

INSPECTION REPORT

BIRLEY SPA COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sheffield

LEA area: Sheffield

Unique reference number: 107067

Headteacher: Mr G. P. Mawson

Reporting inspector: Mr G.R. Logan
11810

Dates of inspection: 19th – 22nd November 2001

Inspection number: 197594

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Jermyn Crescent Hackenthorpe Sheffield South Yorkshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R. Couldwell
Date of previous inspection:	22 nd – 25 th September 1997

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13395	Mrs J. Illingworth	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values & personal development; How well the school cares for its pupils; How well the school works in partnership with parents;
10204	Mr D. Vincent	Team inspector	Information and communication technology; Design and technology; Equal opportunities	The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
21816	Mrs B. Thomas	Team inspector	English; Religious education; English as an additional language	
20007	Mr T. Neat	Team Inspector	Science; Geography; Physical education	
1189	Mrs S. Brown	Team inspector	Art and design; History; Foundation Stage; Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Birley Spa Primary School is a community primary school with 403 pupils in the main school; 195 boys and 208 girls. In addition, there are 78 part-time pupils, 39 boys and 39 girls, in the nursery. At present many children begin nursery with well below average levels of skill, especially in the speaking and listening component of language. One hundred pupils in the main school have special educational needs, and six of these have statements. These figures are broadly in line with the national average. A further 16 children in the nursery are on the register of special educational needs, of whom one has a statement. A very small number of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, none of whom speak English as an additional language. Thirty per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is above the national average. Pupil mobility is not a significant factor, with around 11 per cent of pupils leaving or joining the school each year, other than at the end of the year. The school has a Learning Mentor, funded through the Excellence in Cities initiative. In September 2001 the school was accepted as a Training School, in association with Sheffield Hallam University, to provide initial teacher training facilities for up to 12 graduate students per year. Since the last inspection the school has moved to a new school building, with a new nursery, which opened in 1999.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Birley Spa is an outstanding school. The headteacher is providing outstanding leadership. His vision, determination and hard work have been fundamental to the excellent progress made in the last four years in making the quality of education so very good. He is well supported by his deputy, all other staff and the governing body. There is a very strong, shared commitment to raising standards and to ensuring that the school provides a high quality education for its pupils. The quality of teaching in the main school is very good, with some excellent teaching across the age range. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is excellent, providing children with an exceptional start to their education. There is a very high commitment to in-service training and the professional development of staff. The much improved teaching since the last inspection underpins the significantly improved standards being achieved across the school. Almost all pupils make very good progress. Standards in many subjects by the age of seven are above average. By the age of 11, standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average, overall. There is very good support for pupils with special educational needs. The curriculum has been imaginatively developed and now provides a rich range of opportunities for pupils, with a strong extra-curricular programme. There are excellent care arrangements. Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress and the partnership with parents is excellent. The local community has an outstanding level of involvement in school life; in return the school makes a major contribution to its community and to the lives of the families it serves. The school is highly effective, has many strengths and profoundly enriches the lives of its pupils. It provides excellent value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership for the school. He is supported strongly by his staff and the governing body.
- The quality of teaching is very good overall; it is excellent in the Foundation Stage.
- The school makes excellent provision for children in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils achieve very well throughout the school.
- Many children enter the school with attainment which is well below average, yet standards in English and mathematics by the age of 11 are well above those achieved in similar schools. Standards in science are within the range achieved by the top five per cent of schools nationally.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and relationships are excellent.
- The curriculum provides a broad, rich and stimulating experience for pupils.
- Pupils' moral and social development is excellent. Relationships are excellent.
- The school provides outstanding care for its pupils.
- The partnership with parents is excellent.

What could be improved

- Although much improved, attendance remains below the national average.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in September 1997. A number of areas for development were identified. The school required firmer leadership on curriculum matters and more clearly defined roles and responsibilities for staff. The quality of leadership is now considered to be outstanding. There is a high level of involvement and commitment from staff. The curriculum is now very rich and stimulating. Progress on this issue has been excellent. Standards of attainment have risen progressively over a four year period. The school is significantly outperforming similar schools and progress has been outstanding. Comprehensive schemes of work, adapted to the school's needs, have been produced for all subjects. This represents a considerable commitment by subject managers. All schemes of work have been implemented fully. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress have been revised and extended and the school uses assessment information very effectively to plan future work. Thorough systems for monitoring pupils' progress have been implemented and are used very well. However, progress on these issues does not fully reflect the extent of the progress made in the last four years. The school has moved to new premises and re-established itself successfully. The quality of teaching and the provision for the professional development of staff have improved significantly. The Foundation Stage has been established and provides children with an excellent early experience. The school has been accorded the status of Training School for initial teacher training. Links with parents and the community and the care provided for pupils and their families have been improved and extended. Overall, the school has made excellent improvement since 1997 and shows excellent capacity for further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	D	B	A
Mathematics	D	B	A	A
Science	B	A	A*	A*

Key

Well above average A
 above average B
 Average C
 Below average D
 Well below average E

The test results for 11-year-olds in 2001 were above average in English, well above average in mathematics and very high in science in relation to what is being achieved in schools nationally. When compared to similar schools, standards were well above average in English and mathematics and very high in science. The school's achievements in science place it in the top five per cent of schools nationally. The results in all subjects at age 11 in 2001 were the highest ever achieved by the school. Higher level attainment (level 5 and above) was above the national average in English and mathematics and very high in science. Inspection evidence indicates that, at this early stage in the year, standards in English and mathematics are above average and those in science are well above average at Key Stage 2. Pupils' work shows that the attainment of 11-year-olds is above that expected nationally in art and design, history, music, religious education and information and communication technology and similar to what is achieved in most schools in physical education, design and technology and geography. Currently, standards at the age of seven are above average in English, mathematics and science, information and communication technology, art and religious education and at the level expected in the remaining subjects of the curriculum. Children enter the school often with well below average levels of prior attainment, particularly in language. The excellent provision in the Foundation Stage enables them to make rapid progress and the benefits of this very high quality early experience are now feeding through the lower end of the school, so providing the basis for a further improvement in standards. The consistency and quality of teaching in the main school and the positive benefits of the school's successful implementation of the literacy and numeracy initiatives contribute significantly to the very good progress made by a high proportion of the pupils. Pupils with special educational needs in the main school are supported well and make

very good progress overall. The school also employs a range of highly effective intervention strategies, such as Reading Recovery and Additional Literacy support, which contribute significantly to raising pupils' achievements.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1-6 are eager to learn. They work hard and try their best in lessons. They treat the building and learning resources with care and respect.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons and in the playground. The school is a very orderly community. There have been no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Outstanding. Pupils get excellent opportunities to take on responsibility. They respond positively, carrying out their responsibilities in a very mature and adult way. Relations between pupils and between pupils and members of staff are based on mutual respect and co-operation and are excellent.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. In spite of the school's best efforts, attendance is unsatisfactory and remains below the national average for primary schools. Authorised absence is high, with holiday leave being a significant factor. This can have a negative effect upon the learning of those pupils involved.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery Reception	and	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Excellent		Very Good	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 overall quality of teaching was good at the last inspection; it is now very good. All of the teaching observed was satisfactory or better, 46 per cent was good and 41 per cent was very good or excellent. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is excellent overall. All of the teaching observed in the nursery was excellent. Teaching is a significant strength in Years 1 and 2 where almost all lessons were good or better and just under half were very good or excellent. In Key Stage 2, teaching is very good, although there is less very good teaching than elsewhere in the school. This reflects in part some recent unexpected changes in staffing. The high quality of the teaching across the school is reflected in the high standards being achieved in English, mathematics and science by the age of 11. Teachers equip pupils with secure basic skills. The high expectations of the staff, their effectiveness in managing the pupils and the excellent relationships in the school, are also having a very positive effect upon pupils' attitudes to learning. They encourage pupils to become mature and independent learners from an early stage. They plan well to meet the needs of the full range of pupils. Opportunities to extend literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills across the curriculum are being imaginatively developed. The best teaching sustains a brisk pace and builds upon pupils' enthusiasm. This promotes learning well. Questioning is used effectively in many lessons. Use of assessment information to help pupils improve their work is very good. The valuable support provided by learning support staff has a very positive effect upon the quality of pupils' learning, particularly those with special educational needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school provides a broad, rich, and stimulating curriculum, which is particularly well suited to the needs of its pupils. The provision for pupils' personal development is excellent. The participation and involvement of the community in school life is outstanding.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The level of care and support given by staff is very good, so enabling such pupils to make very good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is very good overall. It is excellent for pupils' moral and social development and very good for spiritual and cultural development. This has a significant effect upon the excellent relationships and very good attitudes and behaviour in and around the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good overall. The school takes extremely good care of its pupils. It provides them with a very safe and supportive environment and it has excellent systems for promoting good behaviour. Monitoring and support of pupils' academic progress and personal development are excellent.

The school's partnership with parents is extremely effective and makes a major contribution to pupils' learning. Parents' involvement with pupils' learning is excellent. Parents have every confidence in the school, and are very appreciative of what it does for their children. They receive very high quality information about how their children are getting on. The school makes excellent provision through well-managed courses and workshops to ensure that parents know how they can support their children.

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 for the school and is well-supported by the senior management team and staff. There is a very strong, shared vision for moving the school forward. Subject managers are very effective and have a clear view of the strengths of their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Excellent. The governors are highly effective and have a very close knowledge of the school. They are very actively involved in its work. All statutory duties are fulfilled.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. The school monitors and evaluates its performance constantly and the governing body as a whole has a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and its remaining areas for development.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. Finances are managed with expertise and are used very effectively to support school developments. The school applies the principles of best value rigorously.

Governors are very successful at managing the finances of the school. Development planning is extremely thorough and effective. Additional staff have been funded through the school's work in initial teacher training, so that the school is, at present, advantageously staffed with well-qualified and experienced teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. The school has very

capable and efficient administrative and premises staff. The new accommodation is of high quality and is well-suited to the needs of the curriculum, although some classrooms are compact in relation to the numbers of pupils in the Years 3 to 6 classes. The Information Centre provides high quality facilities for research and for the study of information and communication technology. The outdoor play areas for the Foundation Stage are particularly good features. The school is well resourced for the demands of the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school • The school works closely with parents • The school expects pupils to work hard • Children make good progress • The quality of teaching is good • Information for parents is good • The school is well led and managed • The school helps children to become more mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of work that pupils are given to do at home

The inspection team endorses parents' positive opinions. The team agrees with their judgements on the strengths of the school. It does not support the view of the five per cent of parents who think that children do not get the right amount of homework and considers that homework provision is, in fact, very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the 2001 national tests for pupils aged seven, standards were above average in mathematics and writing, and average in reading. In comparison with similar schools, standards of attainment were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards have improved significantly in the last four years. Almost all pupils achieved the expected level. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 3, although improving, remains slightly below the national average in reading and writing. There is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys in reading or writing, although girls have tended, over time, to outperform boys in mathematics.
2. Inspection evidence available at this early point in the school year indicates that the standards currently attained by pupils aged seven are above average in mathematics, reading and science and average in writing. The school's performance is improving steadily in spite of the well below average attainment of many children when they enter the nursery. The progress which the five to seven-year-olds make is improving rapidly, mainly as a result of the very good teaching in Years 1 and 2 and the excellent preparation they receive in the Foundation Stage. This is clearly evident, for example, in the very positive attitudes, maturity and independence of pupils and their zeal for learning which underpin almost all lessons in Years 1 and 2. The benefits of this high quality initial experience are now feeding through Key Stage 1 and are likely to have an increasingly positive effect on already good standards as these pupils move into and through Key Stage 2. Across the school as a whole, the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is having a positive effect on improving standards, but this has not yet been operational for long enough to have had the effect on older pupils in Key Stage 2, which is now clearly evident by the age of seven.
3. In the 2001 national tests, standards of attainment for pupils aged 11 were above average in English, well above average in mathematics and very high in science. The science results, with their exceptional proportion of higher level attainment, places the school's performance in science in the top five per cent of schools across the country. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well above average in English and mathematics and very high in science. Standards have improved dramatically and at a rate above that found nationally over the four years since the last inspection. Higher level attainment (level 5 or higher) at the end of Year 6 in 2001 was above the national average in both English and mathematics and very high in science. Overall, an analysis of the progress made by pupils between the ages of seven and 11 indicate that most pupils are making above or well above average progress in English, mathematics and science in relation to their prior attainment.
4. One of the key strengths of the school is the very good progress which it enables pupils to make. Many progress from well below average attainment on entry to nursery to above or well above average attainment as they leave the school. This is achieved in part by the significant strength and consistency of the teaching, and the high expectations of the staff, but also by a range of well-managed and effective intervention strategies, such as Reading Recovery and Additional Literacy Support, together with the work of the Learning Mentor. These do much to boost pupils' achievements and ensure, for example, that there is a steady turnover of pupils on the register of special educational needs as temporary difficulties are resolved.
5. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in English and mathematics by the age of 11 are above average and in science are well above average at this early stage in the school year. Within English, standards in both writing and speaking and listening are above average. Standards in reading are average. The school has been working hard to raise higher level attainment, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Teachers' planning acknowledges the needs of the full range of pupils and there is increasingly effective support for higher attaining pupils.

6. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is above the expected level by the ages of seven and 11. Opportunities in the subject were restricted until the computer suite was installed. Pupils are making rapid progress. Computers are making a good contribution to learning and pupils' skills in ICT are improving rapidly. Co-ordinators are now identifying appropriate applications for information and communication technology within each curriculum subject.
7. Standards in religious education are above those recommended in the locally agreed syllabus at both seven and 11. Pupils have a good understanding of Christianity and of a range of other faiths. Pupils aged seven attain standards above those expected nationally in art and in line with those expected nationally in design and technology, geography, history, physical education and music. Pupils aged 11 attain standards above those expected nationally in art, history and music and in line with those expected in design and technology, geography and physical education.
8. At present, many children begin nursery with well below average levels of skill especially in the speaking and listening component of language. They make very good progress in the nursery, although for many their attainment is still below the level expected for their age when they enter reception. This is confirmed by the initial assessments that are undertaken by teachers, using the local education authority's baseline scheme. Progress in the reception class is good. By the time the reception children are ready to start in Year 1, a significant number exceed the Early Learning Goals¹ in personal, social and emotional development. The majority achieve the expected level in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development and in the number element of mathematics. In communication, language and literacy, higher-attaining children achieve the expected levels for their age.
9. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards appropriate to their ability. Although attaining at below average levels earlier in their school career, a significant proportion of special educational needs pupils achieve the average in the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds. Pupils are generally well behaved, enjoy their activities and have very good attitudes to learning. Many take pride in their activities. The excellent focus on ensuring that they have full access to the same studies as their classmates ensures they have positive self-esteem and the desire to succeed.
10. The school assembles a wide range of information on pupils' prior attainment and undertakes comprehensive target-setting for individuals across the school. Pupils have a good knowledge of their individual targets. These are written in their exercise books for mathematics and English and are reviewed regularly. This is an effective strategy for boosting attainment further. Targets are set appropriately for the standards pupils are expected to attain in the end of key stage National tests in 2002. The school achieved its appropriately challenging targets in English and mathematics in Year 6 in 2001.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The last inspection report praised pupils for having good attitudes to learning. It also said that behaviour in the school was generally good. There has been very good progress during the last four years. Standards of behaviour are now very high, and pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. Relationships and personal development have improved from good to excellent.
12. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good, and their personal development is excellent. The vast majority of pupils are keen to learn when they are in school, and their positive outlook enhances their attainment and progress. Parents are extremely happy with the attitudes and values that the school promotes. They think that behaviour is good, and that members of staff expect pupils to work hard. They also say that their children like school, and inspectors agree with their views. However, attendance is unsatisfactory overall. Some pupils are absent for ten

¹ Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with the following six areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, known as stepping stones.

or more days in the year. They are therefore unable to take full advantage of the opportunities for learning offered by the school.

13. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. The vast majority are well motivated and become fully involved in lessons, particularly when teachers set demanding tasks. They settle down quickly, listen attentively and concentrate hard. Most pupils want to do well and are eager to show members of staff what they have learned. They love answering teachers' questions and are confident about speaking aloud in front of the class. They work well on their own in lessons. They get on quickly with writing tasks, for example, and are not over reliant on members of staff for help and encouragement. Indeed, many take pride in being independent and like to carry out their own research. They will use a dictionary rather than ask a member of staff how to spell a word. Lower attaining pupils are slightly less confident and independent than the majority, but are willing to work hard. Attitudes are consistently positive across the school. Children in the Foundation Stage are enthusiastic, well motivated and keen to learn. In all year groups, lessons are frequently characterised by a sense of excitement and achievement. Pupils are very appreciative of good teaching and learning. This was evident in a Year 1 class that was observed during the inspection. In this lesson pupils clapped when the teacher finished reading a story that they very much enjoyed.
14. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is, with few exceptions, very good. They are polite to members of staff and one another and respect the school's 'Golden Rules'. Even when they are bursting with enthusiasm to answer questions, they wait their turn to speak. Unco-operative behaviour is extremely rare, and is confined to a few difficult individuals. Some of these pupils cannot cope easily with whole class sessions, but behave satisfactorily in one-to-one dealings with members of staff. Out-of-class behaviour is very good. Lunchtimes are pleasant and orderly occasions in which pupils play well together in a variety of games, such as football and skipping, or chat quietly to one another. Aggressive behaviour is rare, and rough and boisterous play is uncommon. No instances of bullying, racism or sexism were observed during the inspection. Nor was there any evidence of vandalism. On the contrary, pupils show a high degree of respect for property and the environment. They handle equipment with care and take pride in keeping the school tidy. For example, during the inspection a group of pupil volunteers carried out a thorough 'litter pick' of the playground.
15. The quality of relationships within the school is excellent. Pupils like and trust members of staff, and want to please them. They work hard in lessons in order to win approval and praise from teachers, and this promotes good learning and progress. They also work well with one another in pairs or small groups. This was the case in a physical education lesson seen during the inspection, where Year 3 pupils co-operated very effectively with their partners in gymnastics, to the benefit of their attainment and social development.
16. Pupils' personal development is excellent and is an outstanding feature of the school. There are many opportunities for pupils to exercise responsibility and they rise superbly to the challenge. They fill the numerous monitor posts after applying formally for the jobs, and carry out their roles in a confident and mature manner. There is an active school council, consisting of representatives from Year 6. During the week of inspection the council successfully presented one of the school assemblies. Pupils are also encouraged from their earliest years to take responsibility for their own learning, to use their initiative, and to think for themselves. They respond very positively and develop well as independent learners. They tidy away resources and equipment at the end of lessons. They put forward their own ideas in class and discuss them constructively with one another. They carry out their own research using a variety of sources such as reference books and the internet.
17. Attendance has improved since the last inspection but is still unsatisfactory. The school's attendance rate was 93 per cent in the year 2000/01, which is below the national average for primary schools, and the figures for the term are in line with last year's performance. The rate of authorised absence is high. Most absences are the result of illness, and therefore unavoidable, but holiday leave is also a factor. In every year group in the school, a significant number of pupils miss one or two weeks of their education per year because of family holidays.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching in this school is very good overall; often it is excellent. The high quality of the teaching is a strength of the school and the main reason why pupils achieve so well. Over two-fifths of the lessons seen during the inspection were very good or excellent. Nearly nine-tenths of lessons observed were good or better. None of the teaching was unsatisfactory. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is excellent overall. Over 90 per cent of lessons in this part of the school are very good or excellent, with more than half being excellent. Pupils aged five to seven are taught very well, with four in every ten lessons being very good or excellent.
19. Despite recent staffing changes, which have mainly affected pupils aged eight or over, the quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. At that time 11 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory, with only four per cent being very good. The improvement is due to the excellent leadership of the headteacher and senior staff, and the impressive teamwork which results from an outstanding shared commitment to succeed. It also reflects the very good provision which the school makes for the professional development of its staff and the very effective systems which have been put in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school.
20. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well. This ensures that pupils have the skills necessary to learn effectively across the full range of the curriculum. In nine out of ten literacy and numeracy lessons observed, teaching was good or better. Teaching in two-thirds of science lessons was very good or excellent. In a high proportion of lessons observed in art and design, information and communication technology, religious education and music, the quality of teaching was frequently good and often very good. In no subject did the proportion of good or better teaching fall below 50 per cent of the lessons observed.
21. The quality of teaching and learning is excellent in the Foundation Stage, with many examples of excellent teaching. Over nine-tenths of lessons observed were very good or excellent, with all teaching being excellent in the nursery. The adults working in both nursery and reception classes work very closely together as a team, There is excellent teamwork and a consistent approach between the classes. This helps to ensure continuity of teaching and learning. Staff constantly strive to improve the quality of their work. This ensures that, in the context of a rich and challenging curriculum, innovative and exciting methods are used to capture children's imagination and inspire a love for learning.
22. The quality of pupils' learning is very good overall. This high quality learning can be directly attributed to the strength of the teaching. The particularly strong features of lessons for the older pupils are the highly effective management provided by the teachers, the high expectations which underpin the planning and delivery and the methods which teachers use. Teachers create a purposeful working atmosphere in which pupils respond well by concentrating hard and trying to do their best. They provide challenging activities, which meet the needs of the range of pupils in the class. This is seen in many of the science lessons, where learning is strongly promoted by, for example, the use of an owl to stimulate pupils' interest in living things. Teachers value the contributions of the pupils. Relationships are very good and this encourages pupils to behave well in lessons and to have a keen interest in what is happening. This has a very positive effect on the progress that they make. Pupils are highly motivated and are encouraged to develop independence and to take responsibility for their learning. Teachers help pupils to reflect upon challenging problems and to develop confidence in their own ability to reason things through. The teachers have high expectations of the pupils. As a result, pupils work at a very good pace and put a great deal of effort into learning.
23. Teachers plan lessons very well. Planning is detailed and takes into account the range of pupils in each class. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and are very effective in helping pupils to develop skills, knowledge and understanding. This was a strong feature of an art lesson in Year 2, where pupils were learning to use collage techniques to create the picture of a monster. The excellent preparation included evaluations of work by pupils who tackled similar tasks in the previous week and a thorough introduction to the techniques to be used. This enabled pupils to make very good progress.

24. Teachers work very well with classroom support assistants. Shared planning and clearly defined responsibilities help all staff to make the best use of their time. As a result of this, and the use of their talents, the assistants make a very valuable contribution to the progress that pupils make, especially in information and communication technology.
25. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Consequently, pupils achieve very well and make very good progress overall against their individual targets. Teachers know their pupils very well and plan activities that are matched to their needs. Pupils make very good progress mainly as a result of well constructed individual education plans which contain specific targets for improvement, including improvement in behaviour. Support staff are used very effectively. Many structures are in place to support pupils' needs, for example, Reading Recovery. Every year group has some initiative to support intervention. Records of gains in skills, knowledge and understanding are very well maintained.
26. Pupils' work is marked regularly, and teachers know their pupils very well. There are many very good examples of teachers making constructive written comments which help pupils to improve. The availability of the computer suite, together with skilled support, means that it is now possible to use information and communication technology across a range of subjects. Generally, homework is used very well to support learning, particularly in Key Stage 2.

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

27. The school provides a broad, rich and stimulating curriculum which meets the needs of its pupils extremely well. The quality and range of learning opportunities is excellent in the Foundation Stage, with children taking part in a very wide, imaginatively developed range of activities. In the main school, National Curriculum and religious education requirements are fully met. The curriculum offered provides a very good range of opportunities for learning. There is considerable emphasis upon English and mathematics and although this puts pressure upon the time available for other subjects, all have a secure place in the overall programme. The school successfully motivates its pupils to have a good attitude to work and this has a positive effect upon their learning. Good links between subjects are established and this has the effect of enhancing the meaningfulness of learning. Pupils' use of the Internet to research the characteristics of animals, for example, provided opportunities to develop not only information and communication technology skills, but also skills in English and science. The school has introduced the National Literacy Strategy very effectively although further use of writing in other subjects would strengthen this process. The National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented with consistency and care and this is having a very good effect upon the provision for mathematics. The use of numeracy to help learning in other subjects, such as science, is good.
28. The school is determined to provide an education which meets the particular needs of each of its pupils and lessons routinely contain activities designed specifically for the higher and lower achievers. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and the requirements of the Code of Practice² are fully met. There are very good guidelines for responding to the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are given the same curricular opportunities both inside and outside the classroom. There is a mixture of in-class support and withdrawal with one-to-one support on specific programmes for statemented pupils. A clear policy on inclusion is well implemented to ensure that the needs of all pupils are being met through the curriculum. Effective use is made of information and communication technology to enrich the learning experiences of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils with the potential for higher achievement are encouraged and challenged. Those with a particular talent such as writing, mathematics, creativity, music and even golf are identified and

² Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

the school takes steps to further enhance such gifts. Under-pinning everything that the school does and provides is a genuine belief in its pupils. This is a fully inclusive school in which everyone is valued and is encouraged to blossom. The dedication and hard work of all who work at the school creates a warm, secure environment and staff are extremely sensitive to the personal circumstances and needs of each pupil. There is a genuine belief that pupils can achieve high standards in their work, in their relationships with others and in their personal fulfilment. No effort is spared to provide opportunities which will enable pupils to develop into well-adjusted, capable persons. Without exception, every child is included in this process. This commitment to inclusion is demonstrated by the visit to Seattle by a group of staff in order to study how equality of opportunity can be more effectively guaranteed.

