

INSPECTION REPORT

**THURNBY LODGE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND
SPEECH AND LANGUAGE UNIT**

LEICESTER

LEA area: Leicester City

Unique reference number: 120057

Headteacher: Mrs A Cordner-Webster

Reporting inspector: John Foster
21318

Dates of inspection: 11 - 14 June 2001

Inspection number: 198833

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 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Dudley Avenue
Thurnby Lodge
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Leicestershire

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr David Wright

Date of previous inspection: 24 November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21318	John Foster	Registered inspector	English Design and technology Physical education English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) the school's results and achievements What should the school do to improve further?
19743	Ann Taylor	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20142	Malcolm Childs	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Art History Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught? Inspection of the Speech and Language Unit
20457	Brian Fletcher	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Religious education Equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?
8552	Wallis Hart	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	21
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23
THE SPEECH AND LANGUAGE UNIT	24
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	27
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Thurnby Lodge Primary School and Speech and Language Unit caters for boys and girls aged from three to eleven years and is about the average size for primary schools. At the time of inspection there were 228 pupils at the school, 120 boys and 108 girls including 58 in the nursery and reception classes who are not yet of compulsory school age. The number on roll is slightly lower than at the previous inspection in November 1997. The general level of attainment for children entering the nursery is well below that expected for children of this age. There are 21 pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds for whom English is not their first language. Fifty-one pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is above the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average. Thirty pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. The inspection of this school included a detailed inspection of its provision for pupils in the Speech and Language Unit. At the time of inspection the headteacher had announced her plans to retire at the end of the current term, but no replacement had been appointed.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Since the inspection of 1997, when it was placed in special measures, the school has made good progress and the many strengths the school now has, substantially outweigh the weaknesses. The strong leadership of the headteacher, senior managers and governors has meant that the school has progressed to the stage where it now gives good value for money. Pupils attain standards below those expected in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, though the improvement in standards in these subjects is better than that nationally. Pupils attain appropriate standards for their ages in other subjects and in music performance they are achieving better standards than expected. The teaching overall is good and especially so for children under the age of five and those within the Speech and Language Unit. There are weaknesses, however, in the quality of teaching for pupils in the Year 5/6 class. There is a very caring atmosphere in the school and because of effective monitoring, pupils' behaviour is invariably good. This is also because of the very good relationships that exist between pupils and between pupils and adults.

What the school does well

- The school is well led and managed by the headteacher, senior managers and the Governing Body.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress.
- There are very good procedures for monitoring behaviour and this results in consistently good behaviour in and around the school.
- The Speech and Language Unit is very good. Unit staff provide a very good education for the pupils in the unit.
- Pupils have good attitudes to school and they work hard.
- The relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils are very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are below those expected nationally at ages seven and eleven.
- Data obtained from assessment is not used well enough to develop future planning of the curriculum.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is not effective enough.
- The quality of teaching for pupils in the Year 5/6 class is unsatisfactory.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

At the time of the previous inspection in November 1997 the school was identified as a failing school and was in need of special measures. Within two years, in 1999 Her Majesty's Inspectors visited the school and judged that sufficient improvement had been made to bring it out of special measures. Since that time the good levels of improvement have been maintained. The key issues identified in the 1997 report have been fully or almost completely addressed. National Curriculum requirements are now met for all subjects and targets are set to improve pupils' learning. Standards have risen in all subjects identified as weak at the time of the previous inspection, though standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology remain low. The quality of teaching has improved enormously throughout the school except within the Year 5/6 class, where it is unsatisfactory. The improvement in pupils' behaviour, to a point where it is now consistently good, is the result of effective monitoring and the implementation of a good policy to reward positive behaviour. The planning of the curriculum within the medium-term is now sound, though the results of teacher assessments are not yet fully used effectively when planning future work. The staff and Governing Body have produced a good quality school improvement plan which clearly identifies the development needed in the next three years.

STANDARDS

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

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

The year 2000 national tests for eleven-year-olds indicate that pupils' performance is well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. When compared to performance by pupils in similar schools, standards are also well below average in all three subjects. The annual difference in standards is attributable to the varying abilities of each year group, though the high mobility rate and frequent changes in staff have also been contributory factors.

Children enter the nursery with attainment levels well below those expected for the age. They make good progress in their learning and by the time they are five they attain standards appropriate for their age, except in the area of communication, language and literacy, where their standards are still below those expected. The good quality teaching they receive helps them to make good progress through the infant and junior stages. By the time they are seven and by the time they leave the school aged eleven, inspection evidence indicates that most pupils attain standards which are below those expected nationally in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. They attain appropriate standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education.

Over the past four years pupils' attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science has improved at a faster rate than that nationally. Realistic targets have been set and these have been successfully achieved. Future targets are equally challenging for mathematics and English.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and work hard to achieve success.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in class and as they move around the school. This is a great improvement since the previous inspection.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Though improved, the levels of attendance remain below the national average.

The quality of relationships is very good and this has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Since the previous inspection the pupils' behaviour has improved greatly. This is because of the improved monitoring procedures and the pupils' understanding of what is and is not acceptable behaviour. The levels of attendance are below those nationally. The school has made positive moves to improve the percentage of attendance and in this has been successful. Pupils with special needs are very well catered for, particularly in the unit, and they make good progress.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	good	good	good

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

The quality of teaching overall is good, though in the class for pupils in Year 5/6 it is unsatisfactory. Apart from in this class there was no teaching that was less than satisfactory. Teaching was satisfactory in 23 per cent of lessons; good in 39 per cent and very good in 28 per cent. Two excellent lessons were observed. In the Year 5/6 class two-fifths of lessons were satisfactory, one-fifth unsatisfactory and the remaining two-fifths were poor. In the nursery and reception years and in the Speech and Language Unit the quality of teaching is consistently high. This high quality teaching ensures that pupils in these areas make particularly good progress. Throughout the school, except for the class where the teaching is unsatisfactory, teachers maintain high quality teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to make progress. There is a good range of out-of-school activities provided.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The high quality provision allows pupils to make good progress in their learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. This group of pupils is well catered for and makes good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including	Provision for pupils' social and moral development is good. It is satisfactory for their spiritual and cultural development.

spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	satisfactory for their spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are very good procedures for child protection. Pupils are well looked after in a caring environment.

The school has good curricular provision to meet the needs of its pupils. In addition to the subjects of the National Curriculum the school makes good provision for out-of-school activities. A wide range of sporting music and craft activities is offered to the pupils. The school enjoys good relationships with the parents. The parents are kept well informed about what is happening at the school and the parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the formulation and review of their individual education plans. The annual reports are good and involve the pupils in making them personal to them.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	This is good. The headteacher and senior staff lead the school well. The Speech and Language Unit is well led and managed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors play an active part in leading the school's development. They perform their duties well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. There are sound systems in place to monitor and evaluate how well the school is performing overall, though arrangements for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are not effective enough.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school uses the resources allocated to it well and seeks for the best value when purchasing goods and services.

The school improvement plan is a well thought out document with full and detailed information about how the school is to improve during the next year and the priorities for the next three years clearly identified. The plan is the result of much consultation between the headteacher, staff and governors. The co-ordinators generally manage their subjects well. There are enough suitably qualified and experienced teachers to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum. The high quality accommodation is well maintained and is used effectively to support teaching and learning. Resources for teaching and learning are good for English, mathematics, science, art and for children under the age of five. They are satisfactory for other subjects.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy school. • They consider the quality of teaching to be good. • They believe that their children make good progress. • The school keeps them well informed about their children's progress. • They are happy to approach the school with problems or concerns. • The school works closely with them to support their children's learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework their children are given. • The pupils' behaviour. • They believe that the school could be managed more effectively. • The range of out-of-school activities.

Almost 40 per cent of parents returned the questionnaire, though only two parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector. The inspection team fully supports the positive views expressed by the parents. Inspection evidence indicates, however, that the level of homework is appropriate for the ages and abilities of pupils; the pupils behave well in class and around the school; the school is managed effectively and that the school provides a good range of out-of-school activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The year 2000 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds show that pupils' performance in:
 - English is well below the national average;
 - mathematics is well below the national average;
 - science is well below the national average.
2. When compared to pupils of similar backgrounds, pupils' performance is:
 - well below average in English,
 - well below average in mathematics
 - well below average in science.
3. When compared to their results in the 1996 Year 2 tests, pupils have made satisfactory progress in English and mathematics. Unsatisfactory progress has been made in science.
4. The year 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds show that pupils' performance in:
 - reading and writing is well below the national average;
 - mathematics is very low. This places them within the bottom five per cent of all schools.
5. Teacher assessments at Key Stage 1 in science place pupils' attainment well below the national average.
6. When compared to the performance of pupils in similar schools pupils at Key Stage 1 attain levels which are:
 - well below average in reading and writing;
 - very low in mathematics.
7. Inspection judgements for the current Year 6 group of pupils indicate that they achieve standards which are below those expected nationally in English, mathematics and science;
8. Inspection judgements for the current Year 2 group of pupils indicate that:
 - they attain levels below those expected nationally in English, mathematics and science;
 - their speaking and listening skills are below those expected nationally;
 - their reading skills are below those expected nationally.
9. In the English tests for eleven-year-olds the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level 4 was about the same as the percentage of pupils attaining that level nationally. However, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 5 was low. The percentage achieving below expected levels was high when compared to schools nationally. The effect of these discrepancies means that when results are compared to the national figures, and to those of similar schools, pupils' achievement is well below national averages. From a low starting point, however, the pupils achieve well and make good progress in their learning. A similar picture emerges when the national test results for mathematics and science are considered. Over the past four years the trend in pupils' performance is better than that nationally in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This is as a direct result of the improved quality of teaching identified between the 1997 inspection, the 1999 inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectors and the present time. The introduction and successful implementation of the National Literacy and the National Numeracy Strategies has had a positive effect on raising standards.
10. In the national tests for seven-year-olds a similar picture emerges. The percentage of pupils attaining the expected level 2 at the end of Key Stage 1 in the reading, writing and mathematics tests was broadly at the same level as nationally. However, in the writing and reading tests no pupils achieved the higher level 3 and only a single pupil managed the level 3 in mathematics. A higher percentage than nationally failed to reach the level 2.

