

INSPECTION REPORT

LEAS PARK JUNIOR SCHOOL

Mansfield Woodhouse

Mansfield

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122441

Headteacher: Mr Jeffrey Hannabuss

Reporting inspector: Mrs Lesley P. A. Clark
25431

Dates of inspection: 12th – 15th March 2001

Inspection number: 197444

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ley Lane Mansfield Woodhouse Mansfield Nottinghamshire
Postcode:	NG19 8LD
Telephone number:	01623 477629
Fax number:	01623 477631
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr W. H. Jackson
Date of previous inspection:	15 th September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Lesley Clark (25431)	Registered inspector	English	What sort of school is it?
		Art and design Music Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
Janet Garland (9214)	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Brian Griffiths (2607)	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	How well is the school led and managed?
Godfrey Bancroft (3697)	Team inspector	Physical education Information and communication technology Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Andrew Waterson (20361)	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Religious education	How well are pupils taught?

The inspection contractor was:

Independent School Inspection Services (ISIS)
15 The Birches
Bramhope
Leeds
LS16 9DP

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7 - 11
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12 - 14
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	14 - 15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15 - 17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17 - 18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19 - 20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22 - 25
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26- 39

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Leas Park Junior School is larger than average with 300 pupils on roll. The school is situated on the edge of a former mining town in a residential area in the same grounds as the adjacent nursery, infant and secondary schools. The school serves the local area of mixed private and rented accommodation. The school is very popular and currently exceeds its admission number by a third. Approximately 25 per cent of pupils come from outside the immediate area. The school has increased in size by ten per cent since the last inspection and consequently the accommodation is cramped. Ten per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is about average nationally. Seventeen per cent have special educational needs, which is slightly below the national average and no pupils currently have statements of special educational needs, which is also below average. A very small percentage of pupils come from ethnic minorities though no pupils have English as an additional language. When children enter the school at the start of Year 3 their attainment is broadly average, though often weighted towards the lower end of this.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a highly effective school. Pupils achieve highly and attain above average standards in virtually all subjects. A distinctive feature is the very good quality of teaching, a large proportion of which is excellent, because of innovative methods of teaching and learning, inspired by the excellent leadership and management. The excellent leadership has resulted in pupils having excellent attitudes to learning, excellent social development and outstanding relationships which pave the way for continuous improvement and good all-round achievement in a wide range of subjects. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are well above average in music and physical education; they are above average in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, design and technology, geography and history.
- Teaching is very good in all classes with many excellent lessons throughout the school, which promotes high standards enabling all pupils to make good progress.
- The quality of leadership and management is excellent and with the very good support of the governing body ensures that standards of teaching and learning are consistently high for pupils of different levels of attainment.
- The school makes excellent provision for pupils' social development and relationships between pupils of all ages and between pupils and staff are outstanding.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to school and their enthusiasm and delighted interest in their lessons underpins their above average achievement.

What could be improved

There are no significant areas of weakness and so there are no key issues. The following minor areas for improvement should be considered.

- Extend the good practice in monitoring and evaluating English and mathematics by subject co-ordinators to other subjects to ensure that standards are maintained or even improved.
- Extend pupils' knowledge of other cultures and customs, particularly those represented in present day Britain.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

As well as consolidating its already good practice, the school has made good improvement since the last inspection in September 1997. Standards have risen in all subjects with considerable improvement in standards in information and communication technology (ICT), music and physical education. The overall quality of teaching has improved substantially and leadership and management are now excellent. The school has greatly improved the planning of work for the higher attaining pupils and provides them with suitably challenging tasks. The headteacher and co-ordinators for English and mathematics monitor teaching and learning in the classroom very well indeed and, as a result, standards across the whole curriculum have risen. The curriculum is good and offers many opportunities in mathematics and science for learning through investigation, leading to improved standards. The quality of planning, teaching and learning in ICT has improved considerably and standards have risen from below to above the average expected nationally.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	D	C	C	D	Well above average A
Mathematics	B	C	D	D	Above average B
Science	B	B	C	D	Average C
					Below average D
					Well below average E

This table shows that pupils' performance in the year 2000 national tests for eleven year olds was close to the national average in English and science and below average in mathematics. The overall attainment of this particular year group was affected by the large proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and the relatively small number of higher attaining pupils. As a result, compared to similar schools, attainment was slightly below average though in previous years it has been at least in line. Even with the results of those pupils who had statements of special educational need, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level is higher than in most schools as confirmed by pupils' performance over the past four years. Trends in the school's results have remained steady. This year, approximately one third of the year group is attaining much higher standards than those usually seen at this stage of the year as a result of the very good teaching currently being seen. Inspection judgements are that attainment is above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils, including those with special educational needs or who are gifted and talented, achieve well. Levels of achievement are particularly high in speaking and listening, music, physical education and in aspects of literacy and numeracy throughout the school. Pupils' achievement is particularly good in ICT where standards have risen from below to above average because of specialist teaching and intensive use of the recently developed ICT suite. Standards in design and technology, geography and history are above average and they are well above average in music and physical education. The school places a strong emphasis on the performing arts. Standards in singing, dance and instrumental playing are particularly high. The use of drama in assemblies and in lessons significantly enhances pupils' confidence and their skills in speaking and listening. Standards are

broadly average in religious education because their knowledge of religions other than Christianity is not particularly extensive. Standards are also about average in art though there are examples of high quality work in some classrooms. The school sets itself high standards and fulfils its targets.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent; pupils clearly enjoy coming to school. They talk enthusiastically about what they have learnt and readily take part in all aspects of school life. They are proud of their school and because they feel valued they want to give of their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons, assemblies and in the playground and this promotes high standards. At lunchtimes, pupils in Year 6 look after younger ones and offer assistance if it is needed. Pupils as well as adults feel there is no bullying or oppressive behaviour at the school.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent; relationships are delightfully open and friendly. Pupils relate very well to their teachers, really appreciating their good humour, laughing readily and then settling instantly down to work. They are pleased to take on responsibilities around the school and use their initiative well.
Attendance	Very good; attendance is much better than average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	N/A	N/A	Very 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 are very good. In all, 20 per cent was excellent, 33 per cent was very good, 42 per cent was good and 5 per cent satisfactory. Teaching is of a very high standard throughout the school and there is no unsatisfactory teaching or learning. English (including literacy) and mathematics (including numeracy) are very well taught and teachers are particularly good at making the learning of basic skills not only effective but also interesting and fun. Lessons have a very brisk pace so that pupils work hard. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is also very good as is the teaching of pupils who have been targeted for additional support in English and mathematics. In many lessons, higher attaining pupils undertake work that encourages them to achieve at a high level. The school meets the needs of all pupils very well. The lively and varied teaching methods stimulate pupils' interest and enthusiasm so that they work hard and achieve well. Almost all aspects of teaching are of an equally high standard and reflect the attention the school has paid to developing effective ways of teaching.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good; a varied curriculum that meets all statutory requirements enhanced by very good extra-curricular provision, both at lunchtime and after school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they achieve well, making good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good; provision for social development is excellent. The school makes very good provision for spiritual and moral development. The provision for pupils to understand their own culture is good but not enough is done to ensure that pupils are sufficiently aware of other cultures within their community and beyond.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good; the school cares well for pupils and supports them to achieve their maximum potential, both social and academic. Pupils learn happily in a positive and supportive environment.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Very good; the school places much emphasis on working with parents. The partnership with parents makes a very good contribution to the school's excellent local reputation and above average standards nationally.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher and all other co-ordinators of aspects of the school's work.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors meet their responsibilities very well. They consider all relevant issues and fully meet their statutory duties. They make positive contributions to the school's very real sense of direction and purpose.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher, staff and governors are fully aware of the school's strengths and of its relative weaknesses, largely because monitoring procedures are very effective. The monitoring and evaluating of teaching and learning in English and mathematics are very good, and has led to improved standards throughout the school; other subjects would benefit from a similar strategy. The school takes vigorous and effective steps to consolidate its strengths and ensure improvements.

The strategic use of resources	The headteacher and governing body spend money wisely, in ways which are most beneficial to pupils' learning. They succeed in obtaining good quality provision at the best available cost.
--------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Most classrooms are spacious but other areas are restricted in size for the number of pupils and adults who use them. The hall is small for the large number of pupils. It is also used as a thoroughfare to classrooms and the ICT suite. Learning resources are good and are used very well. The school is adequately staffed at all levels.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is helping their children to become more mature and responsible. • Their children make good progress at school. • The school expects their children to work hard and to achieve their best. • Their children like school. • The school is well led and managed. • Teaching is good. • They would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or any problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents would like to see the accommodation extended, particularly the hall so they can attend assemblies and school productions more easily.