29. The Governing Body has approved a satisfactory policy for the teaching of sex education and matters relating to health education are given appropriate emphasis. The school's programme for health education includes the required emphasis upon the dangers associated with the misuse of drugs as the school seeks to ensure that pupils are provided with the knowledge and awareness which will help them make informed choices as they grow older. The personal development of pupils is given a very high priority and a programme that deals with a range of important and sensitive issues is successfully delivered. The development of good relationships and consideration for others is deeply embedded in the life and work of the school. Considerable efforts are made to foster pupils' self-esteem, to enrich their experiences and to develop them as 'rounded', confident young people. Overall, the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is excellent.
30. The school has adopted a clear and cohesive curriculum plan. This documentation provides a good basis for ensuring that a balanced programme is delivered to each year group. There is keen awareness of the need to review the way subjects are taught and the staff meet regularly to discuss curricular matters and to improve their expertise. Staff are keen to extend their professional knowledge and recent training relating, for example, to information and communication technology and to design and technology, are examples of how this has enabled teachers to deliver the curriculum more effectively. There is a clear determination, shared by all associated with the school, to continue the process of curriculum development.
31. The number of extra-curricular activities, which is largely dependent upon the voluntary efforts of teachers and others, is good and the school regularly organises a number of inter-school competitive events. Visits to places of educational value, including residential visits, make beneficial contributions to several curricular areas.
32. Excellent links with the community are evident. The school has established valuable contacts with a number of local companies including a major construction company. Courses in computer skills for senior citizens and various workshops for parents are further examples of how the school embraces the community.
33. Links with other educational institutions are very good. Teachers meet regularly with their colleagues in other schools in order to pool ideas and to ensure that the move between the primary and secondary stages is as smooth as possible. The school participates in a number of innovative schemes involving other schools. The link with a Dutch school is an example of how this increases teachers' awareness and expertise.
34. There has been an excellent response to tackling the weaknesses in the curriculum identified at the last inspection. The report pointed to a lack of planned programmes for a number of subjects. Other subjects were said to leave too much to teachers' discretion resulting in a failure to guarantee progression and coverage. Insufficient checks were employed to ensure that the curriculum was properly delivered. All these weaknesses have been thoroughly rectified. In addition the school's links with its community have been considerably enhanced. Taken together, these curricular improvements constitute an excellent response.
35. The school makes excellent provision for pupils' moral and social development and very good provision for their spiritual and cultural development. Overall provision is very good. This represents a vast improvement since the previous inspection when spiritual development was unsatisfactory. The school believes that it, 'Takes a whole village to educate a child,' (African

proverb). Displays in and out of the classroom, pictures, old photographs, posters and artefacts reflect this area well.

36. Provision for spiritual development is very good. The school provides some knowledge of, and insights into, different faiths and religious beliefs in the religious education curriculum as well as encouraging pupils to reflect on life's fundamental questions. Forgiveness, sharing and caring are explored fully in lessons and assembly. The school believes that 'awe and wonder' provides the joy and inspiration in our life. Planned and spontaneous activities, such as the annual hatching of eggs in an incubator, fuel the imaginations of the pupils and stimulate them to ask questions.
37. Reflection time is built into the religious education programme but reflection is also used in other lessons as well as in assembly. Pupils in Year 2 think about people who have a special significance for them after learning about Remembrance Day. In an information communication technology lesson using the Internet, pupils gasp with appreciation as they see the inside of a mosque. Pupils feel special in school when their achievements are celebrated, and they clap spontaneously to congratulate each other and their teachers. One very good assembly reinforced saying 'Thank you' using references to a story that Jesus told. In another assembly, a science experiment clearly showed why we should not tell lies. The pupils were amazed to see the effect of the ink put into the clear water and wondered how the additive (bleach) almost cleared it. A visiting speaker stirred pupils' enthusiasm by using a puppet to introduce them to the story of Nehemiah.
38. There is an excellent framework for the promotion of moral development. All the staff set a very good example for the pupils. They promote very well the school's values and standards and treat pupils with care and respect. Pupils' self esteem and confidence is enhanced in lessons and elsewhere by constant praise and encouragement. The school fosters the values of honesty, fairness and very good behaviour. It has a very positive ethos of encouraging pupils to think about the world in which they live and care for others and the environment. From nursery, pupils are taught to distinguish right from wrong and to understand what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Teachers use circle time to promote consideration for others, taking turns listening to and thinking of others around them. The school encourages a calm atmosphere so pupils feel secure and special. Pupils are able to share their worries privately using special 'Rainbow' boxes for their notes. Given the absence of oppressive behaviour and bullying the school's procedures are working very well.
39. The school provides excellent opportunities to support pupils' social development. Self-esteem is well promoted. Their comments and responses in class are invariably valued and respected and never undermined. There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and make important decisions. Their decisions about finance have resulted in the purchase of equipment for playtimes. The school council take assembly and are very well respected. Circle time focuses on care for each other, sharing and friendship, as a result of which pupils play and work co-operatively together, exhibiting affection, care and consideration towards others. Educational visits support pupils in developing skills of living together as a community, co-operating, communicating, negotiating, persuading others and recognising each other's strengths.
40. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Pupils learn about other faiths, cultures and traditions through their religious education, literacy, geography, history, music, ICT, and art lessons. The school makes very good use of Christian Aid resources and games to help pupils experience what it feels like to live in circumstances different from their own. The school acknowledges festivals and religious events celebrating Yom Kippur, Diwali, Eid, Ramadan and the Chinese New Year. Pupils learn to play with toys and sing rhymes representing many areas of the world. Pupils take part in local events including The Lord Mayor's parade and performances at the Sheffield theatres. All of these help pupils to prepare for the diverse world in which they will become future citizens.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection. It has built on the strengths that were evident four years ago and has raised standards of care from good to excellent.

42. Standards of care are very high and are extremely effective in underpinning academic progress and personal development. The school makes excellent arrangements to ensure the welfare of its pupils, both in the Foundation Stage and in the main school, and to create a happy, orderly community in which everyone can thrive. Parents greatly value the support that their children receive.
43. Measures to safeguard pupils' health and physical well being are excellent. They cover welfare before and after, as well as during, normal school hours. For example, there are first class breakfast and after-school clubs run by parents in co-operation with the school. Governors and members of staff take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school is a safe and secure environment. The premises are checked on a regular basis, and any hazards are dealt with promptly. Equipment is tested in accordance with legal requirements. Arrangements for first aid are very good. Members of staff deal sympathetically and efficiently with pupils who are taken ill or have accidents, and maintain appropriate records of such incidents. All school trips are thoroughly assessed for risk. The school is very vigilant over all matters to do with child protection. It has both a designated member of staff and a governor with special responsibility for the issue. Its child protection policy and procedures meet legal requirements. All members of staff are familiar with these arrangements, and newcomers are well briefed on them as part of their induction to the school.
44. The school also looks after the emotional welfare of its pupils very effectively. The induction of new pupils in the Foundation Stage is handled with sensitivity. As a result children settle quickly into the nursery and main school, are happy, and make good progress. Pupils continue to receive good individual guidance during their years in school from friendly, approachable teachers who are always available to help them. The school's curriculum of personal, social and health education also provides good personal support. It includes regular 'circle time', and this encourages pupils to be open about their concerns and to share them with other people.
45. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. All statutory requirements are met. Needs are identified from the Foundation Stage on, and outside agencies are used effectively. The level of care and support given by teaching and non-teaching staff is very good. Gains in academic and personal progress are recorded efficiently and details are reported to parents and carers every term.
46. Arrangements to monitor and support pupils' personal development are excellent. Staff are caring, know pupils extremely well as individuals, and give them good personal guidance. Class teachers track their progress closely on an informal basis and formally record and assess their personal development in end of year reports. Pupils who are immature, or have significant problems with their attitudes and behaviour, receive valuable additional support from the school's 'Learning Mentor'. The personal development of pupils of all ages is promoted effectively through personal, social and health education lessons. It is also well supported by extensive and planned provision of opportunities to undertake responsibility. The system of rewards encourages pupils to respond positively to what the school provides, since they receive formal recognition for responsible behaviour, good effort and personal achievement.
47. Procedures for recording and promoting pupils' attendance are thorough. The computerised registers provide accurate records and up-to-date analyses of attendance rates. The Learning Mentor also uses them effectively to identify and monitor individuals with unexplained or frequent absences. She makes a significant contribution to efforts to raise attendance. For example, she makes first day contact with home whenever a pupil is away without a proper explanation. The school places a high priority on working with families to improve attendance, particularly with regard to dissuading parents from taking holidays in term time. This policy is having some success. Although the rate of attendance is still unsatisfactory, it has risen since the last inspection, and is continuing to improve. The school has also cut drastically the number of pupils who miss end of key stage tests because of holiday leave.
48. The school has extremely successful policies for promoting good behaviour and discipline. It adopts a positive approach that emphasises praise and rewards, and gives extra support to pupils who have emotional and behavioural problems. Opportunities for aggression and bullying

are kept to a minimum through good levels of supervision. The school also provides pupils with a good choice of activities during the lunch hour, which helps to keep them occupied and happy. It has high expectations regarding behaviour, both in and out of class. These are summarised in the 'Golden Rules' that are prominently displayed in corridors and classrooms. As a result pupils know what is required of them and do their best to meet expectations. Their behaviour is carefully monitored. Positive behaviour is recorded and monitored through the system of rewards. This is an effective incentive to high standards. Pupils value the good opinion of their teachers and therefore work and behave well in order to win their praise.

49. The good procedures for checking and recording how well pupils are learning contribute greatly to the standards that are achieved. For example, the results that pupils gain in tests are analysed closely to see how individuals can be helped to improve. The teachers use the information they gain about attainment and progress very well. The use of information about what pupils know is excellent in science and in the special support activities the school provides to boost reading skills. For instance, in science, the teachers change the plans they make for lessons to meet, as closely as possible, the needs of groups and individual pupils getting ready to do the national tests in Year 6. Homework tasks are selected to help pupils to do their best. A very good quality assessment policy guides teachers in this aspect of their work. Ways have been found to enable teachers to assess attainment in all subjects without spending a great deal of time. However, most of the procedures are new, and ways of assessing pupils' skills in speaking and listening have yet to be agreed. The co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science have worked very hard to provide collections of pupils' work that illustrate the different levels of attainment set out in the National Curriculum. Teachers can look at these to guide the assessments they make, monitoring them to ensure an accurate comparison.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. Parents' involvement with their children's learning was one of the strengths of the school at the time of the previous inspection. This is still the case. The school has built on its success and extended its links with pupils' families. It now has an excellent partnership with parents, and this makes an enormous contribution to pupils' attainment and progress.
51. Parents have every confidence in the school. Their comments in the meeting with the registered inspector, and their replies to the survey of parental opinion, show almost unanimous approval of all aspects of the school's work, with the exception of homework. Five per cent of parents feel that their children do not get the right amount of work to do at home, while a further eight per cent are undecided. The inspection team endorses parents' favourable opinions of the school, and does not support the view of the small minority who are unhappy about homework.
52. The quality of information for parents is excellent. Close contacts, and exchange of information between home and school, begin before children have started in the nursery and reception class. For example, members of staff visit the homes of all prospective pupils. Parents are kept well informed throughout the time that their children are at the school. They are kept up-to-date through regular newsletters, notices, and school publications such as the booklet 'Behaviour Guidelines'. The school makes very thorough arrangements for sounding out parental opinion. It often uses questionnaires to consult parents about proposed developments, such as the revision of the home/school agreement. There is also very good provision for one-to-one consultations between the school and pupils' families. Staff operate an open door policy, so that it is easy for parents to approach them over any concerns that they have about their child's welfare and progress. For its part, the school always involves parents at an early stage if there are problems with a pupil's work, behaviour or personal development.
53. There are excellent formal arrangements for informing parents about the running of the school, the curriculum, and children's progress. Documents such as the home/school agreement, the school prospectus, and the annual report of the governing body are clear, concise, and well presented. The prospectus and the governors' report meet legal requirements. There are termly consultation evenings at which parents can discuss their child's work with class teachers. These are very well attended. The quality of the end-of-year written reports is good. At their best they give details of the pupil's strengths and weaknesses in the core subjects of the curriculum and include specific targets for improvement. Some teachers add comments that give the reports a

good individual flavour. The standard of reporting in the Foundation Stage is consistently excellent.

