every year pupils learn about Christianity and another religion. The scheme is progressive so that, over time, pupils make comparisons between different world faiths. Pupils in Year 4 took part in a Sikh and Christian wedding ceremony, noting the differences but recognising that commitment and promises are part of both beliefs. In Year 5, a visiting Rabbi explained the significance of the Passover feast and the pupils related the Passover to the Easter story well. Pupils visited the local church to explore Christian places of worship but they could have greater opportunities to compare the local church to other places of worship.
133. Pupils' written work is often based on work sheets and there are too few opportunities for higher attaining pupils to present their own views or demonstrate their feelings and knowledge in personal writing. The school has enhanced the resources for RE and is working to develop links with ICT in order to improve pupils' research and writing skills.
134. The coordinator has worked hard and reviewed the scheme using national guidelines and building in assessment opportunities. She monitors the subject through teachers' planning and an overview of pupils' written work and has a useful overview of the subject.