Many parents returned the questionnaires sent out before the inspection and a large number of parents attended the meeting held before the inspection took place. From these, it is clear that parents fully support the school and that they hold it in high regard. Well over 90 per cent of parents made the above positive comments about the school. Parents' only reservation is that the school hall is now too small to hold the large numbers of parents and children when the school puts on concerts or productions. A small number of parents felt that although they are well informed about school events they would like more information about the curriculum and subjects to be studied so that those parents who wish to can become even more involved with their children's work. The inspection team fully endorses the parents' comments and their confidence in what the school gives their children.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Pupils' attainment in the year 2000 national tests for eleven year olds was close to the national average in English and science and below average in mathematics. Attainment was slightly below average compared to schools with a similar intake of pupils. Inspection judgement is that standards in all three subjects are now above average. The school sets itself challenging targets, which it meets. Last year's results reflected a particular year group which had a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs and a comparatively lower proportion of higher attaining pupils. A higher proportion of pupils attained expected standards than in most other schools, despite the number of pupils with statements of special need. Whilst the results are partly attributable to the balance of potential in these year groups, standards are also benefiting enormously from the school's intensive adoption of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and the use of elements of these strategies in science. Pupils achieve well, for the attainment of the majority is weighted towards the low end of average when they begin at this school. They are very well taught, in all classes, and the high percentage of very good and excellent teaching enables pupils to reach above average standards in most subjects. The standard of teaching and learning has improved because of the school's intensive work on developing effective methods of teaching. This enables higher attaining pupils to attain much higher standards than previously. All pupils, whatever their level of attainment, achieve equally well. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented achieve well and make good progress. There are no discernible differences between the attainment of boys and girls.
2. Standards are higher in most subjects than they were at the time of the last inspection. Over the past year, the school has concentrated on improving its teaching methods and this has had a corresponding impact on learning. The school has responded with vigour to national initiatives and has made intelligent adjustments to the timetable in order to provide a well-balanced curriculum. In English, the school has made additional provision for pupils to write at length and this has improved the quality of their written work. The resources for reading are very good and pupils take home books from both the school and their class libraries. Attainment in speaking and listening is well above average because of the frequent and often informal use of drama and the provision made in other subjects to develop these skills. The National Strategy for Numeracy has had a significant impact on standards in mathematics largely through improving methods of teaching and learning and enriching the curriculum. Effective use has been made of additional funds allocated to the school to boost attainment in both literacy and numeracy. Achievement is higher in science than previously and standards have improved because of developments to the curriculum and to teaching methods. There is far greater emphasis on learning through investigation. Time is used effectively, with shorter lessons used to plan investigations and longer lessons used to carry them out. Short, opening questions and games, along the lines of mental mathematics, are used most effectively to help pupils to learn through repetition and application of knowledge as well as revising aspects of the curriculum.
3. Standards in ICT are above average. They have risen considerably since the last inspection when they were below the level expected nationally of eleven year olds. Well-planned expenditure on additional resources, improved quality of teaching and intensive use of the new ICT suite are factors which have contributed to higher

standards. The timetable has been adjusted to allow all pupils to receive two short lessons in this subject each week and so they achieve well because they become more confident and competent users of technology. Standards in religious education are broadly similar to the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for eleven year olds. Whilst much of their written work is good, their knowledge of religions other than Christianity is not particularly extensive.

4. Standards are above average in design and technology, geography and history and pupils achieve well. They are broadly average in art though there is evidence of high quality work in some year groups. Standards are well above the level expected of eleven year olds in music and physical education. The school places a strong emphasis on the performing arts and standards in singing, dance and instrumental playing are particularly high. These subjects are very well supported by extra-curricular activities, which take place at lunchtimes and after school. Features such as a daily running club do much to improve fitness and the use of drama in assemblies fosters pupils' skills in performance.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

5. Pupils' attitudes to school are excellent. They are involved and committed to their work and to the opportunities which the school offers to participate in a wide range of activities. This in turn contributes to above average standards throughout the school. Attendance is very good at over 96 per cent. Pupils come to school on time, smartly dressed and well prepared for their studies.
6. Pupils work very hard in lessons and behave very well both inside the classroom and around the school and playground. Behaviour in class contributes to the high standards seen in lessons. Expectations of good behaviour are implicit in the school's ethos and pupils behave very well in response, rarely having to be reminded of rules. Girls and boys work well together, pupils co-operate well in various groups, and the school is a tolerant society where pupils are encouraged to respect each other and to listen to others' opinions. Parents praised this aspect of the school in the pre-inspection meeting. There have been two fixed period exclusions during the past year, carried out in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.
7. Relationships in school are excellent. Pupils relate exceptionally well to each other and to their teachers; they are keen to express the fact that the school is a friendly place and that they feel they play an important part in it. In turn, teachers treat their pupils with a great degree of consideration and acknowledge that they have opinions by involving them in discussions in lessons to which pupils respond well. The use of humour, for example in assemblies, especially those led by the headteacher whose dramatic performances are much appreciated, encourages an atmosphere of team spirit and co-operation. Pupils enjoy their studies but also work hard and have a social conscience.
8. Pupils have good attitudes to visitors, are welcoming and make social conversation easily at lunchtimes. They are very polite and extremely willing to talk about their studies and experiences at school. They value the incentives for hard work and good behaviour, which the school offers, and work to win awards which recognise effort and achievement. Older pupils take the increasing responsibilities on offer to them very seriously. They are proud to take up different roles in the school as their turn comes round to be monitors and are conscious of the need to set an example and be of help to younger pupils; for example, they conscientiously log any latecomers to school, of which there are few, they help to organise classrooms and have various responsible roles around the school. They fundraise for a variety of charities, for example planning

various amusing activities for Comic Relief. There is a serious band of journalists who are chronicling school life for the new school newspaper. Pupils have mature attitudes, enjoy their time in school and are very committed to all aspects of school life, taking great pride in being members of their community.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

9. The quality of teaching and learning are very good and confirms parents' high opinion of the school. In 20 per cent of lessons, teaching is excellent. It is very good in 33 per cent, good in 42 per cent and satisfactory in five per cent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. This marks a significant improvement since the last inspection and reflects the attention the school has paid to developing interesting and effective methods of teaching.
10. The school has developed a policy on teaching and learning, which sets out key aims and the roles and responsibilities of teachers. The policy makes very clear the school's approach to planning, setting targets for children and how pupils are to be assessed. This has supported the development of a consistent approach in all classes as well as promoting high quality teaching. This approach enables gifted and talented pupils as well as those with special educational needs to learn well. Teachers have good subject knowledge in all areas of the curriculum, are technically highly competent in planning and delivering lessons, and challenge and inspire pupils by setting high expectations of their learning. Pupils acquire new skills and ideas and develop their understanding in lessons where teachers utilise a range of methods to enhance learning. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour and learning very well so that pupils work at a good pace, show interest, sustain concentration and learn to think for themselves. Pupils understand what they are doing, how well they have done and how they can improve. Teachers make effective use of support staff to help pupils who learn at different rates. Pupils respond with enthusiasm to using computers and other learning aids to help them learn. The school's homework policy is carefully implemented using clearly set out homework diaries. The main focus is on numeracy and literacy so that pupils consolidate what they have learnt in school and parents can follow their child's progress. Parents are quite happy with the amount of homework that is set.
11. Pupils are well managed. Teachers have well-established routines and strategies that mean that pupils learn confidently. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good-humoured and purposeful which ensures that pupils work well. Teachers value and encourage pupils' contributions, and work hard to engage their interest and to make lessons enjoyable. Pupils respond well to this. Lessons are well planned and their purpose clearly explained. Teachers' questioning challenges pupils of all levels of attainment to respond and to explain their thinking, which reinforces and clarifies pupils' understanding. The pace of teaching is generally brisk and lessons are well timed. Some satisfactory lessons sometimes lose pace and urgency and others allow insufficient time for average and lower attaining pupils to complete their work. Teachers generally plan work to enable pupils of a wide range of abilities to learn successfully.
12. Where teaching is very good it is invariably thoughtfully planned with a clear focus. Lessons have a purpose, pace and direction which motivates and challenges children to achieve. Classrooms frequently have a 'buzz' of activity. Clear expectations structure lessons so that pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress. Lively, energetic and enthusiastic teaching inspires and captivates the pupils and consequently behaviour is very good. Teachers draw out pupils' responses and encourage them to find and explain their own solutions. In a very good mathematics

lesson, pupils decided when they were ready to move on to the next stage of learning. This enabled higher attaining pupils to quickly progress to working with much larger numbers once they had understood the initial principle of partitioning. Teachers treat pupils as mature individuals and pupils respond accordingly, for example, in history, setting up a Viking meeting to debate whether they should carry out a raid on a monastery or not and researching information to support their views.