Nevertheless, over the past four years there has been an improvement in reading and writing, though the mathematics results remain in the bottom five per cent of schools nationally.

11. Children enter the nursery with attainment levels well below those expected for their age. They are taught well throughout the nursery and in the reception class and when they start statutory schooling at the age of five most children have met the Early Learning Goals in the areas of learning for:
 - personal, social and emotional development;
 - mathematics;
 - knowledge and understanding of the world;
 - physical development;
 - creative development.
12. They make good progress in developing their communication, language and literacy skills, but because of the low starting point, very few achieve the target in this area of learning. They develop good relationships and the well-planned curriculum they are given helps to improve their language skills greatly. The nursery and reception teachers and the learning support assistants are positive in supporting the children's learning and this helps them to maintain good progress throughout their early learning.
13. Between the ages of five and seven the pupils are taught well and this enables them to maintain the good progress they made in the early years. Though they attain below the expected standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, they achieve the expected level in all other subjects except in information and communication technology, where they achieve below the expected standards. The good quality teaching they experience enables the pupils, from a low starting point, to make good progress in most subjects. They make good progress in information and communication technology though they still achieve below expected standards overall in the subject. In English they develop their speaking and listening skills well and are excited when they describe a horse in a story read to them as "an old, grey mare". They listen well to each other's contributions in discussion periods when, for example, they talk about why the number of snails is falling. In their mathematics lessons they become secure in using numbers and when describing the properties of 2-dimensional shapes. They recognise odd and even numbers and begin to recognise number patterns when, for example, they use dominoes. They begin to understand the need for a test to be fair when they undertake scientific experiments, though these are usually led by the teachers. Though standards in information and communication technology are below those expected nationally the pupils experience using computers and are well taught when, for example, they put on "space suits" to solve problems relating to matching shapes. In their music lessons pupils perform well when they sing and play percussion instruments.
14. Pupils between the ages of seven and eleven maintain the good progress in their learning in most classes, again, largely because of the high quality of teaching they receive. This is not consistent, however, primarily due to the overall unsatisfactory level of teaching in the class for pupils in Years 5/6. Pupils' reading levels are below those expected nationally by the time they leave the school. They are aware of the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and use the contents and index pages of books effectively to find information. However, they have not developed the higher order reading skills required to skim text for information or scan a passage to gain the meaning. In mathematics they use number well when calculating money and when telling the time. They use and understand the 12-hour and 24-hour clocks and recognise analogue and digital times. They have sound knowledge of 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional shapes and describe their properties confidently. In art and design, whilst pupils generally attain the expected levels for their age, a few achieve better than this. They use a wide variety of media to produce faces depicting themselves and their friends. In addition to paint, they utilise a range of materials such as wool and wood shavings to enhance their work. In music lessons pupils perform their own compositions using percussion instruments. Whilst one pupil conducts the performance, the others read their music from a simple graphic score.

15. Progress made by pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language is good. Teachers plan work that is appropriate for these groups of pupils, particularly for those in the Speech and Language Unit. The high quality teaching is an important factor in the good progress made by these pupils. The individual education plans for the pupils with statements of special need are detailed and have appropriate targets for the pupils to continue to make the best possible progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Pupils' attitudes are good and they enjoy coming to school. Their behaviour is good and relationships are very positive and supportive.
17. Pupils take a keen interest in lessons. Parents agree that their children enjoy school. A display of work that pupils have completed at home, such as drawings, cross-stitch work and pieces of writing brought in to show their teacher, is one example of their willingness to learn. Many pupils are keen to take part in class discussions and they readily put up their hands when their teacher asks questions or wants volunteers. Pupils are well motivated and they respond well to their teachers. Most pupils sustain concentration and persevere well.
18. Pupils' very good attitudes to learning were typified, for example, in a literacy lesson where younger pupils had to choose their own favourite poems. They were fascinated by the rhymes and excited by word sounds, such as "giggle". They contribute enthusiastically to the whole class reading of poems and enjoyed supplying the missing rhyming words. This was due to the good working partnership between the teacher and the learning support assistant and the planning of the lesson based upon what pupils had already learned. They remembered with excitement, "The Three Little Monkeys" and the way the lesson proceeded at a fast pace gave pupils no opportunity to lose interest, ensuring they were all purposefully engaged.
19. Overall, pupils behave well. Most are fully aware of how the "Sad" and "Happy" books work and they usually know what is, and is not, acceptable. Their good behaviour, both in class and around the school, is having a positive impact on their learning. Occasionally, however, some older pupils, particularly in the class for Years 5/6, do not behave well in lessons. They become noisy and are easily distracted from what they should be doing. This happens when the content of the lesson does not interest them and the way the teacher handles behaviour is not consistent with the school's usual approach.
20. Though oppressive behaviour, bullying and racism happen occasionally, pupils are happy that the school takes notice and helps to resolve these situations. School records show that this is indeed the case. There were seven fixed-term and one permanent exclusions over the last academic year. The school uses exclusions as a last resort and decisions to exclude permanently are taken after much soul searching and deliberation. They are usually imposed to protect the safety of other pupils and staff.
21. Relationships in the school are very supportive and friendly. When asked by Inspectors about the best thing in the school, the pupils' verdict was overwhelmingly, "The teachers!" Pupils carry out responsibilities well and enjoy jobs such as putting out the play equipment for the nursery, organising the goal posts and for younger pupils, being line leaders and classroom helpers.
22. Pupils are conscious of others in need and raise large amounts of money for charity. Recent events have included dressing up in silly costumes for Comic Relief and wearing jeans for "Jeans for Genes" day. They show initiative by asking to hold cake stalls which they organise themselves, donating the money raised to local charities. Last Christmas, everyone made paper candles which were taken to decorate the hospice in the area.
23. The school's attendance rate is below the national average and, therefore, judged to be unsatisfactory. Attendance has been improving steadily over recent years and has now reached a plateau, as the figure for the most recent year is similar to that for the previous year. Unauthorised absence is almost in line with national averages. A small number of pupils are sometimes a few minutes late in the mornings.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

24. The single most significant factor in the improvement in learning and attainment that is evident across the school is the quality of teaching. This has yet to be fully reflected in the results achieved in the National Curriculum tests and assessments at the end of the infant and junior stages. Teaching is much better than it was when the school was inspected in 1997 and placed in special measures, and there has been further improvement since the school was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectors in 1999 and taken out of special measures.
25. The quality of teaching is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to excellent, with the exception of the class for pupils in Year 5/6 where, out of five lessons observed, one was judged to be unsatisfactory and two were found to be poor. There was no other unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching was judged to be:
- satisfactory in 24 per cent of lessons
 - good in 38 per cent of lessons
 - very good in 28 per cent.
26. Two lessons were judged to be excellent.
27. When the school was inspected in 1997, the quality of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory or worse in 25 per cent of lessons and in two per cent it was poor or very poor. Although there had been considerable improvement when the school was inspected in 1999 teaching remained unsatisfactory in ten per cent of lessons. Currently, six per cent of lessons observed was less than satisfactory.
28. The quality of teaching observed was never less than good in the nursery and reception classes, and it was very good or better in 62 per cent of lessons. One excellent literacy lesson was seen. The teaching in about 85 per cent of lessons was good or better in the infants, with the remainder being satisfactory. Teaching in 45 per cent of lessons was very good. Teaching in the junior years ranges from very good to poor. While 50 per cent of teaching was good or better, eight per cent was very good and 38 per cent of teaching was satisfactory; a higher proportion than that found elsewhere in the school. In addition, in one class, four per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory and eight per cent was poor. Teaching ranges from excellent to satisfactory in the Speech and Language Unit. In lessons observed teaching was good or better in 87 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in 13 per cent. One excellent literacy lesson was seen in Class L2 and there was no unsatisfactory teaching.
29. The most significant features of the improved teaching found in the good or better lessons are the:
- good subject knowledge of the teachers;
 - effective teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy;
 - high expectations of what the children can achieve;
 - effective range of teaching methods;
 - ways in which pupils are managed so that there is a positive approach to learning and behaviour is good;
 - efficient use of the time and resources available;
 - close co-operation between teachers, nursery nurses, learning support assistants and speech and language therapists; and
 - good quality of planning, and the way assessment is used to identify the needs of children in the nursery and reception classes.
30. Within this positive picture there are some areas that require development:
- the quality of teachers' planning in the infants and juniors; and
 - the way in which on-going assessment is used to inform planning to meet the needs of individual pupils.