54. Parents and guardians of pupils with educational needs are actively involved at all stages of the Code of Practice and are fully involved in review procedures. There are regular opportunities each term to review progress. Every child at Stage 3 and above has an annual review. Parents are very supportive of the work of the school.
55. The school recognises that parents are the first educators of their children. It therefore gives home/school links a very high priority and constantly seeks ways to make them more effective. It has a formal policy on partnership with parents, which is backed by extensive measures to encourage parental involvement in pupils' learning. As at the time of the last inspection there is a 'Reading at Home' scheme and an excellent programme of workshops for the parents of younger pupils. The Year 2 workshop that took place during the inspection was a magnificent example of the policy of parents as partners in action. It focused on promoting learning and progress, and was superbly organised to this end. Around 40 parents, grandparents, and elder siblings joined pupils in activities in design technology, art, history, geography, and road safety. They had a good understanding of the tasks and supported children's work very effectively. In addition to promoting learning, the workshop gave parents a very good insight into what pupils do in lessons and how they learn.
56. Many parents regularly work in school as voluntary helpers in the classroom. Others are employed by the school as lunchtime supervisors and support assistants. There is never any shortage of volunteers to help with trips. Parents also give very good support to pupils' learning at home. Many hear their children read aloud every day, as pupils' reading records show. They are keen for them to make good progress, and help by selecting new reading books from the school library. Their encouragement has a very positive effect on pupils' levels of attainment.
57. The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection by further developing its already strong partnership with parents and using it very successfully to promote children's learning and progress.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. When the school was inspected in 1997, the management was particularly effective in promoting the welfare of pupils and in creating a positive ethos. Weaker aspects centred on the management of the curriculum by the headteacher, the defining of the roles and responsibilities of the senior management team, the effectiveness of the school development plan as a vehicle for whole-school improvement and the identification of links between projected spending and educational priorities. Standards were not, overall, high enough. There has been excellent, sustained progress in the intervening period. The quality and effectiveness of management has improved significantly. There has been a tremendous improvement in the weaker aspects of the school's work.
59. The headteacher and key staff are providing the school with excellent leadership and management. Specifically, the contribution of the headteacher to the significant improvement in standards and to the considerable progress made in almost all aspects of the school's work has been outstanding. He has a very clear vision for moving the school forward and has created a strong, cohesive and dynamic team who share that vision. The ethos of the school is excellent. The school touches not only the lives of its children, but their families and the wider community also. The school inspires its pupils with tolerance, understanding and a love of learning. In equal measure it provides them with a strong work ethic and with the skills, knowledge, determination and independence to enable them to approach their later education with confidence and a sense of purpose. The headteacher is strongly supported by his deputy and phase co-ordinators, who make a significant contribution to the leadership of the school. The very high quality leadership provided for the Foundation Stage is a particular strength and underpins the excellent provision for the youngest children. A range of very effective – and rigorous – strategies are in place for monitoring the work of the school and these are well established.
60. Fundamental to the school's success is the considerable emphasis placed upon the

professional development of staff. There have been very good training opportunities for all staff, but particularly those with subject management responsibilities, and the positive benefits of this input are coming through. Established subject managers have had opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching in their subjects and to contribute to the extension of the skills of their colleagues. They see planning, have identified good practice and have a clear view of the standards being achieved and how these can be improved. They contribute effectively to the School Development Plan by evaluating progress in their subjects on a monthly basis. The school's recent decision to seek acceptance as a Training School was prompted in part by the opportunities which would be afforded to the permanent teaching staff to reflect upon their own practice and to grow professionally through the discipline of training and supporting others. Although a relatively recent development, the Training School initiative has had a promising start.

61. The successes of the school have been enthusiastically acknowledged by parents in their responses at the parents' meeting and in their questionnaires. Parents are very supportive of the values of the school and the range and quality of experiences being provided for their children. The school has explicit aims, with a clear focus on the raising of attainment, and these are reviewed regularly. The values promoted by the school are strong. The social dimensions of the community are an outstanding strength. A strong partnership exists with the local cluster of schools and this is contributing to effective transition arrangements and, increasingly, to curriculum development.
62. The governing body, under the effective leadership of the chair, is very supportive of the school. Governors are highly effective in fulfilling their responsibilities. They are well informed about the work of the school and have a clear understanding of its many strengths and remaining areas for development. Several governors visit the school regularly. A number of governors are linked to specific aspects of the school's work, such as literacy and numeracy provision and special educational needs. They fulfil their roles well in relation to staffing and premises' management. Committees are well established and work effectively, giving due attention to their particular responsibilities. Governors have benefited from training opportunities from the local education authority and this is enabling them to contribute soundly to school development. They work very successfully with the headteacher and staff to shape the direction of the school. Legal requirements are met fully. Very good performance management systems have been implemented. The school development plan establishes very appropriate priorities for the school. It is a comprehensive document, with a wide range of targets, relating to whole school priorities and to individual subjects and other aspects of the school's work.
63. Special educational needs is managed by a team which includes two special needs co-ordinators, one for each key stage, and a learning mentor. The co-ordinators maintain the register of pupils efficiently with regular movement on and off the register. The inclusion team meets weekly to share information and concerns. The team has a clear vision for the development of special educational needs, which includes extending provision for gifted and talented pupils. Outside agencies are involved as required and the governing body is well informed by the headteacher and the responsible governor who has good knowledge and understanding of special educational needs.
64. The number of teachers and education support staff is excellent in relation to the number of pupils on roll, and their qualifications are very well matched to the demands of the curriculum. There is a good balance between experienced and younger members of staff. Support staff are well deployed and work effectively with teachers in the classroom, where they make a major contribution to pupils' learning and personal development. The number and quality of midday supervisors are very good and help to promote good behaviour and discipline in the school. There are very good arrangements for the induction of new staff and for the provision of support to newly qualified teachers and student teachers. The school has an excellent programme of performance management. Members of staff have been monitored, appraised and given appropriate targets. The in-service training of teachers is also excellent. It is comprehensive in that it encourages all members of staff to acquire qualifications that will help them to carry out their roles more effectively. It is systematically planned to match the requirements of the school development plan and support issues arising from performance management.
65. The school's accommodation has improved substantially since the last inspection, and now

matches the demands of the curriculum and the number of pupils very well. There are enough classrooms to provide proper teaching rooms for every class. However, some are relatively small, particularly for older pupils. There is good specialist accommodation. The studio is a strength in this respect, and enhances the quality of music and drama lessons.

66. Overall, learning resources are very good. They are satisfactory in science and history, and good or very good in all other subjects. The resources in the library are very good, and very effectively support learning across the whole curriculum. The nursery and reception classes are excellently resourced. The quality of facilities for outdoor play for the youngest children is outstanding.
67. The Headteacher consults widely about proposed improvements and the contributions of staff and governors are highly valued. The process supports thoughtful discussion leading to the identification of pertinent initiatives for improvement. It helps to ensure that developments are clearly focused on improvement and that they proceed with the commitment of all concerned. The school development plan identifies these proposals and provides very precise details of the financial implications. Financial control and office administration are excellent. Monetary affairs are extremely well controlled and the school makes excellent use of computer analysis. The last audit report contained a significant number of recommendations but all of these points have been appropriately rectified. Excellent use has been made of the additional money made available to the school through specific grants such as that to support pupils with special educational needs and for the development of information and communication technology skills.
68. The Governing Body has established a committee with financial responsibility and has properly defined its role. Governors are fully meeting their responsibilities in relation to budget setting and expenditure is carefully monitored. The Governing Body thoughtfully evaluates the cost-effectiveness of major spending decisions through the reports of the Headteacher, through discussion and through analysis of assessment and other data. Governors compare the school's results with national averages and with schools having a similar intake. A desire for high standards and improvement is central. These instruments enable the governing body to have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors are very aware of the need to ensure that money is spent carefully. Competing quotations are obtained before contracts are issued although governors are mindful that the cheapest price does not always represent the best value. The school constantly challenges itself to provide better value. The expertise available through its links with a commercial company, for example, was employed to reduce energy costs. Taken as a whole the Governing Body employs principles of best value to an excellent degree.
69. The previous inspection report acknowledged careful financial planning in the school, but found that the planned improvements were not rigorously costed and that there was some inefficient use of staff and resources. The school's finances continue to be administered judiciously and there is now an extremely close link between the budget and planned initiatives. The efficiency with which staff and resources are administered is excellent. Overall, the school has made a very good response to the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection.
70. The financial allocation for educating each pupil is above average compared to similar schools nationally but this money is used exceptionally well to promote the academic and personal development of its pupils. Overall, the school uses its resources shrewdly and productively. Standards achieved by pupils have improved significantly, the quality of teaching is very good, the quality of management is outstanding and the improvement made since the last inspection is excellent. The school substantially enhances the lives and opportunities of its pupils. It provides excellent value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. The school has made excellent progress since the last inspection and has many strengths. No significant weaknesses are indicated in the report and there are no key issues. However, improvement could be made in the following area, with a view to raising the quality of the school's work still further.

- Through the school's efforts, the level of pupils' attendance has improved. However, this remains below the national average, largely because of holidays taken during term time. The support of parents, and continued co-operation between the school and parents, would enable the school to improve this figure.

(paragraphs: 12,17,47)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	83
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	12	22	38	11	0	0	0
Percentage	14	27	46	13	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	39	403
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	95

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	16	100

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	29
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.0
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	27	33	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	26	26
	Girls	33	32	33
	Total	59	58	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (91)	97 (91)	98 (98)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	26	27
	Girls	33	33	33
	Total	59	59	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (89)	98 (91)	100 (95)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	31	30	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	30	28	31
	Girls	23	27	29
	Total	53	55	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (74)	90 (89)	98 (98)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	28	31
	Girls	24	23	28
	Total	51	51	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (66)	82 (71)	95 (79)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	8
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	357
Any other minority ethnic group	9

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	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: YR - Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	20.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.9
Average class size	28.8

Education support staff: YR - Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	204

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.5
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	52
Number of pupils per FTE adult	26

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	962472
Total expenditure	943269
Expenditure per pupil	2092
Balance brought forward from previous year	-5103
Balance carried forward to next year	14100

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	442
Number of questionnaires returned	149

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	23	0	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	73	26	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	40	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	56	32	4	1	8
The teaching is good.	76	23	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	70	28	0	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	23	1	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	84	16	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	66	34	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	79	20	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	72	27	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	54	36	1	0	9

Other issues raised by parents

Although a significant number of questionnaires were returned, there were few written comments enclosed. The great majority of these were very positive.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

72. Children are admitted to the nursery on a part time basis in either the September or January following their third birthday. They join the reception classes either in September or the following January of the year in which they become five years old. At the time of the inspection there were 78 children attending the nursery part-time and 28 children in the reception classes. Early assessment information in the nursery indicates that many children have well below the expected levels of attainment, particularly in speaking and listening. In the reception classes, analysis of assessment information indicates below average attainment, but the benefits of the excellent nursery experience show in the good progress the children make.
73. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is excellent and is a strength of the school. There are many reasons for this but the most significant factors include the provision of a new nursery and the excellent leadership provided by the Foundation Stage manager. She has clear insights into the quality of education being provided and standards being achieved and is constantly seeking ways to ensure that these are the best they can be. Secondly, teaching in the Foundation Stage is excellent. The consistently very high standard is well founded on realistic expectations of what individual children know and can do and ensures that innovative and exciting methods are used to capture the children's imagination and inspire learning. Another factor is the excellent planning which results in highly effective teamwork. As a result, children are learning at a brisk rate through a rich and challenging curriculum. The involvement of children and parents in planning the day's work builds a very strong partnership with parents and carers who have a clear understanding of the curriculum and the work undertaken by their child as a result. Very careful and purposeful assessments are undertaken following the 'stepping stones' and records are maintained throughout the Foundation Stage. Work is clearly annotated so that the progress children make is thoroughly recorded. From this information individual targets for learning are set which are displayed on the wall and shared with children and parents. This consistency of approach throughout the Foundation Stage enables the adults to build very effectively on earlier learning and ensures work is set at the right level of challenge for all. The result is happy, hardworking children who enjoy coming to school because learning is exciting and fun. They make good gains in their knowledge and understanding. By the time they join Year 1 many have exceeded the expected level in their personal, social and emotional development. In their knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development and in the number element of mathematics the majority achieve the expected level. In communication, language and literacy, higher-attaining children achieve the expected level for their age. The good progress identified in the previous inspection has been maintained and built upon successfully.
74. Learning resources are excellent in both the nursery and reception classes. Outdoor play provision is particularly stimulating with high quality experiences for children through the very well structured use of resources.