13. Where teaching is excellent it is creative and inventive, challenging and motivating pupils of all attainments to achieve highly. There is an excellent relationship between teachers and pupils; teachers are calm and supportive, they encourage pupils to participate fully in lessons and give them freedom to take the initiative. In an English lesson, pupils confidently stood at the front and presented a lively summary of their groups' debate, using a large sheet of paper to mark salient points and using emotive language very effectively to persuade others to agree with their point of view. Classrooms have a happy, secure atmosphere with pupils completely captivated with the work. Teachers use questioning to motivate, shape the lesson and challenge pupils' understanding; quick-fire questions keep the pupils fully involved. Teachers lead discussions with a lively pace using carefully planned sequences to extend and develop pupils' skills and knowledge. Teachers provide effective support to pupils of all levels of attainment enabling them to make excellent progress in these lessons. Pupils are encouraged to review and evaluate their work against the high standards set by the teacher and indicate future areas for their own development.
14. The teaching of skills in literacy and numeracy is very good. Teachers use the National Strategies inventively, giving additional time for writing so that pupils learn to write at length. Effective questioning shapes lessons; mathematical games generate enthusiasm and interest as pupils try to test their own skills. Pupils are given opportunities to explain their methods of working and consequently learn well from each other. Pupils with special educational needs are guided and helped effectively by teaching assistants dedicated to supporting their needs.

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

15. The quality and range of opportunities for learning provided by the school are good. The needs and interests of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are met effectively and statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and for the provision of religious education are met in full. The school ensures there is appropriate equality and access of opportunity to the curriculum for all its pupils. Particular strengths lie in the planning for English (including literacy), mathematics (including numeracy) and science. The curriculum for religious education focuses much more on Christianity than on other religions and this is a comparative weakness.
16. Strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are very good. The principles for teaching the National Strategies for these aspects of provision are well established and are understood and applied effectively by teachers; consequently pupils achieve well. The school has responded with vigour to national initiatives and has made intelligent adjustments to the timetable in order to provide a very fair and balanced curriculum. This benefits subjects such as ICT where pupils receive two short, practical lessons each week. In English, the school has made additional provision for pupils to write at length and this has improved the quality of their written work and enables gifted and talented writers to learn well, as well as those pupils with special educational needs. In mathematics, the National Numeracy Strategy is used well to enrich the curriculum. Judicious timetabling allows for pupils throughout the school to be taught in classes according to attainment in mathematics. This means

that pupils receive the specialist teaching they require. In science, standards have improved because of developments to the curriculum and there is far greater emphasis on learning through investigation. Time is used effectively, with shorter lessons used to plan investigations and longer lessons used to carry them out. Other subjects also benefit from the balance between short and long lessons and pupils benefit from the variety within the school day.

17. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and these pupils make good progress. All pupils with special educational needs participate in the full range of provision made by the school. They are guided and helped effectively by teaching assistants dedicated to supporting their needs. Their attainment and progress is assessed thoroughly by teachers. The outcomes and subsequent actions following assessments are communicated clearly to their parents and others who care for them. Teachers also use the information gained from assessments to decide what pupils should be taught next in order to ensure they continue to make good progress. Details of these developments are included in the individual education plans of all pupils with special educational needs. These plans are regularly updated and are used effectively to ensure all those contributing are fully aware of the needs of the pupils.
18. A very wide range of very good extra-curricular activities and educational visits enrich the curriculum. These include sporting and musical activities that are available to pupils each day. There is an excellent school choir that has performed successfully at venues beyond the school and contributes to the very good standard of singing during assemblies. An excellent range of sporting activities is provided for pupils each day at lunchtime and after school. These are well attended and make a significant contribution to the high standards in the subject. They include athletics, football, netball and running clubs.
19. The provision made for pupils' personal, social and health education, including sex education and guidance on drugs misuse, is good. Much is done to provide them with suitable insights in their own values and beliefs and those of others. Assemblies provide pupils with opportunities to reflect on their own experiences, to consider the challenges faced by others less fortunate than themselves, and to develop their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge. Teachers and other adults provide good role models that effectively promote the principles that enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong.
20. The school encourages pupils to take responsibility successfully. For example, the oldest pupils publish the school newspaper, arranging interviews, writing reports and preparing the paper for circulation. They show initiative frequently and are developing a sound understanding of the responsibilities entailed in being part of a community and making a valuable and positive contribution to that community. They raise money for national charities, extending their understanding of the needs of others.
21. The provision made for pupils' spiritual and moral education is very good. During assemblies periods for personal reflection are observed appropriately. Opportunities to make music, dance and write poetry also make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development. The provision for their social education is excellent. Older pupils care for younger pupils. They are respectful and courteous towards each other and consistently co-operative and supportive of each other when they work together. The school provides pupils with valuable insights into their own cultural traditions and the good range of educational visits supports this. However, their knowledge and understanding of the diversity and richness of other cultures is not developed to the same extent. They consider other religions during their religious education lessons, but

this is not extended sufficiently to include wider features of the lifestyles of people from other ethnic origins and from other parts of the world.

22. The school has developed satisfactory links with its community and with partner institutions, such as other local schools. Good liaison with the adjacent infant school ensures the transfer of pupils to Leas Park is smooth. A closer link with the high school is now developing through physical education where teachers from the high school visit Leas Park to teach alongside their colleagues.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

23. The school cares very well for its pupils. They flourish in a secure and calm working environment where they know what is expected of them and do their best. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well supported and play a full part in school life. The school monitors attendance very well and as a result attendance is well above the national average.
24. Pupils' academic progress is very well monitored. Assessment is very good and details of their children's progress are communicated to parents regularly, so that they have a good grasp of how well their children are attaining, and where their work could be improved, as participants stated at the pre- inspection meeting for parents. Teachers know their pupils well and take note of their academic progress and development both on an informal and formal level. The school is successfully beginning to analyse results and to target groups of pupils whom it regards as being capable of better standards in order to work with them to improve levels of attainment; this is already resulting in improved standards.
25. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good and pupils are helped to progress well throughout the school. Pupils who are gifted and talented are also challenged to achieve further high standards; to this end, all pupils are taught in attainment groups in mathematics and Year 6 pupils in English. Instrumental teaching and a variety of musical activities, including orchestra, woodwind groups and choir, foster talents in this area with results which are praised by parents and which are a pleasure to listen to. Similarly sporting activities foster the talents of pupils who excel in this area, and of a large number of pupils who enjoy the wide range of activities open to all.
26. Pupils' personal development is well tracked by their class teachers and systems such as the rolling programme of monitors in the older classes develop attitudes of responsibility and enthusiasm among all the pupils, in their final year. Pupils are encouraged to help others and to raise money for good causes. Parents particularly praised the school's system of recognising achievements which their children gain outside school.
27. Very good behaviour is promoted by regular recognition of high standards and by personal approaches which acknowledge the success of pupils who have excelled or made improvements in various ways. The behaviour policy is very effective, yet unobtrusive; it results in high standards throughout the school. The policy includes an expectation that bullying will not be tolerated and pupils are quite aware of this and say that any minor incidents of friction are immediately dealt with. Awards and merits recognise academic excellence and other personal qualities in pupils. Pupils and parents are particularly appreciative of the school's efforts to commemorate their school careers by a formal presentation evening in Year 6 and by producing for leavers a personal record, which is treasured by families.

28. The arrangements for health and safety are thorough and statutory requirements for child protection are met. There is a large number of staff with qualifications in first aid, and procedures in case of accidents are clear and well known. Healthy eating is encouraged, especially at lunchtimes, through a policy of no sweets for break and a menu which provides a great deal of choice of well cooked meals for pupils.
29. The programme of personal and social education includes health and sex education, as well as a substantial element of drugs education undertaken with the county police force. The school's plan to incorporate these elements into a coherent personal, social and health education policy for all year groups, to include such areas as citizenship, will increase these valuable elements of advice and guidance to pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

30. The school values parents' contributions to their children's progress at school and at home and makes a very good partnership with them. Parents were overwhelmingly positive in their views of the school, both in the parents' meeting held prior to the inspection and in their response to the questionnaire. The school is very popular in the locality and parents work hard to support their children. There is a good sense of working together, which includes teachers, governors and parents. Parents all agree that the school helps their children to become more mature and responsible and that their children make good progress at school because the school expects them to work hard and to achieve their best.
31. Parents and governors offer help in classrooms and for educational visits, sporting events and residential courses, and there is a body of support which the school can call upon when needed, knowing that parents are committed to their children's education. They help and support homework and write comments in the homework diaries, which provide a good link between home and school. Some parents give regular, expert help in the classroom, for example when demonstrating sewing techniques for older boys and girls in design technology, or reading individually with younger pupils. The teachers brief such helpers thoroughly and so their assistance is even more valuable.
32. The school's publications are good and there is regular information sent to parents by means of letters, reports and leaflets. Annual reports to parents provide valuable assessments of pupils' progress and carefully considered comments about each child. Consultation evenings, at which attendance is often 100 per cent, offer the opportunity to discuss progress and explain targets and assessments, an approach which parents appreciate. It results in parents having a good knowledge of the academic standards achieved by their children. Parents are well informed about school events, but information about the curriculum and subjects to be studied should be greater, so that those parents who wish to can become even more involved with their children's work. This was one of the few areas for improvement which parents mentioned in the pre-inspection meeting. Parents also expressed concern that the school hall is now too small to hold the large numbers of parents and children when the school puts on concerts or productions. Parents are encouraged to contact the school as soon as any problems arise and there is prompt liaison with home if teachers have worries about their pupils.
33. The Friends' Association fundraises vigorously and provides valuable benefits for school, such as substantial computer equipment for the new ICT suite, sporting kit, board games and other equipment for the playground. In addition the substantial amount of funds raised by the Association annually subsidises events such as trips to the theatre, which again benefits pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

34. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership that is clear-sighted and extremely effective. All other staff with leadership roles and the governing body make major contributions to the schools' sense of purpose, overall provision and thus to the high standards reached by pupils. In particular, the deputy headteacher and the co-ordinators of Years 3 and 4, 5 and 6, and of literacy and numeracy, have managed major changes very successfully. These have added greatly to the high quality of teaching and learning that is seen throughout the school. Parents are delighted with the way the school is run and name it as one of the reasons why they choose to send their children to this school. A key feature of the school's success is the powerful team spirit engendered amongst all staff and governors, that has resulted in an unusually high degree of consistency of approach to almost all aspects of the school's work. Recent attention given to the teaching methods to be used in all classes has been highly professional and very effective in driving up standards. There is a strong commitment from all concerned with the school to continue to improve its provision and to further increase standards.
35. The governing body meets all of its statutory duties very well and makes a positive contribution to the school's very real sense of direction and purpose. It has adopted a set of clearly expressed aims and has a firm commitment to responding positively to the needs of all of its pupils, whatever their background or their needs. The policy for special educational needs is based on the national Code of Practice and meets all legal requirements; it is properly funded and implemented well throughout the school. Governors are strong supporters of the school and its approach. They are active and very well organised. Much of the governing body's work takes place in committees, all of which have clear terms of reference that focus their work very well. This work is very well informed, so that decisions are taken in the light of the full range of facts; to this end, reports are commissioned from teachers with leadership roles and from governors who visit the school in order to observe it at work. This process also further cements the team approach and the school's very positive atmosphere.
36. The school monitors all aspects of its provision. The monitoring of literacy, numeracy, science and ICT is excellent. The headteacher, teachers with leadership roles and governors have all been involved and the work of all teachers has been monitored. As well as being used to inform the governing body's work, carefully planned feedback to each teacher has helped to consolidate their many strengths and to identify clearly any areas for further improvement. Pupils' work in these subjects is also carefully and rigorously monitored and the outcomes used to focus the school's resources where they are most needed. Data that is collected on pupils' attainment in literacy and numeracy is carefully analysed and used to set targets for the standards to be reached both by individuals and by year groups. These targets are realistic in the sense that they draw on the school's detailed knowledge of earlier performance and demanding in the sense that they cannot be reached unless all concerned work hard at them. Too little such work has taken place in most other subjects to have had the same powerful effect and the school's plans to extend it to other subjects are timely. Arrangements to structure further the appraisal of the work of the headteacher and all other teachers, are well advanced.
37. Financial planning is careful and based on a reasoned view of the school's likely income, the probable number of pupils that it must serve and the needs to which it must respond. Money is spent wisely and spending decisions are governed by their likely impact on pupils' attainment. Rigorous procedures are in place to ensure that good quality materials, services and equipment are obtained at the best available cost. This work is very well supported by the school's use of new technology to both plan

and track spending. Administration is effective and unobtrusive, allowing teachers to focus fully on their teaching and leadership roles.

38. Staffing levels are appropriate to the school's type and size. There are good procedures for the induction of staff new to the school and to teaching, so that such staff quickly make very positive contributions to pupils' achievements and well-being. Learning resources are of generally good quality. Most classrooms are of a good size but other areas, such as the hall, are limited for the number of pupils and adults who have to use them. In some instances it is only the very good behaviour of pupils and the high quality of teaching that prevents some disruption to learning, when, for example, pupils have to use the hall as a thoroughfare whilst it is being used for physical education lessons.
39. The good leadership seen at the time of the last inspection has improved further. The school now plans for improvement even more systematically and changes are clearly focused on improvements to pupils' attainment and personal development.
40. In the light of the school's average income, its very good overall provision and especially the high levels of pupils' all-round achievements, it is deemed to give very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

41. In this very good school there are no key issues for action. However, the following minor areas should be considered:

- (1) Extend the good practice in monitoring and evaluating in English and mathematics to other subjects to ensure that standards are maintained. (Paragraph 21).
- (2) Extend pupils' knowledge of other cultures and customs, particularly those represented in present day Britain. (Paragraph 36).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	67
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
20	33	42	5	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		300
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		30

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		57

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	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	34	29	63

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	26	30
	Girls	24	24	26
	Total	50	50	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79(86)	79(80)	89(88)
	National	75(70)	72(69)	85(78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	24	27
	Girls	24	24	25
	Total	44	48	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70(81)	76(77)	83(86)
	National	70(68)	72(69)	79(75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	294
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.8
Average class size	30

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	85

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-00
	£
Total income	472016
Total expenditure	482177
Expenditure per pupil	1669
Balance brought forward from previous year	42171
Balance carried forward to next year	32010

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	300
Number of questionnaires returned	159

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	45	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	46	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	43	0	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	50	13	1	0
The teaching is good.	58	40	1	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	45	13	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	39	3	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	27	1	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	38	47	13	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	48	49	2	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	44	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	47	9	1	8

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

ENGLISH

42. By the time pupils are eleven, their attainment is higher than found in most schools in reading and writing and well above average in speaking and listening. This is an improvement on the results in the national tests for English in the year 2000 in which pupils' attainment was close to the national average and slightly below that attained in similar schools. Last year's results were affected by the number of pupils in the year group who had special educational needs and a smaller than usual proportion of higher attaining pupils. These factors affected pupils' overall performance. Inspection evidence reflects the large proportion of pupils attaining at least average standards, which the school has maintained over the past four years.

43. Standards are above average in English because of the very good quality of teaching, which enables pupils of all levels of attainment to achieve highly. The quality of teaching is never less than good and much of it is excellent. The subject is exceptionally well managed and teachers of the same year groups work closely together to provide a coherent and interesting curriculum. The governor with responsibility for literacy is closely involved and supports very well by assisting the co-ordinator in monitoring some of the teaching and learning. This subject is very well organised and very well resourced; for example, each class has its own library, including a wide range of very recent fiction and reference materials including different types of dictionaries. Formal and informal assessment is used very well throughout the year to measure pupils' progress. Analysis of pupils' performance in the optional and national standardised tests gives a very clear profile for development. From assessed pieces of work throughout the year, pupils are set individual targets which are used very well to raise standards. Pupils are taught in classes according to attainment in their final year at school, and the quality of teaching and learning in these and in the additional classes for boosting attainment in literacy makes a significant contribution to raising pupils' achievement. Currently, one third of Year 6 is likely to exceed national expectations as they are already attaining at a higher level than is usually seen at this stage of the year.

44. By the time pupils leave the school, their skills in speaking and listening are well above average. They achieve very well, growing in confidence to give opinions and to listen to other people's ideas. The quality of teaching is excellent in this aspect of English. Extra-curricular activities, such as the school newspaper, also support this aspect. Talented pupils proved to be quite formidable questioners as they recorded an interview with visitors. Pupils are highly articulate and confidently express their views showing quite a sophisticated grasp of nuance and meaning in the spoken word. They are well used to playing in role and delight in responding to their teachers' readiness to act a part. In an excellent lesson, Year 6 pupils were greatly amused by their teacher's quick replies as the vulnerable customer, in response to their examples of persuasive sales talk. They are alive to games with words. A lesson on the significance of word order, ended playfully with the teacher rearranging the closing words, 'Pleased am I with you. Are you pleased with me?' until the pupils got the joke. Pupils imitate such liveliness and consequently the level of debate is quite high. They put on formal voices and think very quickly, challenging with comments such as: 'Why are you only looking at the negative things?' Questions and answers are grammatically correct and pupils are delightfully ready to converse. When talking about books they have read, for instance, both lower and higher attaining pupils discuss their preferences with ease. Pupils with special educational needs are also articulate. Assemblies set an extremely high standard for discussion, explanation and justification of points of view as the

headteacher and teachers regularly enact scenes in which pupils are encouraged to take part. Speaking and listening is used very well in other subjects too; in mathematics and science, for example, pupils have to explain their methods and justify their decisions, demonstrating their effectiveness. As a result, pupils voice opinions confidently, mirroring what an adult might say, as in these polite and unprompted closing words to a highly enjoyable lesson: 'Excuse me, Mrs A, I think the groups have done really well and I'm looking forward to hearing their letters.'