31. In both cases the provision is satisfactory overall, but it is not sufficiently developed to ensure that the small number of higher attaining pupils are always appropriately challenged. The school has already identified these as priorities for development within its improvement plan.
32. Where the teaching was unsatisfactory or poor there was:
 - a lack of expression when reading text with the pupils;
 - weak time management;
 - insufficient pace and challenge;
 - a level of noise which was often too high;
 - poor pupil behaviour with a considerable amount of time wasted; and
 - inappropriate strategies for managing pupils' behaviour.
33. Although not yet fully reflected in levels of attainment at the end of the infant and junior stages in the National Curriculum tests and assessments, improvement in the quality of teaching is leading to improved pupil progress through:
 - their increased knowledge and understanding of the different subjects; and
 - the way in which they work hard and are anxious to succeed.
34. The teachers in the nursery and reception classes have adopted the strategies of the national guidance contained in the Foundation Stage guidance folder. They are working successfully to raise standards in all areas of learning, but especially in literacy and numeracy. Reception children in the Speech and Language Unit also follow the Foundation Stage curriculum. The structures of the literacy and numeracy strategies are being used well in the reception class.
35. Teachers in the infant and junior classes, including those in the Speech and Language Unit, have adopted the recommended structure for their literacy and numeracy lessons and planning for these is particularly effective. Lessons start with the whole class being taught as a group.
36. Teaching and learning in English is good overall. In literacy lessons, teachers use the oral introduction well to teach basic skills. For example, pupils in the Years 2/3 class enjoyed reading a book about snakes with their teacher. They enjoyed the discussion that arose from the teacher's challenging questions and from each other's ideas. The teacher made the reading more interesting by covering some words to see how well the pupils could predict what the next word was going to be, from its context and any pictures on the page. The lesson was a good example of how literacy can be taught using a non-fiction book that also extends the pupils' knowledge of living things. Similarly pupils in Year 6 work hard to develop their understanding of tenses - past, present and future. The teacher had high expectations and set challenging tasks for all the pupils within a well-organised lesson.
37. Teaching and learning in mathematics is good overall. The oral introduction is used appropriately to consolidate and extend pupils' mathematical knowledge. In the Years 2/3 class the pupils enjoyed counting forwards and backwards to 100 in twos, fives and tens. However, while the pupils settled to their set tasks, relating to amounts of money up to one pound, the pace of work and the progress made were only satisfactory. Similarly in Year 6 pupils enjoyed the number games at the start of the lesson and they worked steadily on identifying the properties of two-dimensional shapes. In both cases the lessons were brought to a satisfactory conclusion with the whole class coming together to share what they had learned.
38. Taking all the evidence available into account, teaching is good in science, art and design, history, design and technology, geography, music, physical education and religious education. teaching is sound in information and communication technology. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are beginning to make good progress across the curriculum with the exception of information and communication technology where progress is only satisfactory.
39. A particular strength is the way in which teachers plan to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs in the Speech and Language Unit and in the main school. All of the teachers are effective in ensuring that special educational needs pupils are able to take a full part in lessons across the curriculum. The 1999 inspection report judged that these pupils made good progress towards the targets set for them within their individual education plans and this remains the case. Similarly pupils who have English as an additional language are supported well across the school by teaching and support staff, and by staff funded through the Ethnic

Minority and Traveller Support Grant. They make good progress and play a full part in lessons across the school.

40. The school has good induction procedures for staff who are new to the school and performance management is being used effectively to set targets to improve professional expertise and rates of pupil progress across the school.

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

41. The school provides an appropriate curriculum for the needs and ages of its pupils. The curriculum for the under fives is appropriately balanced by the provision of a good range of exciting and interesting activities. In both key stages the curriculum is also broad, relevant and well balanced. For the most part the time is used well and allows flexibility to develop key skills in each subject. Some time is lost, however, through unnecessary repetition and a lack of confidence because the new schemes of work are not fully established. The curriculum meets and supports the aims of the school well. For example, the atmosphere is friendly and welcoming and pupils are now working at a faster pace than at the time of the previous inspection. Homework is set and a minority of pupils in Year 6, for example, have good quantities of well organised homework in their books. Most pupils do not complete their homework well enough. The opportunities for pupils to work with computers are improving, though much development is needed because access to the relatively small numbers of computers is limited.
42. Good schemes of work are in place for all subjects. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority schemes provide sound coverage of the whole range of National Curriculum subjects and the school's own effective weekly planning procedures help to ensure that the teaching is good in most lessons. The school is very well aware of the importance of this planning in the drive to raise standards closer to the nationally expected levels. However, in some subjects, such as information and communication technology and geography, the range of resources is limited so that not all of the activities planned in the two-year cycles can be taught effectively. Developments since 1997 in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are sound and current provision is satisfactory. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy has meant a raising of standards, particularly in literacy. The school is well aware of the need to develop these further if standards are to be raised to national levels
43. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language have access to the full curriculum. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of out-of-lesson activities including exciting visits to the information technology suite in a neighbouring secondary school and go-karts in the extensive school grounds. Girls and boys have access to the full range of games and sporting activities. The atmosphere created in and around the school is good. Pupils with special educational needs are very well provided for in the Speech and Language Unit and in other lessons. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good because the pupils are well taught in small groups for much of the time and the quality of teaching they receive is good. In other lessons also the pupils receive good support from the learning support assistants. The individual education plans are good with appropriate targets set for the individual pupils. The individual education plans are reviewed regularly and good procedures are used to ensure that pupils' confidence increases as they progress from one step to the next. The school is aware of the need to raise the attainment of its pupils and recognises notable achievement. Too few examples of higher attainment, however, were seen in the work samples and in the lessons. Good learning is very well celebrated in special assemblies for the whole school.

44. Pupils receive sound guidance about staying safe not only in the normal course of their lessons but additionally when the school nurse and the local police constable speak to them. Pupils learn actively and soundly about the dangers of drugs through the implementation of the school's drugs policy. They are made aware of the kinds of activities that can easily get out of control if they are not aware of the harmful, as well as the beneficial, effects. These issues are increasingly being taught in lessons as the new plans take effect. Pupils are well trained and behave sensibly around the school and in potentially dangerous situations, for example, when getting off the bus which takes them to and from the swimming pool.
45. The school makes positive efforts to involve the local community in the school and the effects are satisfactory. Parents and teachers work very well together at the beginning and at the end of each day and are seen by the pupils to enjoy good relationships. Many of the support staff are also parents. The good impact on the pupils' learning by these additional adults is evident. The headteacher ensures that parents are well informed in their home language. The school is aware of the need to use the parents' first language when informing them about extra-curricular activities and educational visits. Overall the links between the school and the local community are sound. The school has good links with local training providers, colleges, secondary and other primary schools and commerce.
46. The school makes good provision overall for the pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. This occurs in school assemblies, for example, when pupils are motivated, involved, challenged, included and given time to reflect or to perform. In the good and often very good assemblies pupils are fully involved and thoughtful when time is given for them to reflect upon the good messages they have heard. One pupil who sang before the whole assembly contributed significantly to the spiritual tone and the whole gathering of pupils was, in return, totally involved in the spirituality of the event. It was a very moving experience. Spiritual development is satisfactory in the lessons when pupils complete work on faiths and festivals, further encouraging spiritual awareness.
47. The school promotes a strong moral code through personal and social education and through the guidance pupils receive in their everyday interactions with their teachers and the support staff. The behaviour of the majority of the pupils for most of the time is very good. Overall behaviour is good. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. The teachers emphasise the moral values of sharing and fairness throughout the whole range of activities. They exert a good influence, for example, by ensuring that pupils take turns at the computers and by ensuring that pupils play games enthusiastically. They are encouraged to respect the space occupied by others and to give consideration to others who may be, for example, smaller or less competent in the skills required. The school is an orderly and cheerful community.
48. Pupils' social skills are well developed throughout the whole age range. Pupils in the Foundation Stage have quickly learned to be polite and many initiate conversations with visiting adults who happen to be passing by their area. In all classes and throughout the school pupils are encouraged to get along well together. The 'Circle of Friends' is one example of a successful strategy that has enabled the school to make such good progress in making the school community more purposeful. The school council has been recently introduced to enhance the self respect of the pupils and to give them more responsibility. They often help out in assemblies and willingly co-operate when asked by the staff to assist in such things as carrying a message that contributes to the smooth running of the day.
49. Cultural awareness is satisfactory because pupils experience, in most lessons, the teachers' effective strategies for giving each pupil the same opportunity to make good progress, irrespective of their cultural background. In this happy and purposeful community, pupils experience and observe good respectful interactions between the adults who work in the school. Pupils develop a sound awareness of different cultural tradition in their own and in other countries through assemblies and through music and art.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