Personal, social and emotional development

75. Teaching in this area of development is excellent. Children build confidence and self-esteem as they plan their day. They are able to make decisions and select resources. The high involvement of parents in this process strengthens the partnership and eases the transition from home to school. The children behave very well, sharing and taking turns, for example when using the wheeled toys outside. They make friends readily and play co-operatively because the structured activities promote this well. Teachers have consistently high expectations for the behaviour, attitudes and independence of the children. They respond very positively to these. The children listen carefully, and are eager to respond to questions, in spite of the limited language skills of a significant proportion. For example, in review time children discuss their work and what they have enjoyed doing best. They enjoy visitors and are keen to share their work with other adults. For example, children in the post office explained what had to be done to post a letter, deliver parcels and were acquiring the appropriate vocabulary such as 'express delivery' and 'fragile'. They move confidently about the classroom, playground and the school,

showing a high level of independence. Children prepared their own morning snacks for instance, using knives to cut up a range of fruit and buttering toast and teacakes. Children in the reception classes change independently for physical education in the hall. Children with special educational needs are identified early. They are very well supported, helping them to participate fully and confidently. As a result, they make good progress towards their targets. The school's clear policy on social inclusion is put into practice effectively in the Foundation Stage. Most children make very good progress in this area of their development and exceed the level expected by the time they enter Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

76. Standards are well below the expected level for many children when they start school. They are given many opportunities to engage in speaking activities. For instance, in the nursery the well-structured post office play involved the children in telephone conversations, giving messages and delivering letters and parcels. In the reception classes, following the story of 'Mrs Wishy Washy' well-supported role play enabled the children to act out the story, dressed as the characters. They were totally absorbed around the water tray as they chanted 'scrub, scrub, scrub', pretending to wash the animals in the tub! Imaginative planning by the teacher created great excitement as a letter arrived from Mrs Wishy Washy for the children, in search of the animals and a notice appeared in the outdoor area saying 'Beware of the mud'.
77. 'There are pigs in the garden!' cried one child, 'we've seen the footprints!' This led to a great search and imaginative suggestions from the children about what to do. An able child said 'We must be detectives.... we have to solve the mystery'. The excellent adult intervention in both of these activities extended conversation and imaginative thinking. Through a 'fun approach' to learning, the children improve their speaking skills and gain confidence in speaking aloud, increasing their vocabulary as a result of well-timed interventions. Developmental writing is very well promoted in the nursery and the reception classes. Following the theme of Celebrations in the nursery the teacher used the story of the 'Princess in the Tower' as a focus for learning. Children wrote eagerly in response to a letter from the King asking for their help to find his daughter who was lost in the tower. Through well-structured play in the office and post office, they write messages, send letters and cards and make lists. In the reception classes the children 'made appointments', 'wrote reports and prescriptions' and used the computer to send letters. The theme of purposeful letter writing is successfully developed in the reception classes as children responded to the letter from Mrs Wishy Washy. The reply was carefully modelled by the teacher. Basic writing skills and pencil control are carefully developed, although the majority are at an early stage of letter formation and mark making. Higher attainers write their name independently. Children are presented with a wide range of interesting books. They enjoy sharing books and all demonstrate good book handling skills. Higher attainers recognise words and letters and are beginning to read. They understand terms such as 'author', 'title' and 'illustrator' and know all their initial sounds. The majority make good progress in developing skills in this area, although a significant proportion do not achieve the expected level in all aspects of this area of development by the time they leave the Foundation Stage.

Mathematical development

78. Children in the nursery sort and count objects. They match objects to numbers; for instance, building a tower of cubes high and using the computer to match and count. Most are at an early stage of number recognition but higher attainers recognise and count to 10. They match frogs to their correct lily pad numbers, up to 10, with reasonable confidence. In the reception classes most count confidently to 10 but are less secure when recording numbers. Higher attainers show awareness of 'o'clock' and a few order numbers to 12 around a 'clock face'. They are able to continue a repeating pattern of two colours and in some cases, a three-colour pattern. Lower attainers are unable to continue a two colour sequence. They recognise numbers to 3 but need a good deal of help when recording. They are familiar with some basic shapes such as 'square', 'triangle' and 'rectangle'. In the sand and water, children acquire mathematical language and use terms such as 'full' and 'empty' correctly. They make simple graphs to show, for example, their favourite animal. Teachers build systematically children's knowledge and understanding. Interesting tasks and the very good teaching and support given enable children to make good gains in their learning, particularly in the number aspect of mathematical

development where many are likely to achieve the expected level by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

79. Excellent teaching provides many practical opportunities for children, helping them to make very good progress in this area of development, given their prior attainment on entry to school. Excellent use of a wide range of quality resources contributes very effectively to the enrichment in learning. In the nursery, children explore growth and change as they plant a thick 'hedge' of cress around the princesses' tower. They develop geographical skills as they use simple route maps and investigate the outdoor area in search of the princess. They learn about celebrations by role-playing a wedding, with everyone taking part and sharing the wedding breakfast. Fine hats, confetti, photographs and a wedding cake are all part of the event. One child explained about the wedding with much excitement. 'It were real scary.... so we held each other's hand!' In the water tray coloured water and glitter adds a further interest. In the reception classes the children use construction material to build models and explore a range of fasteners as they make a bus or a train. They investigate bubbles in the water play, with well chosen resources such as whisks adding interest to the learning. The use of guttering to link water trays extends the learning opportunities for all.
80. In the outdoor area the children investigate reflections with shiny fabrics, discs and reflection in the pond water. Wind chimes, windmills and ribbons increase their scientific understanding of the effect of wind.
81. Opportunities to explore the senses are provided. For example, children investigate a range of beautiful scents and smells, soaps, potpourri, perfumes and other pleasant smelling items - the timely intervention extending language as well as knowledge and understanding. Teaching points are effectively made so that children are clear about the sense they are using. Caring attitudes are developed well as the children learn to look after the pets: fish, rabbit and guinea pig. They learn about other cultures through celebrations such as Diwali and Chinese New Year. Through circle time the children develop awareness of their own feelings and those of others. Caring and kindness are very well promoted by the adults who provide excellent role models for the children. The children demonstrate well developed skills when using the computer. They control the mouse well and have a good awareness of early keyboard skills, as they move the cursor, experiment with letter writing in the 'medical centre', and select and click on icons using a paint program. They perform these simple functions confidently. Excellent teaching provides very well structured opportunities which are very well resourced to maximise the learning taking place. High quality support and intervention moves the learning on very well. By the time children leave the Foundation Stage many are achieving the expected level, making very good gains in learning.

Physical development

82. Provision for this aspect of learning is excellent in the nursery and the reception classes. Both benefit from excellent outdoor areas, very well resourced with quality resources. Children in the nursery climb, balance and slide on the apparatus. They pedal wheeled vehicles along marked roadways, delivering parcels and letters and return to an outdoor whiteboard to 'enter' details of their delivery. In the reception classes the adults build very well on these early skills as children balance and negotiate an obstacle course, drive and pedal wheeled toys to 'the petrol station', explore 'the beach', learn to skip and play a variety of traditional games such as 'What's the time Mr Wolf?' linked to their work on telling 'o'clock'. All children in the Foundation Stage have access to the hall. They change independently and make very good use of the hall space to develop physical skills. The children respond promptly to signals to stop and are developing very good awareness of the space around them. The very good support for statemented children enables them to participate fully and with enjoyment. The children demonstrate increasing skill and co-ordination as they run, jump and hop, travelling at different speeds and levels. They have awareness of different forms of throwing, throwing and retrieving a beanbag with the expected level of skill. The majority demonstrate a high level of independence because of high quality teaching, very good support and well-planned lessons. Fine motor skills develop steadily and many control pencils, crayons, brushes and scissors well. Most children make good

progress, reaching the expected standard by the time they start Year 1.

Creative development

83. Children have a wide range of exciting opportunities to paint, print and use collage materials in the nursery and reception classes. Well-structured activities enable them to select resources and make choices. In the reception classes, they use paint broadly to produce sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh, using various techniques and textures, building on the earlier colour mixing in the nursery. The children explore the use of pencil techniques, recognise and draw simple geometrical shapes, inspired by Kandinsky's work and create three-dimensional models of landmarks in the local environment. The adults encourage children to look carefully and work with good independence. Excellent opportunities are provided for children to sing and explore music making in the studio. A wide range of interesting percussion instruments contributes to the very good learning taking place. Children in the nursery have a wide repertoire of songs and rhymes, including songs from other cultures such as the calypso 'Coconut Water'. The use of the guitar to accompany the children further enhances the lessons. They sing confidently and perform actions with a high level of enjoyment.
84. In the reception classes these skills are built upon very effectively. The majority sing in tune and maintain a steady pulse. They confidently suggest new ideas for further verses to songs. The children listen very attentively and respond to the teacher's high expectations of behaviour and standards. Most children move rhythmically. They are familiar with a wide range of untuned percussion instruments and are able to work together in small groups, showing good organisational skills. The very good control by the teacher and good self-discipline by pupils ensures a brisk pace to lessons. Standards in music are better than expected because teachers have high expectations and provide interesting and challenging tasks. As a result, most children achieve very well. Overall, most children are achieving the expected levels in the creative area of development by the time they leave the Foundation Stage.

ENGLISH

85. There has been good improvement in English since the previous inspection. Standards are now above national averages for seven and 11-year-olds at this early stage in the school year. Listening skills are very good across the school. Standards of speaking, writing and reading are good in Year 2. Standards in speaking and writing are above average in Year 6, but standards in reading are average, with relatively few pupils yet achieving the higher levels.
86. At the previous inspection, standards in English by the age of seven were above average in writing and broadly in line with the national average in reading. Standards in reading have greatly improved. By the age of 11, standards were below the national average. This is no longer the case. The whole school approach to raising achievement is reaping rewards.
87. Standards in the 2001 national tests at the age of seven were well above the national average in reading and writing and well above average in comparison with similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level in reading and writing was below average. Pupils' performance at the end of Year 6 was well above the national average and when compared with the results achieved by pupils in similar schools. The assessments made by the teachers supported the test results. There was no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Trends show that standards for the older pupils have improved greatly since the previous inspection. Detailed analysis of the results show that the pupils who had been on the Reading Recovery programme made particularly good progress and ultimately achieved high standards.
88. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy very successfully throughout the school. The very good focus on teaching basic skills, and the emphasis on guided reading and shared text work is contributing very effectively to the continuing improvement in spelling and to fluency and expression in reading. The strategy has helped the school to improve the standard of pupils' work. Teachers now plan very effectively to the national literacy guidelines. In fact, the quality of planning has improved significantly throughout the school and it is very good indeed.