45. Pupils attain above average standards in reading. The school clearly places importance on books and those in the library and in the classrooms are of very good quality. Pupils are encouraged to choose books from both and discussions with pupils of different ages and levels of attainment reveal a rare enthusiasm for reading. The co-ordinator has cunningly capitalised on certain books' popularity, retaining multiple copies for special loan, thus increasing their desirability as pupils add their names to the waiting list. This means that pupils talk about books, discussing their relative merits. Most pupils read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction. Both boys and girls express a distinct liking for poetry and can recommend a large number of poems which they have enjoyed. Higher attaining pupils read expressively and fluently, putting on different voices for each character. Average attaining pupils read well too, with good intonation for questions. Lower attaining pupils read with understanding though not quite with such ease. Talented boys and girls discussed the merits of Tolkien and Lewis Carroll and talked quite animatedly about Shakespeare, explaining that they had read 'the full version of Macbeth' at home because they had enjoyed looking at scenes in school. Pupils keep a 'reading review' book in which they comment on books they have read. A higher attaining pupil wrote, 'This book touched me and almost told me what it was like in the 1940s just by the vocabulary.' A lower attaining pupil commented quite frankly, 'It was a very challenging book.' The teacher writes very full comments at the end of these reviews and makes comments to parents suggesting, for example, that they should try to read together each evening. This helps to raise pupils' attainment through involving parents closely in their children's progress.
46. Pupils attain above average standards in writing by the age of eleven and much work is of a high standard. The quality of teaching is very good and some excellent lessons were seen. It is clear that teachers set and expect high standards. Targets for higher attaining pupils' writing include using 'synonyms for said' as well as using commas in the correct places. In an excellent lesson, pupils in groups had great fun devising convincing, cogently worded letters from the opposing viewpoints of an evacuation officer in the 1940s and a local farmer as to why the farmer should but did not wish to house evacuees. This taxed their historical knowledge as well as their persuasive skill using formal language as they wrote sentences such as, 'You have been selected' or 'Everyone needs to pull together for the war effort.' The teaching is imaginative and pupils are encouraged to adopt an individual tone of voice and a lively use of vocabulary. An average attaining pupil, for example, wrote very convincingly as the Wolf in a fairy story, 'OK, I had the snuffles... I sneezed, it wasn't my fault this stupid little pig made his house out of straw... OK so hang me I growled a little bit!' Pupils' handwriting is neat with well-formed letters. Average attaining pupils' poems show a maturity of style as in a poem in the shape of a whale which ends wittily with the tail and the words going higher and higher. Pupils use ICT very well to present their work.
47. In response to excellent teaching, lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, taught as a group, learn successfully how to enliven their writing by inserting interesting adjectives and verbs. Teachers set a very good atmosphere for learning in which pupils feel safe to make mistakes. The very supportive teaching helps pupils to generate ideas and fosters a real interest in and awareness of words. The success of this is seen in this extract by a pupil with special needs: 'The rusty red fox

stopped faster than the speed of light, he heard the bark of death calling for him.' Similarly, in the additional classes to boost attainment in literacy, very good teaching draws out pupils' responses to a chilling tale so that their imaginations are fired and they respond saying, 'You can smell fear,' or suggesting that 'the darkness is taking you hostage'. They are aware that short snappy sentences can build up tension though their spelling is a little erratic.

48. Pupils achieve very well and their response clearly indicates a high degree of interest. Teachers encourage pupils to work together and to write pieces jointly. This helps pupils of all attainment levels to achieve very well because it supports lower attainers and encourages higher attaining pupils and those who are talented to spark ideas off each other. What emerges is a real interest in language as pupils, for example, have fun suggesting interesting connectives, giggling as they improve on 'however' with alternatives such as 'furthermore' and 'notwithstanding'.
49. English lessons are used very well to develop the skills of literacy. The school follows the National Literacy Strategy very well and allocates additional time to develop writing at length. Much of the teaching is of very high quality and this generates a high level of responsiveness in the pupils. Support assistants are used very well to help pupils to learn, particularly those with special educational needs. Teachers' quick-witted repartee and lively presentation are used very well to reinforce teaching points as when teaching younger juniors the difference between first and third person narration: 'When you've done that, you will note (you and that's instructional) should not interrupt my group..' In good lessons, pupils learn very well from example, appreciating, for instance, their teacher's story of when he was their age. In very good lessons, teachers use the closing sessions to lessons very well to help pupils understand what they have learnt. Sometimes these are quite dramatic and clearly show why pupils have excellent attitudes to English with levels of response that range from the interested to the enthralled. In an excellent lesson, younger juniors listened open-mouthed to their teacher's dramatic rendering of St George and the Dragon, drawn into the story almost as though a spell had been set with words. Standards of teaching and learning and pupils' achievements have improved since the last inspection. The school sets itself challenging targets which it meets.

MATHEMATICS

50. In recent national tests undertaken by eleven year olds, the proportion of pupils reaching the nationally expected levels has been similar to the national average, although in 2000 only a small number of pupils reached higher standards – largely because the year group had an unusually high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and a low proportion of potentially high attainers. The attainment of the current eleven year olds, and of the year group below that, is better than last year and attainment in mathematics is now above the national average. Whilst this has a good deal to do with the balance of potential in these year groups, standards are also benefiting considerably from the school's vigorous adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy, from the effective use of additional funds that have been allocated to the school to boost attainment in numeracy and from more recent work on improving teaching and learning methods; this has resulted in a rich curriculum being very well taught.
51. Pupils achieve well. Their ready recall of number facts enables them to calculate quickly and accurately at a level and speed unusual for their age. Not only do pupils know basic number relationships and multiplication tables but they also have a clear grasp of the link between addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. This allows them to solve relatively complex problems often without needing to write them down.

For example, nine year olds accurately totalled 768 and 486 using a range of methods. One pupil explained that he had 'used approximation' and had added $750 + 450$, then added onto his answer 18 and 36 in order to get 1,254. Another then suggested that she found it easier to... 'round-up' the 486 to 500, then subtract the 14 from the 1268' in order to get 1,254! Whilst this demonstrated a sophisticated grasp of number, the teacher wisely counselled against over-elaboration. Attainment in other areas of mathematics is above average. For example, higher attaining pupils conduct mathematical investigations and demonstrate that the area of a circle is found by multiplying the square of its radius by a constant that is called 'pi' and is about 3.1; they use the terms concerned both accurately and naturally. Most eleven year olds measure and draw angles accurately using protractors. They know that the three angles of a triangle total 180 degrees – as do any three angles that go to make a straight line. Average and lower attaining pupils understand the concept of area; with the teachers' help they measure the area of regular shapes by counting squares and work towards the formula for calculating the area of a rectangle and then, by carefully staged steps, that of a triangle. Lower attaining eleven year olds collect data and record it in charts and graphs, often using computers to simplify the process. Higher attainers have a good understanding of how computers can be used to present data in a range of ways, and can discuss the appropriateness of a range of different graphs, for a variety of purposes.

52. The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school. Lessons are well planned and often imaginatively presented. Pupils enjoy the very real sense of excitement stemming from the fast pace of lessons and the stimulating presentations by the teachers. This results in almost all pupils working very hard and behaving excellently. In many lessons, pupils have to work in small groups and co-operate with each other in order to get the most from learning. This they do very well, so that as well as developing their mathematical skills they also learn to work successfully with others. Boys and girls work very well together in pairs and in larger groups. Pupils' abilities to form relationships and their all-round personal development benefit considerably. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual learning targets. The targets are carefully designed to be challenging but within their reach and progress is helped greatly by the expert deployment and work of classroom support assistants. Similarly, pupils whose attainment is close to average receive special help in order to ensure that they reach the standards of which they are capable. This help is well organised and effectively given, so that almost all pupils are on track to achieve appropriately.
53. The school's approach to mathematics benefits considerably from the work of its co-ordinator of the subject, who has added to her earlier expertise a good knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy and of the range of successful approaches adopted by other schools. The work of the co-ordinator, other senior members of staff and governors in monitoring the teaching and subsequent learning in order to consolidate strengths and to improve areas of relative weakness have also played a large part in the improvements that have been implemented since the last inspection; standards reached by pupils, teaching and overall provision have all improved at a good rate. Numeracy is used well in other subjects such as ICT and this helps the school to meet challenging targets. The school is well placed to maintain these high standards.