50. The school is successful in providing pupils with a very good level of support, in an environment where teaching and learning can flourish. The headteacher's own passion for the importance of pupils' mental health and welfare and her readiness to take time and listen to them, is a strong factor in this very good quality provision.
51. Arrangements for child protection are very good. The named person is experienced and together with all staff, provides an important safety net for children. Health and safety procedures are good. Governors make regular checks of the premises and there are a number of staff trained in First Aid. The school's prompt and efficient reaction to a pupil's lunchtime accident during the inspection confirmed this.
52. The school has very good procedures for encouraging pupils to behave well and most parents who replied to the Ofsted questionnaire agreed that behaviour is good. There is an effective climate which is helping to promote positive behaviour and the headteacher provides outstanding support for teachers and pupils. Teachers place great emphasis on praising pupils for their positive behaviour: "catching pupils being good". They ensure parents are fully aware of the approach taken by sending out letters of welcome, explaining in some detail the systems of rewards and sanctions each is using and what parents can expect. This is good practice.
53. "Happy" and "Sad" books are used well to reward good behaviour and show teachers' disapproval and posters around school make it quite clear of the consequences of poor behaviour. Monitoring of behaviour is good and the "Sad" books are checked and commented on regularly by the headteacher. Staff have worked hard over the years to improve their skills in behaviour management and have been successful in achieving this. There is consistency at lunchtimes, when trained and experienced midday staff continue the good work seen in classrooms. The practice of settling the pupils in the dining hall by insisting on a period of silence beforehand works well in creating a calm, controlled atmosphere. The school values the support it receives from the Child Behaviour Intervention Unit based in the school building, which has provided them with much skilled advice and training.
54. The systems to encourage regular attendance and monitor those who are often away are good. An efficient team comprising of the administrative assistant and the headteacher take a shared approach and a firm stance in checking and following up those who are absent. The support from the educational welfare officer is good.
55. The school has very good policies for assessment but there are some gaps between the policies and practice, which makes the overall quality of assessment and monitoring no better than satisfactory. Already established are sound procedures for checking on pupils' progress in their day-to-day schoolwork and the extent to which they are successful in national tests. Assessment is seen to be a major tool to move the school forward to higher levels of attainment by pupils, not only in tests, but in lessons and in homework and this is good practice. In both the Foundation Stage and in the Speech and Language Unit there are very good examples of this major aim already being reached. Indeed throughout the school the teachers mark work regularly and keep detailed records. When the assessment is good the pupils know exactly how well they are doing and what to do next to improve. Sometimes these good targets for improvement are displayed on the wall to make the procedures open and transparent. Records are sometimes used effectively to track the progress of individual pupils. In science, for example, detailed records are kept and analysed so that staff are clearly aware of the current levels of attainment or under attainment. Informal assessments made by teachers in lessons are generally good. There are many good examples of teachers' use, for example, of question and answer techniques and pupils' books are regularly marked.
56. However, there are a number of inconsistencies in the marking procedures used between different year groups and subjects. In Key Stage 1 the marking guidelines are included in the pupils' exercise books but this is not done in all classes. In some classrooms there are statements to show what teachers are looking for when they mark the pupils' work. Teachers in their understandable desire to motivate the pupils will sometimes write 'excellent' for work which, by national standards, is only moderately good. When practice papers for the national tests are marked, there are too many inconsistencies, for example in science. There are

inconsistencies about what is expected nationally of pupils in the same age range when they are collecting and looking at their data. The school is well aware of the need to make the marking more consistent not only between teachers within the school but also to ensure that there is consistency between the marks awarded in this school and in other schools. Appropriate plans are in place to improve the quality and the consistency of the marking so that it can be confidently used to monitor the quality of the learning in all subjects and to implement the changes needed to make the learning even better.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

57. Parents have a satisfactory view of the school. This is based upon the range of replies to the Ofsted parents' questionnaire, the views of parents spoken to during the inspection and at the parents' meeting with inspectors. About 40 per cent of parents responded to the questionnaire, though only two parents attended the meeting arranged for them to put their views to the inspection team.
58. Most parents are happy with the school, especially with regard to:
 - the good quality teaching
 - the way they are kept informed about their children's progress
 - the ways in which the staff welcome them
 - the good progress their children make
 - the ways in which the school expects the children to do their best.
59. Inspectors agree with all parents' positive views. A very small number of parents had negative views about many areas of school life.
60. Over a quarter of parents who replied said they were not happy with the levels of homework given to their children. Inspectors found that the homework pupils receive is satisfactory and is in line with many other primary schools. Depending upon the pupil's age, reading, spellings, tables, mathematics, English and research tasks are set. Teachers encourage pupils to complete their homework and remind them if they forget. The parents' questionnaire also showed that a significant number of parents are unsure about the range of extra-curricular activities the school provides. There are a good range of clubs including cross-stitch, rugby, tennis, football, cricket, cross-country, mathematics, French and computers.
61. The school has satisfactory links with parents. The headteacher spends time talking to individual parents and helping to support them in times of crisis. She believes in the importance of informal daily contact and teachers are usually available on the playground before and after school, for a friendly chat.
62. The quality of pupils' annual reports is good. There are clear comments on the progress pupils are making in English, mathematics and science with areas highlighted on which pupils need to focus in order to improve. Each report is made into a treasured document to keep, by the child personalising it some way with his or her own photograph or a specially drawn picture. This is good practice. The overall comments from the headteacher and class teachers confirm the good relationships that exist between pupils and staff. Attendance at parents' evenings is good and the school places great value on these occasions. They are held with the intent of 'celebrating achievement' and are family occasions where children are encouraged to come along with their parents.
63. A group of hard working and loyal parents is having a strong impact on school life. This is through the work of "Friends of Thurnby School" and the management role of parents who are also governors. The popular Friday lunchtime sessions when pupils bring along their roller blades and scooters, was a suggestion from the "Friends" and they have been successful in applying for a book grant for the nursery. They raise money through regular children's discos, fashion shows and a range of other events. A small number of parents help in classes and the grounds are tended by a keen parent volunteer. These parents all play an important role in helping the school to develop and improve. Parents are encouraged to come to the school's Family assembly and many do so.

64. Parents provide a satisfactory level of support for the work pupils are given to do at home. Some parents listen to their child read and help them with to learn their spellings. Most ensure that homework is completed on time. There is a minority, who due to a range of external and social pressures, find this kind of support difficult to provide.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

65. Since the previous inspection, the school has been well led and managed and, as a result, was taken out of special measures by Her Majesty's Inspectors in 1999. The headteacher has been given invaluable support by the deputy headteacher, particularly during her two periods of extended absence, through illness, over the past two years. The school has recovered from a substantial budget deficit in a shorter period than that set by the local education authority and now has a working credit balance. Academic standards remain below the national average in mathematics, science and English but show steady improvement over time.
66. Thurnby Lodge is a thriving school that serves its pupils well. It is a happy school where pupils feel safe and secure within a good environment for learning. The senior management team, staff, governors, parents and pupils have worked together to ensure the recovery of the school. All are justly proud of their achievements. The quality of teamwork is good. There is a strong and shared commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed.
67. The Speech and Language Unit is very well run and is a major asset of the school. Pupils in the unit are given first-class support by knowledgeable and dedicated staff who ensure that pupils develop confidence and self esteem. In turn, their speech and language skills develop well. The aim of the unit is to return the pupils to mainstream education as soon as they have made sufficient progress. Pupils are well integrated into the school. They sit the national tests, attend assemblies and some mainstream lessons. Teachers plan together to ensure that the curriculum is fully accessible to these pupils.
68. The headteacher has a clear vision for the development of the school that is shared by all who work there. The overall aim is to raise standards by maintaining and improving the quality of teaching and learning and to provide all pupils with a rich curriculum for academic, personal and social development. The headteacher is well supported by her colleagues and by the Governing Body. Jointly, they are developing good links with the parents and the community. The school's reputation in the local area is rising.
69. The headteacher delegates to a greater extent than noted in Her Majesty's Inspectors' report of 1999. All those with delegated responsibility perform their tasks efficiently and effectively. The role of the subject co-ordinators is well developed and more clearly defined than at the previous inspection. Co-ordinators take the initiative for organising the subject on a day-to-day basis and also in long-term planning. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is not formally planned and subject co-ordinators do not have release time to carry out this important task. The consequence is that good practice is not always shared and weaknesses in teaching are not always remedied. The headteacher personally monitors teaching and has plans to extend this practice to others.
70. The Governing Body gives the school strong support. The headteacher and the chair of governors are in regular contact. A team of governors, who care greatly about the school and who know its strengths and weaknesses, supports them well. The governors are committed to the school's long-term future and to the improvement of standards. They work hard to ensure that the school is respected in the neighbourhood. The governors are proud of the school, many are frequent visitors and some hold responsibility for subjects. They work effectively through a wide range of committees and give good support to the headteacher. Governors have established good procedures to evaluate success based on their sound knowledge of the school. In summary, the governors make a significant contribution to the effectiveness of the school.
71. During the past two years the Governing Body and the headteacher have established good procedures for financial planning and management. The Finance committee worked hard to help the school to recover from a deficit budget. A part-time bursar, skilled in finance,

provides good quality financial information to the governors so that they may determine future spending on the basis of fact. Good use is made of computer technology in financial administration. A "needs budget" is now established so that pupils derive the maximum benefit from all expenditure. The recent school audit found that the school's accounts are well kept. The school is implementing the minor recommendations made.

72. The school improvement plan is the product of wide consultation. It provides a clear set of aims for the current year and sets out a broad, strategic overview for the years ahead. The plan is appropriately costed and those responsible for its implementation are clearly identified. The progress of the plan is systematically monitored. Specific grants, such as the Standards Fund, are used effectively to support the raising of standards in such areas as numeracy and literacy. The school makes satisfactory use of the principles of best value to ensure prudent use of all income.
73. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed. It fully reflects the national Code of Practice. The register of special needs is carefully kept. Parents are consulted at the time of the annual review. Individual education plans are well written and contain small-step targets that are realistic and achievable. Progress towards them is carefully monitored. Provision in the special unit for pupils who have speech and language needs is exemplary.
74. Teachers are suitably qualified, by training and experience, for the age group they teach and they are well deployed. There is a good balance of experienced and more recently qualified staff. They work closely together to plan the curriculum for the benefit of all pupils. The quality of the learning support assistants is outstanding and they give invaluable support to the class teacher and to the pupils. Newly-qualified teachers are given good support and in-service training. A policy for performance management is well established. Teaching and learning is well supported by the administrative staff and midday supervisors, all of whom contribute to the smooth and efficient running of the school.
75. Learning resources are good in mathematics, science, English, art and in the Foundation Stage. They are satisfactory in all other subjects. Improvements in the range of resources for numeracy and literacy have been used well to improve pupils' skills. The range and quality of books in the classrooms are satisfactory and they are well supported by those in the library. Resources for information and communication technology are satisfactory, although they are not used often enough in the classroom or computer suite to support learning.
76. Accommodation is very good and it is used very well. It is spacious, bright and clean. The outside area provides very good opportunities for play and there is plenty of room for pupils to use up any excess energy. The corridors and classrooms are well organised and attractively decorated with displays of pupils' work that support learning. The site's presentation is well supported by the cleanliness and care provided by the caretaker and cleaning staff. Overall, the environment is very pleasant and has a very good impact upon teaching and learning.
77. Good quality financial administration and careful monitoring of spending contribute well to the efficient running of the school. Taking into account pupils' attainment on entry, the progress they make and the quality of education provided, the school provides good value for money. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