89. Phonics are well taught in the earlier years. Teachers use the 'Progression in Phonics' materials. The activities help teachers work in a lively, interesting and interactive way. In a very good lesson in Year 1, pupils were reading words in context from silly questions. They had to read the question and answer it by holding up a 'yes' or a 'no' card. They enjoyed this activity and went beyond the simple reply.
90. Knowledge and understanding of fiction and non-fiction texts has been extended through the literacy strategy but also through the love of books that the co-ordinator and teachers share. There are many well kept, up-to-date books for the pupils to choose from in the library and in book corners. As a result, pupils by the age of seven really enjoy books. They choose the book they want and are familiar with the contents. Pupils in Year 1 know the title, author and what the summary on the back of a book is for. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 enjoy sharing and partnering reading with those in Years 1 and 2.
91. When pupils enter Year 3, they are self-motivated, confident readers. They progress well. Standards of reading and comprehension in Year 6 are in line for the age group at this stage in the term. They understand the texts well but not many pupils are reading really demanding texts. All pupils said that their favourite author was Jacqueline Wilson but could not talk about a wider range of authors. The skills needed to read with deeper understanding need to be further developed. There is little evidence of reading beyond the guided and shared reading in Years 5 and 6. Often support staff fill this role. Pupils with difficulties in reading are well supported individually and achieve well. The 'Reading at Home' scheme is of great benefit to many pupils.
92. Standards in listening are very good; standards in speaking are good. Pupils make very good progress given their low attainment on entry to school. Teachers encourage the use of Standard English through guiding learning sensitively across all areas of the curriculum. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and each other and answer questions well. In discussions, pupils were able to put forward their own points of view. In a well-planned lesson in Year 3, very good discussions took place about Spring. The language used was excellent, for instance, 'green and rustling,' 'pearls of buds,' 'treasures of flowers' 'gusty winds chase away...'. There is a drama studio to help pupils to express themselves more clearly and at the end of some lessons the pupils take part in 'Hot Seating'. This was used successfully in Year 6 when pupils take turns being King Henry V. No procedures for assessing pupils' speaking skills are yet in place.
93. The whole school target to improve pupils' writing has been successful. Writing across the school has improved and pupils are now attaining the standards for their age, with some achieving at higher levels. In Year 1, pupils are beginning to sequence sentences relating to 'Jasper's Beanstalk,' showing a beginning, middle and end. By the beginning of Year 4 pupils are able to write well, 'The sky is dark blue with glittering stars, the moon shaped like a crescent.' Pupils progress well. Very good work was seen in Year 4 books. In their work on newspapers pupils are now able to identify the features, and predict what they think the story might be from a headline, as well as predict a headline from a story. Poetry is well developed and enjoyed by all the pupils. Year 3 pupils write good poems on the seasons. Year 6 pupils have written very good 'spell' poems.
94. Year 3 and 4 pupils begin to write play scripts, and can explain clearly the differences between plays, poems and story writing. This is built on successfully, and by Year 6, pupils are successfully accessing works of Shakespeare. They have knowledge of 'Macbeth', 'The Merchant of Venice' and understand the meaning of 'a pound of flesh.' Pupils realise how powerful words can be.
95. Grammar is well taught across the school. All teachers provide lively, whole class activities for teaching sentence level objectives in the literacy lessons. Pupils' understanding of grammar enhances both reading and writing skills. In some lessons pupils were using dictionaries and thesauri to improve their work. Punctuation is understood and used well from Year 1.
96. Each child has a separate writing book that shows development. Clear targets are set. There is a variety and range of writing. Teachers mark very well. The 'Once a month,' books show the targets that have been achieved and the good progress that pupils are making. Half termly

pieces of writing are assessed against level descriptors. This is having a very good effect on the standard of writing across the school.

97. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught and their achievement is good. Teachers have excellent support from the classroom assistants who hear the pupils read and keep very good records of their work. They use a wide range of strategies to keep the pupils on track and learning. The school provides well for pupils identified as gifted and talented.
98. There is evidence of some good writing across the curriculum but this is inconsistent. In Year 6 there was some very good use of geographical language in the work on rivers. Good lists and good use of bullet points were used to inform a piece of writing after watching a video in history. Excellent links using imaginative language linked to the monster poems within an art lesson. In most lessons pupils are given many opportunities to use speaking and listening skills.
99. Standards in handwriting are improving. By the end of Year 2 pupils almost always correctly form their letters. In Year 6 handwriting shows control of a printed or partially joined up script in which letters and words are appropriately spaced. However, a number of pupils, as yet, have failed to acquire a neat, legible and fluent handwriting style.
100. Standards in spelling are good. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 use the lists of words and activities from the spelling bank linked to the spelling objectives in the literacy strategy. There is a good emphasis on the context in which words might be used.
101. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was very good overall with a quarter of lessons being excellent. Very secure knowledge and understanding of the literacy strategy is evident. Teachers have great enthusiasm for the teaching of English. Their relationships with pupils are very good.
102. There are two new libraries. Both have many high quality attractive books. The older pupils have been involved with the Sheffield Book Awards, which helps the pupils read, review and vote for their favourite book. However, there is little evidence that reference books are being used to develop research skills in some areas of the curriculum. Links with ICT are improving writing, pupils' work is word-processed and the Internet is used to locate information.
103. Pupils are well motivated and eager to learn. During the majority of lessons observed pupils' behaviour was very good or excellent. On some occasions when it is good overall, pupils began to fidget because the physical arrangement of the class is not appropriate, and they find it difficult to see the text.
104. There are two very good, hard working co-ordinators for English. Both are very secure in their understanding and knowledge of the curriculum. Their plan is to raise standards even further. Resources are of very good quality.

MATHEMATICS

105. The last inspection report indicated that attainment in mathematics was around the national average by the end of Year 2, but below the national average for some pupils by the end of Year 6. While most pupils were making good progress up to the age of seven, this deteriorated as they grew older and progress was variable, and sometimes poor, in Key Stage 2. Although attainment in number was secure, there were weaknesses in other elements of the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs had good support and were making satisfactory progress. The teaching observed was always at least satisfactory; in some lessons teaching was good. The need to raise standards in mathematics was a key finding from the inspection report.
106. The school has worked hard to raise standards in mathematics and they have made very good progress. Attainment in mathematics by the end of Year 2 fell below average in 1998, improved to above average in 1999 and to well above average in 2000. Standards were above the national average in 2001, but well above the standards achieved in similar schools. Only one child did not achieve at least the expected level 2 in 2001. Pupils' performance by the end of Year 6 was well below average in 1998, below average in 1999, above average in 2000 and

well above average in 2001. Standards in 2001 were well above those achieved in similar schools. The school achieved its target for attainment in mathematics at Year 6 in 2001. The school's tracking systems show that the majority of pupils are making very good progress in mathematics as they move through the school. This is a significant improvement on the situation in 1997.

107. On the evidence available early in the school year, a significant group of pupils in the current Year 2 are on track to achieve standards in mathematics which are above those expected nationally. Standards are also above average in Year 6. The strengths in mathematics reflect the high quality of much of the teaching, the benefits of stable staffing, the depth of coverage achieved, the structure and consistency provided by the numeracy initiative and the successful management of the subject by the co-ordinator.
108. The school has implemented the numeracy initiative with considerable success and teachers, including some new to the system, are, overall, using the structure well. This is indicative of the good support given to newly-recruited teachers by senior staff. Pupils have access to the breadth of the National Curriculum in mathematics and there is a good balance of experience through the school. A significant benefit for pupils now coming through the school is the very good Foundation Stage provision. This ensures that pupils entering Year 1 have now had a very good grounding in mathematics. This is crucial to the much improved progress which pupils are making. In Key Stage 1 pupils extend their knowledge of mathematics, particularly number. They add and subtract accurately with numbers of increasing size, successfully perform simple multiplication calculations based upon familiar tables and estimate and measure accurately. They recognise time and clock-faces, understand symmetry and produce simple tally and bar charts. Higher attaining Year 2 pupils were observed confidently recalling multiplication bonds in twos, fives and tens. They were able to present these tables in different number arrays. Some additional activities were provided for them and they could manage these independently. From an early stage, staff encourage pupils to be independent, so that they have the confidence to work by themselves, seeking the teacher's support only when it is necessary. There is a positive emphasis on practical mathematical activities throughout Key Stage 1. At least half of the current Year 2 pupils are already working at level 2 or within level 3, with the remainder still working within level 1.
109. The emphasis upon number continues in Key Stage 2. No work was available from the previous school year, but planning indicates that pupils cover an appropriate range of work. They have had experience of, and work accurately with, fractions, decimals and percentages, long multiplication, ratio and proportion, mean/mode/median and range, approximation, co-ordinates in four quadrants, negative numbers, indices, line graphs and grouped frequency bar charts. Pupils are making very good progress across the key stage. There is a good balance between the elements of the curriculum. The quality of presentation is systematic and thorough across the key stage. By the end of Year 6, pupils are familiar with, and can interpret confidently, bar charts and line graphs. These skills are used appropriately in other areas of the curriculum, particularly science. There is good use of practical activities. Provision for investigative work remains a positive feature.
110. The quality of teaching is good across the school, with some very good or excellent lessons. Most teachers have a clear grasp of the standards which pupils should be achieving and expectations are high. Progress by all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is increasingly brisk. There is evidence of challenging work being provided for the higher attaining pupils in Year 2 and towards the end of Key Stage 2. The school is actively identifying gifted and talented pupils in mathematics and is promoting opportunities to support their progress. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good. They plan in great detail. They identify clear objectives in their planning and ensure that pupils know what these are. They list them on the board and sometimes on each table. They set targets for each pupil, so that they know where they need to make improvement. There is very effective use of both whole-class teaching and group work within each class. The pace of the best lessons is very brisk. This ensures that no time is wasted. These factors, together with the good support provided for pupils with special educational needs, underpin the improvement in standards in mathematics which is now coming through. Homework is used well to support pupils' learning in mathematics. There have,

recently, been some staff changes and the school has done well to sustain the high quality of teaching across such a large staff.

111. The older pupils show a good grasp of tables and of the strategies necessary for accurate mental calculations. Higher attaining pupils in Year 5 were mentally - and accurately - doubling numbers with three digits. A few could tackle four digit numbers. However, the grasp of multiplication bonds is less secure for some of the oldest pupils. Teachers recognise the importance of these skills and provide regular opportunities for practice.
112. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards mathematics. When the teaching is stimulating they are attentive, co-operative and enthusiastic. They work well together and support each other. However, in this school, pupils are accustomed to very high standards of teaching and their attention sometimes wanders when teaching fails to stimulate them sufficiently.
113. Information technology is now making a good contribution to the teaching of mathematics, with regular access to the computer suite. There is evidence of work in the data-handling element of the mathematics curriculum and of directional work using robots. Staff have the opportunity to develop further the use of technology in the teaching of mathematics. Formal procedures for assessing pupils' progress are very good. This has been an area of development recently. There is regular use of standardised test material, to support teachers in their planning. The marking of pupils' work is good overall. There are many comments to guide pupils and to show them how they might improve or extend their work. Targets are identified for groups of pupils and for individuals. The co-ordinator is providing good leadership for the subject and has a clear view of the standards being achieved. There is a regular programme of monitoring of mathematics teaching.

SCIENCE

114. The results of the national tests in 2001 showed that the standards of pupils reaching the end of Year 2 were above average. Pupils near the end of Year 6 attained very high standards. The proportion of pupils in this year group attaining at a higher than expected level was extremely high. The limited evidence available at the time of the inspection confirms these results. Bearing in mind that what pupils can do is below average when they start work on the National Curriculum, those in the infant part of the school achieve very well. Based on their attainment at the beginning of Year 3, pupils' achievements in the junior classes are excellent. Overall, boys and girls do equally well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as others in their class. There are many reasons why, by the time they leave, pupils' results are in the top five per cent of schools across the country. The main ones are :-
 - the quality of teaching throughout the school is very good,
 - the subject is led and managed very well,
 - the headteacher inspires and supports the work in science very effectively indeed,
 - the pupils have very good attitudes to learning,
 - the way in which the teachers assess how well pupils are learning and the use they make of the information they gain is very effective,
 - the checks made on the quality of teaching and learning are very helpful, and
 - great importance is given to teaching and learning investigative skills.
115. Since the last inspection the good standards at the end of Year 2 have been maintained, and those achieved at the end of Year 6 have risen from being well below average to their present very high levels. The main reasons for this are listed above. Overall, the weaknesses identified in the last report have been dealt with very successfully, although the school still needs more resources to help pupils use computers more effectively in science lessons. The quality of teaching has improved markedly. One of the most telling advances has been in the teaching and learning of investigational skills.
116. Standards in the current Year 2 are above average. Much of the work they do is usually done by older pupils. This is because the teachers demand much of them. For example, when they investigate things, pupils are asked to research using books and to explain what they find out from experiments. They begin to identify those elements in an experiment that can change and those that do not. They record their work in a variety of ways, but do not always say whether

what they found out was what they expected. They already explain why different materials are used for particular purposes, for example, that plastic is used for toys because it is strong, but light. Like older pupils, they understand that some forces can cause things to move and others slow them down. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 2, in which objects were released down a ramp, the pupils recognised that gravity 'pulled' the objects down the ramp and friction slowed them.