SCIENCE

54. Pupils' attainment is above average by the age of eleven. The results of the most recent national tests for eleven year olds indicated that standards were close to those achieved in other schools nationally and slightly below those attained in similar schools. Inspection judgement confirms pupils' performance over time as being above

average. Results last year were lower than usual because of the unusually higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the lower proportion of higher attaining pupils. Approximately just over a third of the current Year 6 is working at the higher level 5. Standards have improved in all areas of the science curriculum but particularly in scientific investigations since the last inspection.

55. By the age of eleven pupils are generally able to plan successful investigations; they design fair tests by controlling variables and selecting appropriate equipment and draw appropriate conclusions from their results. Pupils are able to relate these conclusions to their knowledge and understanding of science such as the force of friction being related to the weight applied to the surfaces. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to evaluate the procedures they use in investigations and identify strengths and weaknesses. Pupils understand the need for repeated measurements and are able to average results developing their numeracy skills. Pupils' understanding of blood circulation, forces and separating mixtures of materials is above average for their age. For example, they are able to use their knowledge of how to separate materials to identify ways that mixtures might be separated.
56. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Teachers effectively adapt national guidelines to meet pupils' needs, choosing contexts which promote pupils' interest. For example, work on friction centred on the design of a non-slip drinks tray. There is a clear focus on the development of pupils' ability to plan and carry out investigations in all classes. Pupils' skills such as reading scales, using force meters, measuring pulse rate and using electronic data recorders improve very well over time. Pupils respond eagerly to the challenge of investigative work and pupils of all attainments develop their understanding of practical work as well as knowledge of living things, materials and physical processes. Teachers use similar planning sheets across the school to support pupils in planning scientific investigations; these need to be redesigned to make sure that they are suitably challenging as pupils' attainment increases. In some lessons teachers discuss the plans that pupils produce and then decide on a common procedure for all; this prevents higher attaining pupils from putting individual plans into practice and as a result pupils' evaluative skills do not progress at such a good rate as in their other learning.
57. The quality of teaching is very good overall. The following strengths account for the pupils' good achievements. Teachers plan collaboratively and the planning is carefully monitored and reviewed by the science co-ordinator. This prevents duplication between year groups. Introductions to lessons often include a 'kick start' activity where teachers use games, rhymes and other activities to reinforce and consolidate learning. Teachers' secure subject knowledge enables them to ask challenging and probing questions which help pupils to evaluate what they have done and what they have learnt. The high expectations that teachers have of what pupils can learn and how they will behave promote very good behaviour, good relationships with other pupils and an enthusiastic attitude to learning. The effective use of time with shorter lessons used to plan investigations and longer lessons to carry these out means that pupils are well prepared to get the most out of practical work. The school has identified the need for more flexibility in the use of time as not all aspects of learning fit this framework.
58. The school has suitably identified assessment, recording and reporting as priorities for development as they are underdeveloped at present. The headteacher has completed monitoring the quality of teaching by observing lessons. Teachers monitor and evaluate the pupils' performance in lessons and use this to support future planning. The science co-ordinator analyses the results of the national tests in science and identifies areas of strength and weakness in pupils' attainment. This information is

used to modify learning programmes to address the areas where pupils need to improve. The progress of individual pupils is monitored through end of topic tests and through 'mind maps' where pupils draw charts to show how their scientific ideas in the area they are studying are related. This gives the teachers valuable information about what pupils know and can do.

ART AND DESIGN

59. The standard of work is very broadly at expected levels by the age of eleven, with some exceptionally good pieces in Year 5. Standards are better overall than reported in the last inspection, largely because of the flair and expertise of individual teachers.
60. As part of a linked art and design and technology project, Year 4 pupils produced detailed drawings of chairs from different angles. Some of their preliminary sketches incorporated different densities of shading to give a good sense of perspective. Pupils mix their own paint colours and have quite a sophisticated sense of the different colours to blend to show the creases and folds in a white shirt, for example. Pupils are extremely good at making imitations of current popular art and clearly enjoy imitating this style. Younger pupils greatly admired older pupils' work and pointed out lots of details on large-scale birds and a dragon on painted sheets pinned to the low ceiling. Teachers use the limited display space imaginatively, for example, in the cloakrooms stencilled friezes of colourful creatures decorate the walls above the coat pegs. The best art was seen in a Year 5 class where pupils created a still life in the style of their chosen artist. Pupils of different levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, produced work of high quality. The use of colour was startling and there was very good smudging and blending of oil pastels to give depth and texture. The preparatory work was thorough and pupils had clearly experimented with different media and ways of shading which resulted in a very individual style whilst creating a similar effect to the original.
61. No teaching was seen because lessons take place at a different time of year and therefore no judgement is made. The way in which the school organises the blocks of work has a positive impact on pupils' attainment because they learn important preparatory techniques as well as studying an aspect in depth. Pupils achieve well and clearly enjoy art and design. They have opportunities to create a design for T-shirts, shopping bags or computer mouse mats. The quality of these was well above average and included a lifelike drawing of a horse's head, some rather vividly characterised cartoon figures and some fine figure drawing with head and body very well proportioned. They are aware of colour, form, texture and tone and use these well. Some of their portrayals are quite imaginative. The school promotes an enjoyment of visual arts. Teachers take care to display pupils' work in three as well as two dimensions which contributes to developing pupils' aesthetic appreciation.
62. The subject is well led and the scheme of work offers a suitable variety of experience in working in two and three dimensions using different materials and techniques. The planning, for example, for a lesson in using clay, gave a very clear outline of the techniques to be taught. Educational visits are used well to support work in art and design in school. These include making sculptures using found materials and sketching Lakeland scenery. Visitors to school demonstrate woodturning, for example, and crafts such as making ships in bottles.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

63. Standards have improved since the last inspection with pupils now generally achieving at a standard above that expected for their age. The curriculum is much better planned and links with art and design have a positive impact on standards.
64. Pupils in Year 6 are able to utilise information from a range of sources to generate designs which meet the needs of their project; they work collaboratively, refining and developing their ideas and use a range of materials and techniques to make them. They are able to evaluate both the quality of the products and the effectiveness of the process they used to make them. For example, pupils have designed and made puppets and scenery for a puppet show: they combined the information on a range of types of puppets and the requirements of a story, to produce designs which they then made and used in a puppet show. Average attaining pupils are able to describe the difficulties they experienced in making the puppets and how designs had been adapted. They can evaluate the puppets in terms of how effectively they could be used in a puppet show. Elsewhere, the products made by some older pupils showed that their construction skills are below the standard of the rest of their work. This is due to earlier weaknesses in the teaching of some construction skills, which the school has now addressed.
65. There is some variation between different classes across the school with some pupils achieving at the national standard and others achieving well above it, reflecting the level of expertise of the teacher. The standards achieved by pupils are monitored individually by teachers and by the pupils themselves using evaluation sheets at the end of each teaching unit. The co-ordinator keeps an overview of the development and progress of pupils across the school through monitoring the work produced. This needs to be further developed so as to gain an overview of the consistency of standards achieved and progress made across the school. The last inspection indicated that the co-ordinator would require opportunities to support and evaluate colleagues; this has not yet been implemented and remains a priority if the high standards achieved in some classes are to be realised in all classes.
66. The curriculum is based on national guidance and teachers plan collaboratively in year groups to adapt and modify these programmes to meet the needs of individual pupils and groups. Work is planned to be challenging so that pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress across the school. According to the standard that each pupil has achieved, teachers set different demands and expectations as to what pupils are to do and learn and the standards they are to achieve. The co-ordinator monitors the resource implications of these plans ensuring that all lessons are suitably equipped; the quality of the resources is good and the subsequent impact on standards. Lessons are well planned and conducted at a brisk pace so that pupils' progress is very good. Teachers focus the learning on pupils developing all aspects of the subject as a narrow curriculum was a shortcoming identified in the last inspection report. Pupils develop their skills and understanding of how objects are made. For example, before designing greetings cards pupils made examples of 'push-pull' and 'pop-up' animations; pupils are taught to identify the needs that their designs will have to meet and plan with this in mind. Teachers ensure that pupils are aware of a range of information and discuss with them how they will use this in their plans. Teachers require all designs to be planned. These range from simple drawings for younger pupils to annotated diagrams indicating the materials to be used and the design process for older children. Teachers ask questions while pupils are working on their designs to help them evaluate these as they go along. Teachers have designed a series of worksheets which help pupils to evaluate a range of key aspects, such as 'good features' and 'things to improve'. Teachers clearly indicate to pupils the learning that is to take place in the lesson and

the place of the activity within the unit being studied. Teachers link learning to other areas of the curriculum including art, drama, literacy and science. For example, food technology is linked to pupils' developing understanding of nutrition in science.

67. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the work they are doing; they enjoy designing and making. Teachers set clear expectations of what pupils will do and how they will behave and remind them of these expectations whenever necessary. This means that pupils work purposefully and industriously during lessons. All relationships within classes are very good and pupils work very well together in pairs or larger collaborative groups. Parents with particular skills and expertise are effectively used to aid pupils' learning.
68. The local education authority has carried out an audit indicating the risks associated with design and technology and staff are implementing their recommendations. In a lesson observed on food technology the risks associated with food preparation were discussed and pupils were made aware of what they needed to do in terms of food hygiene.

GEOGRAPHY

69. By the age of eleven, pupils reach above average standards in geography, largely because a curriculum that has a strong practical element is taught very well and sometimes excellently.
70. Most eleven year olds have a good range of geographical skills and understandings. For example, higher attaining pupils can understand, describe and discuss the water cycle; they confidently outline how evaporation from rivers, oceans and seas, forms clouds that in certain conditions such as travelling over mountains and hills, cools and so condenses to form rain, that in turn fills rivers and so the cycle continues. Most pupils can identify significant features of a river such as source, tributaries and estuaries. They confidently use terms such as meander. Most pupils, including lower attaining pupils, have a good knowledge of a range of places. They can locate major countries and cities on maps or globes and they understand why settlements have occurred in some locations and not others. The high standards reached by eleven year olds owe a good deal to the very good teaching in earlier years and the resultant good progress made by pupils. Seven year olds are able to compare and contrast a village in India with others in Britain, at a relatively sophisticated level. They develop observational skills on well-planned field trips. Nine year olds develop high level decision-making skills, when, for example, they consider the positive and negative features of sharing their school drive with a neighbouring school; in response to careful guidance from teachers all pupils make very articulate and well considered comments on what actions would improve both appearance and safety. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress because work is planned that suits their needs and they are supported well in their learning.
71. The teaching of geography is very good and some lessons are outstandingly taught. The school's approach develops not only geographical skills but also makes major contributions to pupils' development as thoughtful, considerate people. In an excellent lesson, pupils discussed an environmental issue animatedly, and quickly drew up a comprehensive list of proposals, scribed by one member of the group so minimum time was wasted. Field trips, both to the immediate locality and further afield, are planned so that pupils are able to show high levels of initiative and creative thinking. This enables higher attaining pupils to fulfil their potential. In lessons as well as beyond school, behaviour is excellent and pupils' attitudes to the subject are a powerful driving force towards high standards.

72. Very good teaching is supported very effectively by a carefully considered approach to the design of the curriculum. In recent times the school, led by an able co-ordinator, has considered national guidance on the teaching of geography and integrated this into its own thorough understanding of teaching and learning methods. The result is that pupils meet a stimulating geography curriculum to which they respond enthusiastically. The subject benefits from the effective use of other subjects during geography lessons: for example, mathematics makes a good contribution when map co-ordinates are studied; pupils' ability to write poetry is used to enhance their understanding of geography. In addition, geographical ideas are revised and enhanced in other subjects, notably in history, to the benefit of both subjects. This compensates to a large extent, but not entirely, for the terms during which no geography is taught in order to make opportunities to teach history in depth. Geography is taught in pupils' first term at the school but not again until the final term of their second year. This affects progress in pupils' first years at the school.
73. Since the last inspection, the school has made considerable advances in its overall provision for the subject, to teaching and therefore to the standards reached by pupils. It is well placed to make further improvements through monitoring.

HISTORY

74. Pupils' attainment in history is above average by the age of eleven. Pupils progress well during their four years at the school largely because very good teaching, that includes very well chosen visits, brings the subject alive for pupils.
75. By the age of eleven, pupils have a good level of knowledge of the history of Britain and the wider world. They achieve well. Work of a good level undertaken by seven to eight year olds gives them not only good background knowledge of, for example, Ancient Egypt and Tudor England, but also gives them a sense of time passing and how some things change and some do not. This is enhanced in the following year when pupils are led to see the similarities and differences between the present and the past. When studying inventories of the belongings of Tudor townsmen and country people, pupils gain a good deal of insight when they compare those inventories not only with each other but also with an inventory that they make of their own bedrooms. All pupils approach this work with enthusiasm and they co-operate very well with each other and with the teacher. Higher attaining pupils quickly work out methods of tackling the task systematically, which result in them quickly identifying ways of undertaking sensible comparisons. A typical example of high quality work resulting from a very carefully planned visit was the work done by nine year olds in connection with a topic on the Victorians. On a visit to Newstead Abbey, pupils and adults wore period costume and undertook some of the activities that would have been normal in the mid-to late-nineteenth century. As a result, pupils began to develop a relatively advanced understanding of how different life could be for rich and poor, and how events could be interpreted in different ways, according to the role that the participant occupied. By the ages of ten and eleven, all of these skills and understandings are developed to a good level. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, largely due to the ways in which teachers match work well to their existing levels of understanding. Throughout the school, in all of this work, pupils' behaviour is excellent. In class they listen attentively and co-operate very well with adults and other pupils. On visits beyond school, compliments are frequently passed on how well pupils behave. This view is enhanced by the school's practice of having pupils write very well expressed letters of thanks to their hosts.

76. History is very well taught throughout the school. The planning of lessons is thorough and designed to capture pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Much of the good progress that pupils make stems from the high levels at which work is often pitched; pupils respond very well to these high expectations. Teachers' marking of pupils' work often makes a major contribution to the standards that they reach. For example, throughout a long piece of work on the Victorians, the teacher wrote supportive comments ('This is coming along really well. You are trying hard') but also gave clear advice on how to improve further ('You could improve even further the appeal of your project by thinking all the time about who will be reading it - your 'audience)').
77. The curriculum has benefited a great deal from recent analyses of national advice and from work done in the school that is centred on identifying the best available teaching approaches. It would now benefit from a review of the allocation of history and geography topics over time in order to achieve a better balance of teaching the subjects term by term. Since the last inspection, provision for the subject, especially its teaching, has improved greatly. The enthusiasm and expertise of the specialist co-ordinator puts the school in a good position to make further improvements through monitoring.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

78. By the time they are eleven pupils' attainment is above that expected for their age. The majority of pupils achieve well and those with special educational needs make good progress. At the time of the last inspection pupils' attainment was below the standard expected. Improvement since then is good. This is mainly the result of well-planned spending on additional resources and on the improved quality of teaching. This latter feature is linked closely to the impact made by a very good range of staff development attended by the subject leader and by other teachers.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is good; sometimes it is excellent. Teachers plan their lessons well. They take great care to match the activities they intend to teach to the level of attainment of their pupils. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is also good, enabling them to provide effective support for their pupils. They usually take great care to explain to pupils what it is they are expected to learn in lessons. They also encourage pupils to consider how well they have progressed during lessons and to explain what skills they think they have learned. This means pupils know about the things that computers can do and the contribution they can make to their learning.
80. During lessons teachers often provide pupils with accurate demonstrations of the techniques they are intended to learn. They give pupils as much support as they require in order to replicate the techniques correctly. This means that most pupils attain at a similar level. This good support is enhanced further by the effective work of teaching assistants. One teaching assistant provides technical support, ensuring that computers are well maintained. This work does much to ensure the smooth operation of the dedicated computer room.
81. Teachers enable pupils to use ICT effectively to enhance their learning in many subjects. Pupils of all attainments know how to edit and save text. They apply these skills well to their work in literacy, using computers to write and to improve their stories, poetry and letters. They record their scientific experiments, develop plans in design and technology, store data on graphs, spreadsheets and databases and present the information in a variety of forms. For example, they record and analyse their performances in a variety of athletic events. They also use heart rate monitors during physical education lessons. After the lessons they enter the data on a computer and comment on the variations that have occurred during the lesson.

82. The youngest pupils are progressing rapidly. They use colour and art programs to enhance the quality and presentation of their work, adding decorative borders and using a variety of fonts effectively. These pupils also record and store data on charts and graphs.
83. Throughout the school pupils' word-processing skills are developing well and they are achieving well. Teachers successfully encourage pupils to discuss and make suggestions about how their work might be improved and why they have chosen to apply particular techniques. For example, they know that the use of some colours as background for text can detract from the ease with which the text can be read. In all classes pupils are very confident and competent at switching computers on and accessing systems and programs. They do this independently, explaining the functions of most items on the program toolbar and using such features as 'shortcuts' and 'spellchecks' to edit text and produce finished work quickly and efficiently. They apply these skills well when presented, by their teachers, with pieces of text to edit and improve.
84. Since the recent opening of the computer suite pupils are able to use e-mail to communicate with children in other classes, and access the Internet for a range of research purposes. They do this competently. They also readily access CD-ROMs, using additional computers in the library and in classrooms, to do independent research. Pupils' achievement has been very good in this respect.
85. Provision for the subject benefits from strong leadership. This gives a clear direction and provides effective support for teachers. The school has invested wisely in resources and very good use is made of the dedicated computer room to which all pupils regularly have access. This makes a significant contribution to the rapid progress that many are making. Procedures to assess pupils' attainment and progress are well developed. Pupils receive certificates that list their skills and achievements. These do much to motivate pupils and help them to understand how well they are learning in the subject.