78. In order to improve standards and the quality of education further, the headteacher, staff and Governing Body should:

- Raise standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology at both key stages by:
 - maintaining the high quality teaching in these subjects and improving the less successful;
 - developing systems to enable the co-ordinators to monitor more effectively the quality of teaching and learning;
 - planning work to challenge all pupils even more, particularly the highest attainers;
 - developing the current systems for target setting and tracking pupils' progress in order to identify and rectify weaknesses in their learning.
(see paragraph numbers: 1-10, 13, 14, 114-119, 123-125, 132, 154, 155)
- Improve the ways in which assessment data is used to develop curricular planning further by:
 - developing systems to ensure that pupils' work is regularly and consistently assessed and matched to National Curriculum levels;
 - formulating and implementing planning strategies which take account of the assessment results;
 - teachers working together to ensure that they have a common view on the standards identified and the ways in which planning can be improved;
 - evaluating, at regular intervals, the effects of the improved planning on pupils' learning.
(see paragraph numbers: 30, 55, 56, 134, 135, 148, 149, 153)
- Monitor the quality of teaching and learning more effectively by:
 - devising and implementing a regular programme of classroom observations by senior staff and subject co-ordinators;
 - giving effective and constructive feedback to teachers on the results of the observations;
 - allowing time for co-ordinators to undertake regular analysis of pupils' work in their subjects.
(see paragraph numbers: 69, 130)
- Improve the quality of teaching in the Year 5/6 class by:
 - giving extra support to the teacher to develop the planning and implementation of pupils' work;
 - undertaking more effective monitoring of teaching within the class;
 - providing appropriate professional development to help the teacher to manage pupils' inappropriate behaviour more effectively;
 - raising the teacher's expectations of pupils' behaviour and the levels of work of which they are capable.
(see paragraph numbers: 14, 19, 28, 32, 119-121, 124)

In addition, the Governing Body may wish to include the following minor issues in its action plan:

- further raise the levels of attendance
(see paragraph number: 23)
- extend the use of information and communication technology to cover all National Curriculum subjects
(see paragraph numbers: 41, 125, 147, 156)

- challenge higher attaining pupils further to ensure that they make all the progress of which they are capable.
(see paragraph numbers: 31, 125, 129, 148)

THE SPEECH AND LANGUAGE UNIT

79. The Speech and Language Unit provides high quality support for pupils with speech and language difficulties, and is a strength of the school. The head of the unit provides very good leadership giving the unit a sense of positive identity and purpose. This has made it a full part of the school and a place where pupils who have often been failing elsewhere, succeed. The progress made is good and this reflects the position reported by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools in 1999.
80. The unit was opened in 1993, and currently has places for 26 pupils from the City of Leicester and the County of Leicestershire. The unit is the only primary Speech and Language Unit in the City that caters for pupils from reception to Year 6. The pupils are brought to school by taxi or mini bus from a wide area that extends up to 20 miles from the city centre.
81. All the pupils in the unit have a Statement of Special Educational Need. They come to the unit because they have particular speech, language or communication difficulties. In addition they may have epilepsy, cerebral palsy, autism, social and emotional behavioural difficulties or a varied range of other conditions. Each pupil has between one and four sessions with a speech and/or language therapist each week, with some having additional therapy with the unit staff. The speech and language therapists work closely with the unit staff on issues such as "Makaton" sign language, social skills teaching, cued articulation, planning and the setting of targets within individual education plans. They also participate fully in the annual reviews of progress made by pupils with their parents and carers.
82. The quality of teaching is very good and, in combination with the effective work of two part-time speech and language therapists, is the most important factor in the good progress the pupils make. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to excellent. Eighty-seven per cent of lessons were good or better, 47 per cent were very good or better and seven per cent were excellent. Thirteen per cent was satisfactory and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. A key strength of the teaching is the shared desire to see that all pupils are happy, confident and that they become enthusiastic learners and thereby reach their potential. Together with their learning support assistants, teachers have been successful in creating an environment that is warm and caring and which offers the pupils a good quality curriculum matched to their needs and which helps them to achieve success. Each year staff in the unit have a training day as part of their professional development. Supply teachers are employed to cover the work of the unit on this occasion in order to allow the pupils to continue with their lessons.
83. It is not appropriate to judge the standards of work seen against national expectations as the majority of the pupils are working at levels well below those expected for their age in English and mathematics. Nevertheless, by the end of the infants, most pupils can write in a clear joined-up style and know that a sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop. They enjoy reading and having stories read to them, and they take discussion very seriously. They also develop a secure understanding of simple number and the names of shapes such as circles and triangles. Standards remain low at the end of the juniors with most of the pupils achieving in English and mathematics at a level expected for the end of the infants or Year 3 of the juniors. For most of the pupils these standards represent a considerable achievement, and reflect their hard work. Work done in writing is shown in the improvement seen over time in their written work in subjects such as history, where the pupils enjoyed learning about Drake's voyage round the world.
84. Pupils in Class L1 were observed learning about the importance of having ears. Each child required the teacher and learning support assistant to use different methods of communication ranging from 'signing' to slow clear speech, linked to strong eye contact. All the pupils had understood the importance of hearing and they worked hard to record their knowledge in a simple sentence. The lesson was paced in such a way that the interest of all the pupils was

maintained, and the work, although challenging, was set at a level that ensured success for all of them. Pupils in Class L2 were observed identifying objects that worked by mains electricity, used batteries, or could use either. The teacher had placed two overlapping hoops on the floor, and the different objects, such as a torch or a toaster, were placed either in the hoop for battery-powered objects or the one for mains electricity. If both could power the object, it was placed in the space made by the overlap of the two hoops. The pupils were totally engrossed in what they were doing and tried very hard to respond to their teacher's questions. In this lesson, the teacher's use of voice, facial expression and body language was effective in keeping pupils focused on what they were doing and they made good progress. By the end of the lesson, all the pupils had a better understanding of the way in which electricity is used in the home and the importance of treating it with respect because it can be dangerous. Pupils in Class L3 studied seed dispersal, and were very interested in looking at plants. The teacher provided good individual support and ensured through questioning and discussion that the pupils had understood that there was more than one way in which seeds can be dispersed.

85. A particular strength of the teaching is the way in which lessons are paced in short manageable sections that the pupils can cope with. In one lesson, for example, the teacher said to the pupils, "I want you to leave the objects on the floor and work at your desk for two minutes". It should be noted that for some pupils in the unit, two minutes is a very long time. Where a pupil has difficulty in doing what he or she is told, skilful offering of choice, as in, "I want you to... or you can...", avoids confrontation whilst, at the same time, ensures that the pupil completes the tasks required. The very good teaching and the work of the speech and language therapists is instrumental in making sure that many pupils make rapid progress. The case of a pupil who had made 28 months' progress in speech and language skills in 19 months is typical within the unit. As the head of the unit expressed it, "If it's there, they do it."
86. The pupils follow the same basic curriculum as other pupils in the school, although it is adapted to their individual needs and most are working at a standard that is well below their chronological age. All aspects of the pupils' work are planned jointly with teachers in the main school, and every appropriate opportunity is taken to include them in mainstream lessons if they can benefit from this and achieve success. For example, in a science lesson observed in Class L3, six pupils were present in the unit, but four others were learning science in a mainstream class. All pupils have access to the full National Curriculum. Good quality work relating to art and design was in evidence throughout the unit.
87. Although many of the pupils travel some distance to school, the headteacher and unit staff have been very effective in establishing close links with all the parents. An indication of this is the support that parents give by attending coffee mornings and class assemblies. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress, and they have access to the school at any time. They are fully involved in the annual review of their children's individual education plans and Statement of Special Educational Need. The school works very hard to ensure that these statements reflect accurately the needs of each pupil. The opportunity to observe such a review confirmed the close partnership that exists between parents, teachers and speech and language therapists, built on mutual trust and respect. There are good procedures for welcoming pupils into the unit and helping the parents to feel confident about their children's placements. Parents are given opportunities to visit, and receive 'welcome' booklets; one for parents or carers and one for pupils. Good procedures also exist for helping the pupils and their parents to prepare for the next stage of their education, which include visits to the school or special provision to which they will be going. After they have started the next stage of their education, the head of the unit monitors their initial settling-in period.
88. The unit staff work closely with the school's educational psychologist and other agencies providing support, for example, for pupils with autism, or those whose first language is not English.