117. In the junior classes, pupils also do work normally tackled at a later stage. The work done this term shows much rigour, both in the depth at which pupils learn and their correct use of scientific terms such as 'power source' and 'secondary consumer'. For example, those in Year 4 develop an understanding of the feeding relationships between predators and prey that is often gained by older pupils. Those in Year 5 discuss the Earth's magnetic field and the action of the solar wind. The standards of pupils in Year 6 are already high. Their knowledge of animals and plants is very well developed. For example, in a short lesson taught by the headteacher, pupils recalled that owls have a special set of feathers which enable them to fly without being heard. In their work on electricity, pupils use conventional symbols to represent the components in circuits and understand the best conditions for conductivity. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that, throughout the school, they do not use computers enough for recording and reporting their investigations.
118. The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school. This is the main reason why pupils' achievements are so good. One of the great strengths of teaching is the extent to which pupils are encouraged to do their best. The high expectations of teachers about what pupils can do are at the heart of the school's success. In a lesson for Year 2, the teacher insisted that pupils predict what might happen and were repeatedly asked to explain what was happening. The very effective questioning in lessons ensures that pupils gain a clear understanding of what is taught. There are a lot of 'Why?', 'What?' and 'How?' questions used. Pupils have to think hard. The very good methods employed by the teachers, such as always writing the objectives for the lesson on the whiteboard, also enhance pupils' learning. The teachers control and manage their classes very well, leading to the very good behaviour seen in lessons. As a result, the pupils, including those with special educational needs, learn very well. They try to think for themselves and are keen to answer. They work hard and concentrate well. They involve themselves very well in their learning, and are often captivated by what they find out. This was obvious in a lesson for Year 6 in which the head teacher showed the class an African barn owl. It was true also, in a Year 3 activity, when a pupil using a magnifying glass to look at a stalk of celery dyed red in an experiment said, 'It looks like a shark's tooth'. Occasionally, pupils are too passive and do not ask enough questions to help them learn better. In some lessons the quality of learning is slightly reduced when the teacher forgets to ask some pupils to turn their chairs to listen or join in class discussions.
119. The leadership of the subject is very good indeed. The head teacher has extremely good knowledge of plants and animals, and leads the school's drive to raise standards in science extremely effectively. He teaches short lessons to the pupils in Year 6 to boost their confidence, extend their skills, knowledge and understanding, and revise intensively. The co-ordinators work very well. Their knowledge of how well each pupil is doing and the use they make of this information to support greater learning are extremely good. Homework tasks are set regularly to supplement and reinforce what is learned in lessons, and tests form an important part of the provision that is made. Much work has been done to develop the quality of teaching, including classroom observations. The willingness of all staff to share good practice has resulted in them showing a great deal of confidence and competence in the teaching of science, including the skills of investigation.

ART AND DESIGN

120. Standards in art and design are above the level expected in Year 2 and Year 6. This represents a big improvement since the previous inspection when standards were considered to be below average and progress unsatisfactory. There are now good cross-curricular links with other subjects and many opportunities for individual creativity in two-dimensional and three-dimensional work. Sketchbooks are used with increasing effect across the school, although this is not yet consistent. There is better attention to the work of famous artists, although this topic is

not consistently addressed in all year groups. Since the previous inspection a scheme of work has been put in place, adapted from the national guidance. This has provided a clear structure for the development of the subject. New resources have been purchased to support the scheme of work. A major development has been the use of the dining room to provide a 'circus' of art and design activities for the year group. The excellent support received from parents enables these well-structured sessions to be very effectively managed.

121. All staff and parents who support have benefited from in-service training. Links have been established with information and communication technology and this is now effectively supporting work in art and design. As a result of these developments, art and design has improved dramatically. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress throughout the school because they are presented with interesting and challenging activities and are given very good support by the adults.
122. Pupils in Year 2 work competently and confidently with a wide range of materials. They have a good awareness of colour; discriminating between shades such as lemon, true yellow and brilliant yellow. Sketches of old toys show careful observational skills in many cases. They use modelling material confidently to create a sculpture of a monster, exploring the use of wire and modroc. They work with a good level of independence, building effectively on skills acquired earlier.
123. By Year 6 pupils have built well on colour mixing techniques, using shading to highlight features in a portrait. Artistic vocabulary is systematically developed with pupils understanding terms such as 'perspective', 'tint', 'shade', 'tint' and 'hue'. Skills in observational drawing continue to develop as pupils move through the school, with observations of shoes, fruit and vegetables, and evergreens such as holly and mistletoe, being carefully reproduced. Evidence of attention to the work of artists is seen in Year 3 looking at the work of Escher, and Georgia O'Keefe, Gustav Klimt in Year 4 and Van Gogh's 'sunflowers' in Year 6. Pupils make good use of the computer, for example to explore Islamic patterns linked to work in religious education through the program 'Dazzle' in Year 3. There are good links to design and technology through puppet making in Year 3 and a good focus on fabric and textiles such as clay tiles. Pupils in Year 4 identify the elements of patterns and lines typical of Klimt and apply these to their own work. They develop this further through their designs for mosaic tiles. In Year 5 pupils use colour wash technique to create a Lowry background and add figures using wax crayons. Weaknesses in the preparation and organisation of this lesson, together with missed opportunities to mention the artist's name prevented this lesson from being as successful as it could have been. In Year 6, pupils make imaginative use of clay to create candleholders. They know how to use a range of tools well and work confidently with clay to produce work to a good standard. Other pupils create Victorian peg dolls and jewellery boxes following work in history on the Victorians. Perspective is introduced successfully in Year 6 with the use of the computer to support this work.
124. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good, with some excellent teaching observed in Year 2. Features of the very good teaching include excellent planning, a variety of challenging experiences and excellent provision and use of resources. Skilful explanations and discussions and perceptive interventions encourage pupils to develop their skills very well. Teachers make excellent use of some outstanding support given by parents. This is particularly helpful in ensuring the full participation of all pupils. As a result of this very good teaching pupils are inspired to learn, enthusiastic to try out their ideas and develop new skills and work with sustained effort and interest. Where progress is less evident it is a direct reflection of weaker teaching, resulting from weak organisation and preparation.
125. The subject is managed enthusiastically by the co-ordinator who has expertise in art. The displays of artefacts such as clay work and African masks serve as a stimulus to learning. The subject co-ordinator provides in-service training and manages two art clubs, providing very good support to teachers. A very recent assessment sheet has been introduced but its use is not yet firmly embedded in all classes.
126. Pupils and parents contribute to the displays about school through the 'job squad'. Work in art is supported by visiting artists including those from other cultures. Mosaic birds produced in

Year 4 are the result of work with an artist in residence. The co-ordinator would like to develop the use of artists from different cultures working with different media in school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

127. The previous report judged achievement at age 11 to be below expectation and progress to be unsatisfactory. The programme was said to be inadequately defined and there were weaknesses in planning and assessment procedures. All of these issues have been appropriately rectified. The school has made a very good response to the weaknesses identified.
128. Pupils at both seven and 11 achieve levels of knowledge and skill in design and technology which are appropriate for their ages. They are able to select from a satisfactory range of materials when designing and making products and proper consideration is given to the purpose of each item and to the subsequent design and construction. Pupils in both key stages are competent in their ability to relate what they are making to their associated design. Food technology is an integral part of the programme. Pupils make thoughtful evaluations about their work as demonstrated by the comments made by Year 3 pupils relating to their work across a number of group activities. Skills associated with design and technology are satisfactorily developed as pupils move through each key stage. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology to support the subject.
129. Although the quality of teaching and learning is good across the school, time constraints mean that standards are only in line with national expectations and progress is sound.
130. Teaching is good at both key stages. Teachers are clearly aware of the essential elements of design and technology such as providing opportunities for original and creative generation of ideas. Teachers include material to develop knowledge associated with mechanisms, structures and applications and how products can be refined and improved. The degree to which parents are involved in helping during design and technology lessons is remarkable. It enables pupils to work in very small groups knowing that adult support is immediately available. This contributes significantly to the quality of learning, to safety and to the excellent links with the community which are evident at Birley Spa.
131. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good. They are interested and motivated in their work and they discuss this with animation. They concentrate well and persevere to overcome problems. Collaboration is particularly productive.
132. The school has adopted national guidance to guide teachers' planning. This, together with supplementary material, helps to ensure the systematic development of skills. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of his role and has suitable subject expertise. Meaningful links with other subject areas are frequently established. Despite the pressure on teaching time, design and technology remains securely placed within the overall curriculum.

GEOGRAPHY

133. The limited evidence available during the inspection indicates that standards of pupils in Years 2 and 6 are in line with those expected nationally. This was the case at the time of the last inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they pass through the school. There is no difference between the standards of boys and girls.
134. The scrutiny of the work done by pupils in Year 2 shows that the tasks associated with maps are what they do best. They know where in the country Sheffield is, and label their city, together with London, on a map of the British Isles. They know the names of the countries that make up the UK. They draw maps of their journeys to school and of the Isle of Struay which they 'visit' when following a television programme. In the latter they make use of symbols to stand for features such as the jetty and the shop. They also know the points of the compass. However, they do not record enough of their views on the environment.

135. Discussion with pupils in Year 6 shows that they use the Internet well to find things out. They collect information about different countries and make up a database to collate it. They discuss topical issues such as the foot and mouth crisis, and use geographical terms well. In a note-taking exercise they used words such as 'erosion' and 'reservoir'. They know much about rivers. Pupils understand and can draw the journey of water from the mountains to the sea. They recognise the physical features caused by rivers, such as meanders, ox bow lakes and flood plains. The scrutiny of their work indicates that their knowledge and understanding of the effect of humans on the environment is not as well developed.
136. There is insufficient evidence to judge reliably the quality of teaching and learning. Only two lessons were seen because many classes were studying history, as indicated in the school's planning. Of these lessons, one was good and the other satisfactory. Those pupils spoken to have very good attitudes to work in this subject.
137. Since the last inspection, most of the weaknesses found by the inspectors have been corrected successfully. The scheme of work has been revised completely to take account of the national guidance issued recently. This has helped to ensure that learning is based securely on what has already been taught. However, teachers still do not give pupils enough opportunities to write at length about what they learn. The new co-ordinator has worked well with the literacy co-ordinator to improve the links between English and geography, and to ensure that teachers have the means to assess and record pupils' work effectively. She has also improved the stock of learning resources, although more are needed.

HISTORY

138. The standard of pupils' work in history is as expected nationally in Year 2. It is above expected levels in Year 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in Years 3 to 6. Standards have improved in Year 6 since the previous inspection.
139. Pupils in Year 2 have the expected knowledge of past times. Through looking at pictures, photographs and artefacts they are able to identify some of the changes that have taken place, for example, from when they were a baby to present day, changes in houses, in the kitchen, holidays and toys. They develop a sound sense of chronology as they sequence items such as cooking implements and events such as those of the life of Florence Nightingale. They use appropriate terminology such as 'old', 'new' and 'long ago' to show their understanding of the past. They have a satisfactory knowledge of other historical figures such as Guy Fawkes and know the purpose of Remembrance Day. Very little work is recorded, with much oral discussion forming the basis of lessons.
140. In Year 6, pupils have a good knowledge of a range of historical periods. They know about Invaders and Settlers and can discuss the Vikings, Anglo-Saxons and Romans. They know about aspects of Tudor life, particularly about Henry VIII and his wives and people such as Sir Francis Drake. They have a good knowledge and understanding of aspects of Victorian school life, rich and poor Victorians and children working in the coalmines or the mill. They confidently discuss important figures such as Dr Barnardo. They are able to identify some of the changes over time and create time lines to show events in the reign of Albert and Victoria and other famous people.
141. No teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6 teaching was satisfactory in the lesson seen, but from the evidence gathered, teaching is good. Lessons are very well planned. Teachers make effective use of photographs, artefacts, videos and visits to develop pupils' interest in history. Pupils respond with enthusiasm to sources of historical evidence, for instance, the video showing a comparison of rich and poor in Victorian times. Good links are made to literacy as pupils use skills such as note taking to record their observations. Although pupils are able to discuss at length aspects of history, there is little recording of work taking place. In the lesson observed the teacher's expectations of behaviour and the pace at which the lesson proceeded were not high enough. This resulted in a few pupils being inattentive and not achieving as well as they might. Although work is marked to date, few comments are provided to help pupils improve their work further. Samples of work and planned observations

provide help to inform co-ordinators about their subject. A very recent development is the introduction of assessment grids at the end of each unit of work. These have not yet had time to affect standards. Not enough use is made of writing in history. There are missed opportunities for writing for different purposes within history. For example, only occasionally do pupils write in role, such as the letter home for parents from a son on Remembrance Day or the newspaper report on the work of Dr. Barnardo, or to produce eyewitness accounts of historical events. Pupils make good use of ICT skills, using the computer for research in history. The work in history makes an effective contribution to pupils' cultural development. The leadership of history is satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