MUSIC

86. Standards in music are well above average by the time pupils leave the school. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and pupils achieve highly. There is tremendous enthusiasm for music throughout this school and boys and girls readily take part. Standards have risen since the last inspection.
87. About 20 per cent of the school are in the choir and attend regular practices at lunchtimes. The quality of their singing is very good and sets high standards for singing in assemblies, particularly when singing in harmony. Boys and girls sing equally well, articulating words clearly and with careful attention to musical phrasing. Pupils sing wholeheartedly and quite unselfconsciously. The music co-ordinator supports singing very well with an expressive accompaniment, which helps pupils to pitch notes accurately and vary the dynamic range.
88. The quality of teaching is very good overall and ranges from good to excellent. The work is interestingly planned and teachers are skilled at incorporating the different elements of music into their lessons. Pupils achieve very well. In a good lesson for younger juniors, the teacher selected an extract from a currently popular song and in just a few minutes helped pupils to work out the speed and pitch and what emotions the music was trying to convey. Using pitched and untuned instruments pupils then collaborated to produce a musical sequence to describe different emotions; for

example, a group of lower attaining pupils played a very carefully structured and repetitive piece with a constant beat to illustrate 'boredom'. From looking at the score, which another group had written for their sequence, it was easy to see how the lively scribbled notation, with its upward movement of notes, represented joyfulness. In an excellent lesson, the teacher used a very wide range of instruments, including ICT and keyboards, to enable pupils to perform 'spooky rhythms' based on Macbeth which the pupils performed with relish. This immediately set the atmosphere for the rest of the lesson and pupils progressed from maintaining three complex clapping rhythms simultaneously to providing an inventive and rhythmically diverse accompaniment in groups to the words of a poem. The pupils were extremely well organised and quite self-critical, analysing the effectiveness of the layers of sound. Boys and girls sang and played music together with unaffected enjoyment. Pupils have an excellent rapport with their teachers and one wit teased, 'Can we do four things at once?'

89. In all lessons, pupils are given ample opportunity to learn through practice and consequently they really enjoy music lessons. Pupils support the school orchestra very well and many pupils play musical instruments, most of which they borrow from the school or the local education authority. The school has an extensive range and number of instruments, including violins, guitars, cornets, flutes, keyboards and clarinets as well as percussion. The governors are very supportive and the subject receives generous additional funding to enable its high standards to be maintained.
90. The subject is very well led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who gives very good support to teachers who feel they have less expertise in this subject. Together, they have developed an interesting curriculum. Extra-curricular music, such as lunchtime recorder groups for both beginners and more advanced players, are well attended and help to underpin the high level of expertise evident throughout the school. This also gives additional scope to talented pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

91. By the time pupils are eleven their attainment is well above that expected for their age. The majority achieve well and those with special educational needs make good progress. Improvement since the last inspection is good.
92. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and at times it is excellent. Teachers have very good subject knowledge. They provide their pupils with clear information about what they are expected to learn during lessons. They also draw pupils' attention to the important features of each part of their work that they need to think about. This enhances pupils' understanding of the activities, helps them to improve and enables them to know how much progress they have made. For example, in tennis pupils explain the main features needed to play an effective forehand shot. During these lessons pupils work hard, responding well to the enthusiastic approach of their teachers.
93. With guidance from their teacher the youngest pupils lead exercises to warm up muscles before strenuous exercise. They respond well to the good demonstrations presented by their teacher, repeating the movement patterns accurately. In gymnastics they work very hard to improve their movement and sequences in response to suggestions made by their teacher and by their classmates. Their work is typified by movement that is controlled well and performed with care and precision. In athletics they try hard, and often succeed, in extending the distances they can jump following good demonstrations and advice from their teachers.

94. The oldest pupils attain very high standards, well above those expected for their age, in dance and gymnastics. They benefit greatly from the excellent subject knowledge of their teachers. In these lessons excellent links with science are evident. Pupils know why it is important to warm up their muscles before exercise and to cool them down afterwards. This shows how well they achieve for pupils often lead the warm up part of the lesson, correctly identifying the muscle group they are working on, and explaining its function to the other members of their class. During lessons they also measure heart rates. They later analyse the information on the computer and discuss such features as the build up of lactic acid in muscles during exercise. In gymnastics their sequential work is sustained and sophisticated. They work very well together in groups, combining to produce lengthy sequences containing complex and challenging movements. They provide each other with constructive criticism and offer suggestions for how their work might be improved. Pupils sustain their efforts for long periods, constantly striving to improve their work. This combined with inspirational teaching leads to very good progress during lessons and over time.
95. Provision for the subject benefits greatly from the effective and enthusiastic subject leadership and there is an excellent programme of extra-curricular activities. This takes place each day at lunchtimes and after school and includes athletics, football and netball. The daily running club does much to improve the fitness of those who participate. The school has also achieved considerable success in competitions against other school in the area.
96. Very good liaison with the nearby high school, which is a sports college and to which most pupils transfer, contributes to the high standards. Teachers from the sports college visit regularly and work alongside staff at Leas Park. This helps to maintain and enhance the high quality of teaching. Because the quality of teaching is so good and the level of pupils' interest and concentration so high, pupils' attainment does not suffer from the hall being used as a thoroughfare. The hall is, however, rather cramped for the large class sizes and it is not easy to pass through the room discreetly.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

97. The standards achieved by the pupils, their attitudes and behaviour and the quality of teaching and learning are at the same standard that was observed in the last inspection. At the age of eleven years pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Resources, that were identified as an area for development, have greatly improved and there are now sufficient books and artefacts to support the curriculum in all classes. Many of these form the focus of high quality displays on a range of common religions around the school which helps children to understand the similarities and differences between them.
98. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity is in line with the standard expected but below the required standard in some aspects of other religions. This affects their overall attainment. Pupils are able to describe the key events and aspects of Christianity and the parts played by significant people in these. They know many of the events and stories connected with the life of Jesus. They are less knowledgeable about other religions. Average attaining pupils can name only two of the five pillars of Islam, prayer (Salat) and pilgrimage (Hajj), and confuse Buddhism with Hinduism. The standards achieved in terms of what pupils learn from religion are good. Pupils relate to others with kindness and consideration throughout the school and in class they work well together showing courtesy and respect for the views and feelings of others. In nearly all the lessons observed, teachers direct pupils towards considering what they and others might be feeling. For example, nine year old pupils studying the story of

Easter, after listening to the story of Jesus' betrayal in the Garden of Gethsemane, were asked to reflect on and describe the feelings of Jesus and his chief disciples. Higher attaining pupils were able to go beyond simple adjectives to more complex explanations.

99. The standards achieved in the samples of pupils' work inspected are good. The work is well presented and shows that pupils receive well-prepared resources to support their learning. Progress observed in lessons and in the work inspected across the school is also good. Teachers make good use of learning aids to further the pupils' understanding. Lessons are well planned and teachers make effective use of simulation, drama, music and drawing to engage pupils' interest and support learning. Teachers are able to fascinate pupils by stimulating story telling. Many of the lessons are well paced and this helps to maintain the pupils' attention so that the children's behaviour is good. In one lesson pupils were led round the classroom to the 'Garden of Gethsemane' which was the floor in the centre of the room and told to lie down. All pupils behaved completely responsibly and there was no inappropriate behaviour. When given a task to complete pupils work hard even when some of the tasks are quite challenging.
100. The schools' planning seeks to ensure that all areas of the agreed syllabus are presented to the children. Since the beginning of this school year, teachers have been developing new plans in religious education, many of which are based around national guidelines. These guidelines have three areas of focus: learning about Christianity, learning about other religions and themes that span more than one religion. In their plans, teachers take the learning targets from the national guidelines and devise lessons to achieve these. In themes that span more than one religion the emphasis in the school's plans differs from the national guidelines, as the focus is much more on Christianity and much less on other religions. For example in the unit on Bible origins the school's plan places much more emphasis on Christianity and much less emphasis on Judaism. This change in emphasis can be seen in other topics. In the unit on Christian buildings children visit a church whereas in the unit on Mosques there is no corresponding visit to a mosque. This lack of regular reference to other religions limits the pupils' opportunity to further their understanding. Although pupils are taught about other religions this is not sufficiently consolidated. The school has identified the development of teachers' knowledge and understanding in religious education as a priority and this should help teachers to broaden the curriculum.
101. Work is monitored informally in classes and is used to identify areas where pupils need further teaching to develop and consolidate their learning. The learning from religions and the effects that this has on their social and moral development are monitored through questioning pupils. If the school is to monitor how well the pupils are learning in all areas of religious education it needs to develop a strategy to achieve this. This will help to ensure that pupils increase their knowledge and understanding in all areas of religious education.