89. The unit is divided into three small classes, and in addition there is a special room for speech and language therapy. All the rooms are bright and attractive, with much celebration of the pupils' work on the walls. There are sufficient resources to meet the demands of the curriculum, and they are used well.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	54
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	28	38	24	2	4	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	27	189
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	49

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	29
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	53

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	21

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.6
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	15	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	7	10
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	19	18	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	66 (56)	62 (64)	72 (60)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	9	11
	Girls	11	11	10
	Total	18	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	62 (68)	69 (56)	72 (72)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	17	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	10	11
	Girls	9	10	11
	Total	20	20	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	59 (40)	59 (43)	65 (48)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	11	11
	Girls	7	10	10
	Total	12	21	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	35 (43)	62 (40)	62 (38)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	13
Pakistani	6
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	148
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	1
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	7	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 – Year 6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Year 6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	175

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	46

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	613365
Total expenditure	564495
Expenditure per pupil	2498
Balance brought forward from previous year	-58881
Balance carried forward to next year	-10011

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	228
Number of questionnaires returned	89

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	36	2	1	3
My child is making good progress in school.	51	38	7	4	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	36	6	6	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	43	18	10	7
The teaching is good.	56	34	2	3	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	43	6	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	34	4	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	36	8	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	36	48	8	4	3
The school is well led and managed.	40	34	9	6	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	36	11	4	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	29	9	3	21

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

90. Children enter the nursery with levels of attainment that are well below those typical for children of this age. They make good progress in their use of spoken language and in their personal and social skills. Their attainment remains below that expected in writing at the end of the reception year, but the good progress they make in the other areas of learning means that most children achieve the expected levels by the age of five. The quality of education provided in the nursery and reception classes is a strength of the school and provides a secure foundation for raising standards further in the infant and junior classes. The inspection report of 1999 found that by the time they were five, children's attainment often reached, and occasionally exceeded, the expected level for their age. Children's social skills were judged to be well developed and many could speak with confidence. Their use of letter sounds and numbers was developing and some were writing simple words and phrases. The position now is broadly similar, but evidence from school records confirms that attainment in literacy and numeracy is better now than it was then, even though attainment on entry is now judged to be lower.
91. Very good co-ordination of the work of the nursery and reception classes has provided a strong commitment to raising standards that is shared by the teachers, the nursery nurses and the learning support assistants. This in turn is reflected in teaching that is good in general, and very good or better in almost two-thirds of lessons. During the inspection, one excellent lesson was observed. Judgements on levels of attainment on entry are based on information provided by the assessments made when the children first join the nursery. The continuing high quality assessment of their progress is effectively applied to the very good planning of lessons. The nursery staff have already identified the need to develop further the assessment procedures that they use on entry so that the information it contains is more easily accessible.
92. The accommodation is spacious and used very well to support the early years' curriculum. In addition to four classrooms, three for the nursery class and one for reception, corridors are used well to provide additional space. There is access to a school hall with large and small apparatus, and the secure outdoor area is used well by the nursery as a natural extension of the indoor classroom. Resource provision is good, and the staff have additional plans for the further development of the outside area. Pupils from Year 6 are encouraged to get out and put away the apparatus that is used in the outside play area and to play with the full-time nursery and reception children at lunchtimes. This is doubly beneficial, as they provide younger children with role models, and exercise responsibility themselves.
93. Children are admitted into the nursery on a part-time basis from the age of three. The youngest children attend in the afternoons and the older part-time children attend in the mornings. The eldest four-year olds attend full-time in preparation for entry into the reception class. In all, 27 children attend on a part-time basis and a further 14 children attend full-time. Children who have special educational needs are identified early, and given effective support that enables them to make the same good progress as other children. This is also the case for children who have English as an additional language.

Personal, social and emotional development

94. The children's personal, social and emotional development is very good in both the nursery and reception classes. Most children have achieved the targets for this area of learning by the end of the reception year. Teachers and support staff act as very good role models for the children. Class routines are very well established, and children have learned good habits of work such as concentration, perseverance and purposeful play. They are enthusiastic when they arrive in the nursery each day, and even the youngest are keen to try most things. Given the generally low level of attainment on entry in this area of learning, the rate of progress is impressive. Very good organisation and teamwork on the part of the staff in the nursery has created an environment in which the children develop good levels of independence, with many organising their own activities when this is appropriate. Within the security of the nursery, their

behaviour is very mature and they share and take turns with very little sign of disputes. Relationships are very good and children work and play effectively and purposefully, either alone or with each other. A number of instances were observed of children helping each other. Even when a very young child has a little difficulty in sharing they are very patient and understanding. The children take responsibility for helping to keep their classrooms tidy and for undertaking tasks such as returning the register to the school office.

95. The good work begun in the nursery continues in the reception class, where the children continue to work well, co-operate and support each other, within a carefully structured school day. For example, in a literacy lesson, groups that were not working with an adult continued to work hard and to help each other. Particularly impressive was the way in which four children with special educational needs continued to work when their learning support assistant left them for a while to work with other children. Teaching of this aspect is very good and leads to the very good progress made by pupils.

Communication, language and literacy

96. The use of language, both spoken and written, is very important to the children's work across the whole curriculum. Given the generally very low levels of attainment on entry in this area of learning, the nursery staff give a high priority to providing the children with every opportunity to hear and use language. Staff are constantly talking with the children and encouraging them to talk and listen to each other. Each day when they arrive in the nursery, there is an opportunity for them to talk with their teacher and the nursery nurses about anything that they wish to share. They listen attentively to instructions, comments and stories, and respond readily with their views and opinions. However, the quality of responses is hampered by the poorly developed speaking skills of many children. A love of books is evident amongst nearly all the children, as is their eager anticipation as they listen to a story such as, "A Roar for Stanley", waiting for the opportunity to 'hiss' and 'roar' – and the roaring is very impressive! Stories and other language activities are carefully selected to link to the language theme for the week – in the week of the inspection this was 'sounds'. Language is also developed when children 'read' books to themselves and to adults, through many opportunities for discussion in group activities and through role-play. Many opportunities for pre-writing activities are provided; virtually all hold a pencil or paintbrush correctly, and a number of the older children can write their own name. Although very good progress is made, attainment when they enter the reception year remains below that typical for children of this age, especially in terms of reading and writing.
97. In order to maintain the progress already being made, the reception class follows the early years' curriculum and plans on the basis of the six areas of learning and their associated targets, but teachers use the structure of formal literacy lessons. Literacy lessons are well paced and they challenge and excite the children. In one lesson, as soon as the 'Big Book' "Who's in the shed", was opened, the children's interest was engaged. They enjoyed sharing reading the words with their teacher and guessing what was coming next. The focus of the lesson was on 'sh' and the teacher provided a wide selection of objects to consolidate the children's understanding. Group work was timed well, and set at levels that were appropriate for the different levels of understanding of the children.
98. Teaching of language is very good in both the nursery and reception classes. The teachers have particular skills in using books with children, talking with them, helping them to develop ideas, listening carefully to what they say and responding accordingly. The progress made in speaking and listening and in reading reflects these strengths, although many pupils will not achieve the targets for the end of the reception year in writing.

Mathematics

99. When they join the nursery, many of the children have had only limited experience with mathematics and their levels of attainment are low. They make very good progress and most achieve the targets expected by the end of the reception year.
100. Every possible opportunity to count is taken in the nursery, from number rhymes and action sums to the numbers of children in class and those absent. Children learn to write numbers up

to 10 correctly and to count up to ten and beyond in order. They develop early understanding of weight and capacity through weighing different objects against each other and through sand and water play, using a range of different containers. Through their work in art, they develop some understanding of three-dimensional shapes and most can name a circle, rectangle, triangle and square. While most children are gaining a secure understanding of number up to five, a few show above average understanding of larger numbers, such as the child who intuitively gave the answer 27 when their teacher told them that there should be twenty-nine children in the group and two were away. Another successfully counted the children present.

101. Building upon the very good progress made in the nursery, the reception teachers teach mathematics in structured numeracy lessons. In one lesson observed, the start of the lesson was very challenging, with the children counting up to ten and then beyond twenty. They counted forwards and backwards in twos, fives and tens, and particularly enjoyed putting the numbers 12 to 20 in order. They enjoyed singing a range of number rhymes such as, "One, two, three, four, five". Most of the children were successful in combining two numbers to make 15. Most have satisfactory understanding of the properties of simple two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. They are developing secure understanding of weighing and capacity. A small number of high attainers have a good understanding of addition and subtraction.
102. Numeracy is taught well in both the nursery and reception classes through a number of different strategies, including very effective use of number rhymes and action songs. Number activities are related to real settings whenever possible, such as counting the number of milk cartons in the nursery, or combining two sets of plastic aeroplanes to make a given number, with one set of aeroplanes resting on a runway, while the others are 'flying' in the sky on a specially made picture card. The very good teaching is directly responsible for the very good progress being made.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

103. Most children enter the nursery with knowledge and understanding of the world below that typical for children of this age. They make good progress, and most achieve the expected targets by the end of the reception year.
104. The nursery offers a rich experience which is successful in opening the children's eyes to the wonder of their world. They enjoy learning about the importance of electricity in their lives. They are fascinated by living things, and there is ample evidence of this in the good quality displays of their work on plants, animals and the life cycle of the butterfly. They enjoy walking around the school listening for different sounds. They enjoy using the computer and learning from programs such as, "Banana's in Pyjamas", where they have an opportunity to learn about their world, whether to play with the Bananas on the beach or to move containers in a shop. Work on the computer helps the children's language as they talk and laugh together and contributes to their physical development as they control and use the 'mouse'. The children also have the opportunity to walk round the local area and to begin to develop a simple understanding of maps and plans. The good work begun in the nursery continues through the reception year, where the children produce satisfactory work for their age on topics such as the story of "Noah's Ark" from the Bible and learning about the properties of light and the fun that you can have with it.
105. Children in both the nursery and reception classes enjoy using large construction toys to create objects or imaginary worlds, such as a farm or a railway line. They understand the purpose of simple tools and the need to use them safely.
106. The quality of the work on display confirms that the teaching is very good and is responsible for the good progress being made by children in the understanding of the world around them. Discussion with the children showed that teachers and support staff are effective in stimulating the children to ask questions through well planned activities, effective use of resources and a good range of factual books. The many opportunities for discussion help the development of the children's language skills.