142. Standards in information and communication technology by the end of Years 2 and 6 are above those expected and pupils make very good progress as they move through the school.
143. Pupils in Year 2 display good competencies in basic keyboard skills and have above average levels of proficiency in word processing. The ability to save and retrieve information, with support, is secure. Most pupils are able to select options when investigating on-screen situations and can use paint programs with confidence and skill. They can control programmable devices purposefully and can, with support, produce graphical representations of data.
144. The competence of Year 6 pupils in the range of skills required by the National Curriculum is also above that expected. Most can save and retrieve stored information independently. Word processing skills are extended and pupils are very competent in this aspect of their work. Many, for example, are able to combine text, colour and pictures. They are able to utilise more sophisticated tools such as borders and shading. Pupils are able to print the finished product and can establish, test, modify and store sequences of instructions to control on-screen events. Most can enter, sort and classify data and can present the findings using a range of graphical representations. The school has recently provided Internet access and pupils can log on confidently and use the search facility well to help their work in other subjects.
145. There is good use of information and communication technology to support learning in other parts of the curriculum. The use of a 'painting' programme in Year 2, for example, provided valuable extension of pupils' work in art relating to Paul Klee. Pupils in Year 3 were able to search the Internet for sites relating to Islam, to paste Islamic patterns in their own files, and to modify the design using a paint programme.
146. The quality of learning is very good in both key stages and the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress. Few pupils are able to practise their skills outside school and the very good progress results from the quality of teaching and the impressive resources available. Since the last inspection the school has made major improvements to the provision for information and communication technology and the emphasis upon the direct teaching of skills and the ability to allow immediate 'hands on' experience contributes significantly to pupils' learning and to their attitudes to the subject. Teaching in both key stages is very good. Teachers and the Information Assistant have particularly good levels of expertise. Lessons are carefully planned and the purpose of each lesson is shared with the pupils. Class management is very secure and relationships between teachers and pupils are warm but purposeful. These qualities were effectively demonstrated in Year 6 work culminating in 'Powerpoint' presentations using the interactive 'whiteboard' to deliver a presentation relating to their research on the Internet.
147. Throughout the school pupils display very good attitudes to information and communication technology. Almost all pupils strive to achieve the desired outcome and interact well with each other and with staff. There is productive co-operation and behaviour is mature and responsible. Almost all pupils clearly enjoy their work and the school is harnessing these favourable attitudes well. The very positive response and confidence of most pupils together with systematic and informed teaching contribute significantly to progress and standards.

148. The school has made a substantial financial investment in order to promote information and communication technology. It has created a modern, attractive computer suite and staff have undergone comprehensive training to extend their skills. In addition to these improvements a well-structured programme is now in place which describes what should be taught and when. The school intends to consolidate the content with even greater precision. A direct result of these initiatives is that the majority of pupils are making very good progress as they move through the school. The planned appointment of a part-time technician to support information and communication technology should promote greater efficiency in the use of resources and of teachers' time. The improved standards and the clear direction for the subject are a direct result of very good leadership provided by the co-ordinator and the co-ordinator designate.
149. The last inspection report contained a number of serious criticisms relating to information and communication technology. Standards in both key stages were below those expected and pupils made poor progress. Shortcomings in teaching were identified. The skills to be taught were not properly defined and not all pupils were afforded the same opportunities. Resources were judged to be poor and planning inadequate. Since then the requirements and prominence of information and communication technology within the National Curriculum have been greatly increased. Standards are now better than average and progress is very good. There is consistently very good teaching. The school has clearly defined what is to be taught and teachers maintain good records of pupils' progress. Overall, the school's response to the identified shortcomings has been excellent.

MUSIC

150. At the last inspection standards in music were judged to be satisfactory, with strengths in singing. No composition activities were observed. Teaching was never less than satisfactory and was often good, although lessons were highly structured and work was not always closely matched to the needs of individual pupils.
151. The positive features of music have been maintained in the intervening period and pupils continue to achieve well in singing. The creative arts remain a priority in the school. Overall, standards in music are average by the age of seven and above average by the age of 11. The majority of lessons observed were taught by the music specialist who teaches all classes except Year 1. The lessons observed were similar in structure and included a broad range of composition and performance activities, singing and work on the elements of music. In a very good lesson in Year 5, for example, pupils sang a round which they had learned in the previous week. They demonstrated a good awareness of tempo and pitch and sang sensitively throughout. They then used the wide range of keyboards and percussion instruments to demonstrate a composition which they had developed in an earlier lesson. This was an efficient presentation, with pupils working together well. As in the other sessions, it was not possible to judge the process which had led to the finished composition. Likewise, the highly-structured nature of these brief lessons limits opportunities for pupils to show initiative or to undertake extended composition activities.
152. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in music over time. The curriculum is good. It is enriched by the quality of singing, by the opportunities to learn instruments and to listen to recorded music. A number of pupils in the juniors learn the recorder and a small group learn guitar. This makes a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning and the development of their musical skills. There is an established choir and pupils have regular opportunities for performance at school and in city musical events during the year. Several pupils choose to take instrumental lessons from visiting tutors in brass, keyboards and violin. However, none of these were provided during the week of the inspection.
153. In the lessons seen the quality of teaching was at least good. Lessons were conducted at a brisk pace, with no time wasted. This is a significant factor in promoting pupils' learning successfully. Good subject knowledge enables the teacher to respond well to pupils' queries. For example, in one lesson observed, she demonstrated how both a clarinet and French horn are played and the different techniques necessary for each instrument. Listening and appraising is developed well in the school. Many pupils are able to use technical terms correctly to answer the teacher's questions.

154. At present, music makes a modest contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills. They make limited use of information and communication technology to support their learning in music. Teachers make informal assessments of pupils' learning in lessons and use this information to plan the next step in pupils' learning.
155. The leadership and management of music is very good. Several staff have musical expertise. Although they do not necessarily teach class music, they often make a significant contribution to the extra-curricular musical life of the school. The school is very well-resourced for the teaching of music. There is a dedicated studio area and a comprehensive range of instruments and recorded music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

156. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 attain average standards. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they pass through the school. Boys and girls achieve equally well.
157. Pupils in Year 1 achieve appropriately in the different aspects of physical education (PE), thanks to the consistently satisfactory quality of teaching. Most of the teachers make appropriate use of demonstrations and get pupils to learn from observing others, but opportunities to explain how they could do better are sometimes missed. Teachers use praise well and help pupils to develop good attitudes to physical education. Pupils apply themselves very well to the tasks they are set and get on well with each other. In dance lessons they listen to poems read by their teacher and think of good ways of recreating the poetry as movements. In gymnastics activities they work successfully to explore basic actions such as stretching and curling. They do this more productively on the floor than on apparatus. They control their movements well. For example, some were seen to stretch in the air, twist and land facing the direction from which they had come. The co-ordinator's good use of a video of Olympic gymnasts performing inspired the pupils of one class to do better. When taking part in games practices, pupils dribble with a ball, but most use only their preferred foot. Pupils' behaviour is good, overall, and contributes well to the satisfactory progress they make.
158. In Year 6, pupils were observed doing gymnastics and games lessons. They attained standards in line with those expected nationally in these activities, largely because all the lessons were of satisfactory quality. Pupils have appropriately developed soccer skills. They dribble, trap and pass the ball successfully. Most understand the need to move to mark an opponent, but do not always do this as well when trying to receive a pass. Pupils do not always make the best use of the space available to them. Teachers pay good attention to helping pupils understand the effects of exercise on their bodies, but do not always do enough coaching while the class is practising skills. Pupils' gymnastics performances show a good deal of variety. Nearly all work in a controlled way to link movements. They copy their partners' actions accurately when asked. Pupils are very good at working together. For example, they negotiate how they can best produce performances with their partners. Pupils also use their evaluation of others' performances to improve their own. In response to good quality teaching, pupils in Year 3 were seen to attain above average standards in gymnastics. The teacher's structuring of the lesson to increase the demands on the class, and the very good co-operation of pupils, resulted in skilful sequences of movement. Some individuals included handstands and headstands in their performances. The teachers handle their classes well, and as a result, pupils' behaviour and their response to lessons are very good. This contributes well to the satisfactory progress they make. The school's records show that the great majority of pupils can swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave.
159. Since the last inspection, the new co-ordinator has worked very well to develop the planning for PE, increase the effectiveness of the links with other schools, and improve the teaching through checking the quality of lessons and supporting colleagues. The effects of these improvements have yet to be reflected in improved standards across the school. The provision of extra sports activities for pupils at lunch-times and after school is now very good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

160. Standards in religious education are good across the whole school. Attainment at the time of the last inspection was judged to be average. This good improvement is due to the increased confidence of the staff, a better understanding of other faiths, improved schemes of work with helpful activities to ensure that all aspects are covered and delivered well, and improved resources which are now used purposefully to support each unit of work. This is a school where children love religious education. Their attitudes in lessons seen and in the discussions conducted are very good.
161. Year 1 pupils have a very good understanding of the Bible and the stories in the Old and New Testament. They can remember the stories of Noah, Jonah and the whale, Daniel in the lion's den, Joseph and his coat of many colours, and the lost sheep. They know that these stories have messages, that Christians celebrate events and that Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus.
162. Year 2 pupils understand about helping others in need, and talk knowingly about what they are sorry for and discuss whether they should give someone a second chance. Jesus said, 'Forgive each other'. They understand the story of the prodigal son and consider why his father accepted him back and gave him money. They reflect on whether his son deserved a party and why the older brother didn't go to the party. 'We can still love someone even if they do wrong', said a pupil. Pupils show great enthusiasm listening to the story of Zacchaeus. They learn how the crowd felt when Jesus spoke to him, why he gave them their money back and why these events changed his life.
163. In the study of Islam pupils know the purpose of the Qur'an is to teach the law according to Allah. A close observation of the Muslim prayer mat shows them that these do not include pictures of animals or humans and they find out why. They understand that the five pillars of Islam represent the requirements to declare the creed, pray regularly, fast, give alms and participate in the pilgrimage to Makkah. The fourth pillar helps them understand why Muslims celebrate Ramadan. In their study of Judaism the pupils understand that the Torah is the 'Law' or 'Teaching' of the five books of Moses, and that the Seder plate holds symbols for the celebration meal used as part of Passover (Pesach). The festival of Tub'shuat helps explain why trees are important in God's creation for Jewish people.
164. Christianity helps all pupils develop an appreciation of the community they belong to and to understand the Golden rules. They understand why it is important to make good friends and share. After learning about Bernadette, a visit is made to the local Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic church. A visit to the local Church of England helps pupils to explore the nature and purpose of this building and why such buildings are important and special.
165. There are many opportunities for pupils to write prayers. Those seen were well written and covered a range of experiences and feelings. Pupils were able to discuss sensibly and reflect upon wider issues in the world today.
166. Good and very good teaching was observed. Teachers raise standards in their class because planning includes learning objectives linked to the attainment targets, which they share with the pupils. This allows all pupils to make good progress. Teachers reinforce Christian belief and this contributes to reflective understanding. Assessment and recording of attainment was an issue in the last inspection. Each class now has a very comprehensive assessment grid for each half term's work. Reflection time is built into the religious education programmes. All of this is a marked improvement on the last inspection when there was some unsatisfactory teaching.
167. Information communication technology is being developed through the use of the Sheffield website as well as CD ROMs. Pupils in Year 1 have used a computer to make a Bible picture using a paint based package. They have used the Internet and CD ROMs to look for Bible stories. In Year 4, pupils were using a website to search for information on Islam. They were impressed by the architecture and decoration in the mosques and the beautiful carpets. Year 3 pupils use the program 'Dazzle' to design an Islamic patterned tile.

168. The co-ordinator has worked really hard to deal with all the issues that were highlighted in the previous report. She has developed a good curriculum map so that the work is pitched at the right levels throughout the school. Very good support is provided for staff and everyone is clear about standards. She undertakes observations of teaching and learning and is aware that she needs to monitor carefully all the children's work across the school so that future improvement can be effective in raising standards even further.