Physical development

107. Attainment on entry into the nursery is below that typical for children of this age, although skills in this area are better developed in many of the children than is the case for other areas of learning. They make good progress and most achieve or exceed the targets for this area of learning by the end of the reception year.
108. Many opportunities are provided to develop gross motor skills through the use of tricycles, bicycles and scooters in the outside area, and through climbing and balancing, using large apparatus in timetabled lessons in one of the school halls. Children in the reception class also have the opportunity to develop their physical skills in the hall using the apparatus, in swimming lessons, and when playing outside. Children in both classes enjoy the many opportunities that they have to practise running and jumping and small ball control.
109. Further opportunities for physical development are offered through the good range of large structural toys available and there are many opportunities to develop fine motor control through activities such as painting, drawing and learning to write.
110. Teachers' planning shows that all aspects of this area of learning are being taught and that health and safety receive proper attention. The rate of progress being made is a direct result of the very good teaching.

Creative development

111. Many of the children have had little opportunity to develop creatively before starting in the nursery. They make good progress, and most achieve the expected targets by the end of the reception year.
112. Some examples of above average work were to be seen. For example, children in the nursery are able to identify the key elements of a musical shaker, and are able to take decisions as to the container and filling they are going to use to make one. Such work makes a positive contribution to their language development through discussion and to their physical development because of the cutting and sticking involved. Across both year groups, they have opportunities for painting and drawing, large and small work, two-dimensional and three-dimensional work, collage and clay work. It was fascinating to observe the progression made between entry into the nursery, when a painting of themselves was simply a splodge, to quite accurate representations by the end of the reception year. In the nursery, there were lots of paintings of candles and rainbows and a big display on the theme of sunlight and moonlight that linked with their work on understanding the world around them. In the reception class the story of "Noah's Ark" was the stimulus for pictures of the rainbow used as an opportunity for the children to learn about mixing colours. They had obviously enjoyed doing black and white pictures of "Jasper the Cat". Opportunities to engage in role-play and become someone other than themselves, to sing and to make music, all help to make these classrooms lively and interesting, and to stimulate the children's creative development.
113. Teaching in this area of learning is very good in both the nursery and reception classes. Teachers, nursery nurses and learning support assistants are particularly skilled in developing children's aptitudes in all areas of creative development, through well-planned activities and probing questions that arouse the children's capacity to solve problems. Basic skills, of which painting is an example, are taught very well.

ENGLISH

114. In the year 2000 national tests for eleven-year-olds, pupils achieved standards which were well below the national average. When compared to the results of pupils from similar backgrounds their achievement was also well below average. At the time of the previous inspection standards were identified as well below average in the similar tests in 1996. In the intervening period, however, though standards have been low overall, there has been some fluctuation year by year. In 1997 standards were very low, within the bottom five per cent of schools nationally. There was good improvement in 1998 when standards were below those nationally, though they fell to very low again in 1999. There was some improvement to the 2000 figures. The annual variance in results is attributable mainly to the different abilities of each year group, though the high mobility rate and the frequent changes in staff have also been contributory factors.
115. The year 2000 tests for seven-year-olds showed pupils' achievements in reading and writing to be well below the national average and well below those of pupils in similar schools. Whilst these figures are the same as in 1999, they show improvement from 1997 and 1998, when pupils' attainment was very low, within the bottom five per cent of all schools. The main reason for the low standards in relation to other schools, is the low number of pupils who attain the expected level 2 in the tests and the fact that no pupil attained the higher level 3. This reflects the low ability displayed by pupils when they start school. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in reading and writing closely match the results of the tests. Assessments made by teachers of pupils' speaking and listening skills indicate that the standards are well below those expected nationally.
116. Inspection findings indicate that by the time they reach the ages of seven and eleven, pupils achieve standards below those expected for pupils of these ages. The previous inspection report indicated that at the age of seven, pupils' attainment was below that expected in reading and writing, though speaking and listening skills were identified as being in line with those expected. At the age of eleven pupils were attaining well below expected levels at that time. In the intervening period there has been positive developments and they now reach standards below those expected nationally. The previous report identified, as a key issue, the need to raise standards in the subject. Whilst good progress has been made, particularly during the past year, standards are still too low. The major factors in improving standards have been the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and the stability of the teaching staff.
117. When pupils enter the school their speaking and listening skills are poor. They make good progress in the nursery and the reception years, because of the many opportunities planned for them to develop and use these skills. However, by the time they begin compulsory schooling at the age of five, their speaking and listening skills are generally below those expected for pupils of this age. The good quality teaching pupils receive in the infant years enables them to continue to make good progress. Within the literacy lessons, teachers give pupils many opportunities to develop their skills through discussion about the books used to develop their reading. In Year 1 pupils are keen to show off their skills and are excited when they describe the horse in a story as "an old, grey mare". They become entranced when discussing the story with their teacher and, as a result, their skills develop well in the lesson. Pupils in Year 2 discuss the reduction in numbers of snails because of the destruction of their habitat. They listen well to each other's contributions and add their own sensibly. As they get older, pupils continue to make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. In the Year 3/4 class pupils know the correct terminology for a range of poetry styles and describe, for example, the format of "rhyming couplets". They make up a small poem to illustrate the style. In the Year 5/6 class, pupils do not make the progress they should because of the lower quality teaching they receive in this class. When reciting Lear's poem, "The Owl and the Pussy Cat", pupils fail to stay together and do not use appropriate expression. The pupils in the Year 6 class make good progress when they discuss a wide range of activities set out by the teacher leading to written explanations of different processes. One group, for example, was describing how an electrical circuit works, and made notes for later use in writing down the explanation.

118. At the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' attainment in reading is below that expected nationally. By the time they are seven, pupils are very aware of the place of books in their lives and most are beginning to read, with the higher attaining pupils reaching an appropriate level for their age. In Key Stage 1 teachers use the National Literacy Strategy very well to develop pupils' reading skills. From the low level of reading ability when they start school, most pupils make good progress in the early years and in Years 1 and 2. This is the result of the ways in which the teachers plan to give pupils a wide range of experience of books and to instill a love of books. Pupils throughout Years 1 and 2 try hard to master the sounds made by groups of letters and to pronounce them accurately in their reading. The less able pupils find difficulty in reading books at an appropriate level for their age, and can only master reading from lower level books. In the junior classes pupils continue to make good progress, though their reading levels remain below those expected nationally by the time they leave the school aged eleven. Pupils are aware of the difference between fiction and non-fiction and describe the differences clearly. They use both in their work, but few have developed higher level reading skills such as skimming and scanning for information. Most pupils express a liking for reading and this is reflected in the ways they talk about the books they read. Regular lessons are planned for pupils to use the school library, with the opportunity given for them to take home books. As a result of this, the older pupils are very aware of the classification system used in the library and readily find books about a given topic. They recognise and use the index, glossary and contents pages in their books.
119. At the time of the previous inspection standards in writing were described as "well below what is expected". In the intervening period through the better planning for improving writing skills, the standards have risen, and inspection evidence indicates that standards are now below those expected nationally. Pupils start school with poor literacy skills. The high quality teaching they receive in the early years classes gives them a good grounding, but when they reach the beginning of compulsory schooling at age five, they are still below standards expected for pupils of this age. In the infant classes, pupils continue to make good progress. By the time they leave the infant classes, the higher attaining pupils are working at a level appropriate for their age though few work at a higher level. The average and below average pupils, however, attain standards which are below those expected for their age. In the infants, pupils begin to write in sentences, with many using capital letters and full stops, though this is not consistently implemented. Pupils write for a range of purposes; lists, simple instructions, factual information and re-telling stories they know. Pupils' spelling is poor. They fail to consistently spell correctly the most basic words. However, a few use imaginative vocabulary in some aspects of their writing. One pupil, for example, described the living conditions of a character in his story as, "a dirty, smelly, broken-down hut". Pupils in the junior classes continue to make good progress in most classes, though the quality of teaching for pupils in the Year 5/6 class is of low quality, resulting in the pupils making limited progress in this class. Throughout their time in the junior classes pupils write for a range of audiences, though throughout the period of a year the level of opportunities for extended writing is limited. They write stories, letters and poetry. Pupils' stories differ widely in quality. The best stories involve highly imaginative writing, but too often they lack clear structure. Letters are written to the local press expressing views about a range of subjects relevant to the pupils. Pupils record their ideas following discussion about current issues. They write the arguments for and against, for example, the culling of unaffected animals in the foot and mouth outbreak, and express their views about foxhunting. Whilst the ideas expressed are overall sound, the pupils' handwriting and use of grammar are low quality.
120. Pupils display positive attitudes to English in most classes. The younger pupils are very keen to learn and try hard to improve. In this they succeed within their ability levels. The behaviour in almost all classes is good, reflecting the teachers' high expectations and good behaviour management. In the small percentage of lessons where the teaching is poor in the Year 5/6 class, however, pupils consistently misbehave and are not corrected. This results in limited learning taking place during this lesson. Overall the presentation of pupils' work is of a low standard. Too little care is taken in setting out work and in taking pride to write neatly and carefully.

121. The quality of teaching in the subject is good overall with elements of very good and excellent teaching, particularly in the nursery, reception and infant classes. In the Year 5/6 class, however, the quality of teaching was poor. The best quality teaching was within the unit classes and was the result of very well planned lessons to support the particular needs of the pupils in these classes. The lessons moved at a pace which was appropriate for the pupils to make the greatest progress within the lessons. The teachers' very good knowledge about the pupils and their particular learning needs was used very effectively. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has been beneficial to the school in developing the quality of planning in the medium- and short-term. The format of the strategy is used to maintain good levels of learning in most classes. The high expectations of behaviour and work displayed by almost all teachers have a positive effect on the progress made by the pupils. Teachers handle pupils well and the pupils know and understand the limits set by teachers and react accordingly. In most lessons the work is planned effectively to enable pupils with different needs to work at an appropriate level to maintain effective progress. In the lesson where the poor teaching occurred, the teacher had poor control over the pupils, the planning did not link activities to the specific learning objectives and the pupils made little progress.
122. The subject is led and managed effectively by the experienced co-ordinator. She has successfully introduced the National Literacy Strategy following appropriate training. Due to the good support for the subject, the standards are beginning to rise. The optional tests from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority are used at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. The analysis of the results of the tests has led to greater knowledge of pupils' abilities and the co-ordinator has been able to ensure that most teachers use the results of the tests to develop appropriate work for the pupils. Literacy is used soundly to enhance pupils' work in other subjects. In history, for example, they record their discussions about religion in Ancient Egypt and in science they write the results of their experiments. They use their reading skills effectively when they undertake research in geography lessons.

MATHEMATICS

123. The results of the national tests for seven-year-olds taken in 2000, indicate that seven-tenths of pupils attained the national standard. In the tests, girls did better than boys, though no significant difference was observed during the inspection. Overall, the results are very low compared with the national average and with the average for similar schools. This is because very few pupils attain the higher grades. The 2000 results are markedly better than those of 1999. Inspection findings, based upon the examination of pupils' work and their progress in the lessons observed, confirm that while standards are slowly improving, they remain below the national average.
124. The results of the national tests for eleven-year olds show that three-fifths of pupils attain the national standard, which is much better than the proportion attaining the national standard in 1999. The upward trend was greater than that achieved nationally. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Overall, the results are well below the national average and the average for similar schools. This is again because very few pupils attained the higher grades. Inspection findings indicate steady improvement, although standards remain below the national average. The results of previous tests have been analysed so that areas where pupils achieve less well are known and addressed by careful lesson planning. Insufficient emphasis is placed upon the development of problem solving skills, particularly at Key Stage 2, so that few pupils develop the capacity to work independently. Standards at both key stages are similar to those noted at the previous inspection.
125. Pupils achieve well at Key Stage 1, although progress is better in number than in shape and measure. Pupils' problem solving skills are satisfactory although practice is needed in using number in practical situations, such as shopping. Most pupils continue to achieve well at Key Stage 2 and, relative to their prior learning, make good progress in developing mathematical skills. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support in working towards their targets and progress well. Higher attaining pupils progress satisfactorily but sometimes are given work that is too easy for them. Consequently they spent some time repeating work in which they were already competent. All pupils benefit from daily practice in mental calculation

and in the recall of number facts, but the pace is not always as lively as it might be. In the inspection week little use was made of textbooks to enhance learning. In all classes observed, there is too little opportunity to confirm and extend learning by using computers.

126. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are secure in their use of number and accurately name 2-dimensional shapes. Pupils shade one-quarter of a circle and most are able to say that three-quarters is unshaded. Most pupils understand place value in two-digit numbers and add and subtract them correctly. Some pupils write digits the wrong way round and confuse the tens with the units. Pupils know the multiplication tables for 2 and 10 but are less secure in recalling multiples of 5. They know about odd and even numbers and many are quick to spot a number pattern, for example, when matching dominoes. Pupils collect information about class birthdays and illustrate it on a bar graph. They find the lines of symmetry of simple shapes.
127. Basic skills continue to develop at Key Stage 2, although more practice is needed in solving problems. Pupils are not always sure which mathematical operation to use. They ponder, for example, whether to add or subtract and they have too few opportunities to write number statements based on textbook questions. Pupils do not always set out their work clearly and consequently make unnecessary errors. Pupils use number well when calculating money and when telling the time. Most pupils, for example, understand analogue and digital time and are familiar with the 24-hour clock. Pupils know how to estimate the size of an angle and how to measure it using a protractor. They know, for example, that four right angles make a complete turn and many relate this to the cardinal points of the compass. Pupils correctly identify 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional shapes and describe their properties confidently. Pupils collect information from the class about favourite fruits or shoe size and illustrate their findings using bar charts and pie charts. Pupils know about probability and chance and engage in conversation about the odds of winning the national lottery.
128. Numeracy skills are used satisfactorily in other subjects. In history, for example, pupils place historical events on a time line and in geography, pupils use their knowledge of co-ordinates to read maps. In information and communication technology, an enterprising group of pupils in Year 4 inputs numerical data onto a spreadsheet and prints off a range of line charts and pictograms. In science, pupils measure the right quantities needed for an experiment and in music, numerical prowess is demonstrated when beating time to a waltz or a march.
129. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and is very much better than at the previous inspection. Of the lessons observed, one half was good or very good; the remainder was satisfactory. Unlike at the time of the previous inspection, there was no unsatisfactory teaching. The teaching of pupils in the Speech and Language Unit is good. Teachers manage the pupils very well and provide a secure and stimulating environment for learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understand well how pupils learn. Basic skills are well taught. Mental arithmetic is a prominent feature of all lessons although it sometimes lacks pace. Teachers work very well with the learning support assistants and together they ensure that pupils understand the work and progress in their work. Expectations of work and behaviour are usually good but harder work could be demanded of the higher attaining pupils. Most pupils respond well and do their best. Occasionally, pupils are inattentive and noisy, which distracts the teacher and spoils the learning opportunities of other pupils. Assertive discipline is used well to regain the pupils' attention. The assessment and recording of pupils' progress is not used consistently. A very useful addition to assessment procedures is the recent introduction of tracking pupils' progress through effective record keeping procedures.
130. The teaching and learning of mathematics are managed well. The prime focus of management, to which all teachers and learning support assistants subscribe, is the raising of standards. There is the will and the capacity to succeed in this endeavour. There is a need to continue to share good practice and to remedy weaknesses in teaching and learning.
131. Since the previous inspection, pupils' numerical skills have developed well and all pupils now make at least satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs achieve in line with their abilities. Pupils' attitudes in Key Stage 2 are much better and there is no unsatisfactory teaching. The National Numeracy Strategy is securely in place and provides a secure base for lesson planning. The environment in which mathematics is taught is conducive to further improvement.

SCIENCE

132. In the year 2000 national tests for eleven-year-olds pupils' performance was well below the national average and well below average when compared to similar schools. This shows a deterioration in standards when compared to those in the 1999 tests when pupils attained below average standards. Over the past four years, however, standards have improved satisfactorily. Inspection evidence indicates that current standards are similar to those in 1999. The teachers' records confirm this. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is also below that expected nationally. The teachers' assessment in the year 2000, at the end of Year 2, indicates that pupils attain standards which are well below those expected nationally. Inspection evidence indicates that currently pupils at the age of seven attain standards below those expected for their age. The improvement identified to 1999 has not been maintained over the past two years, mainly because of staffing difficulties and the high workload of the co-ordinator. He has co-ordinated three subjects, including science, for the past year. A new co-ordinator has been appointed to take over in September 2001.
133. Pupils in the infant classes build upon the scientific ideas they have previously learned because the teachers plan well for a sequence of activities to support pupils' learning. The weekly plans are continuously and effectively updated and include sound skills' development. Pupils in Year 2, for example, use their developing literacy skills to describe science in everyday life. They describe how tadpoles change to frogs and that electrical appliances should be switched off safely. When studying light they explain, for example, that light enables us to see things. They measure the lengths of shadows when under supervision. However, when doing practical work themselves, they do not collect evidence in a careful and systematic way. By the end of Year 6 pupils are more confident when they use scientific vocabulary. They understand the meanings of words like 'evaporation' and they know that fair testing is important in their science work. However, when planning their own investigations and experiments they often do not choose the most appropriate procedures for collecting evidence. They do not think sufficiently carefully about the change they can make in their experiments and what they will need to measure tests the effects of the changes made. The analysis of pupils' work indicates an unsatisfactory level of competence in collecting, recording and analysing the data they have attempted to collect. By the end of Year 6, pupils' skills in conducting scientific experiments and investigations remain well below the national average. Pupils in Year 6 are keen to investigate the growth of plants and those in Year 4 enjoy science. Pupils in Year 4 enjoy learning about solids, liquids and gases. They explain the differences between the three states and make simple classifications of which items are solid, liquid or gaseous. They know, for example, that yoghurt is liquid, chalk is solid and water can be all three. This group of pupils is very enthusiastic when they proudly display and explain the computer produced charts about the distribution of eye colour in their class. Pupils in Year 6 understand the requirements for grass to grow. They know, for example, that without light or water, the grass would wither and die. They understand the need for a test to be fair when they undertake scientific experiments, and that they need to, "keep things the same".
134. The quality of teaching is good overall, though it varies between very good and poor. It is particularly good for pupils in the infant classes and the Speech and Language Unit but more variable in the junior classes. The teaching was poor in the Year 5/6 class. When the highest quality teaching occurs, pupils make the greatest progress in their learning. In a lesson for pupils in Year 2 and 3, for example, the teacher had planned challenging activities to enable the pupils to sort a range of objects powered by electricity. They worked in groups to identify which were battery-powered, which used mains electricity and which could operate using either. In this lesson the teacher had high expectations of pupils' behaviour and performance and set challenging time limits for them to complete their work. The teaching for pupils in Year 4 was effective. The pupils were quite enthusiastic about their new knowledge because the work planned by their teachers had a degree of scientific excitement. The teacher gave clear explanations and demonstrations and managed the time effectively to enable pupils to do their own practical work thoughtfully so they felt they had achieved something themselves. In a Year 6 lesson the pupils worked well to meet the targets set by the teacher though these were not sufficiently precise to enable the pupils to make good progress towards the highest levels expected. Teachers generally use good techniques for managing pupils' behaviour. This results in high levels of concentration on their work and helps them to make good progress in

their learning. Pupils often respond well and make good progress because the teachers and adult support staff work very effectively together to positively influence the pupils' learning in the classroom. This support helps boys and girls to progress equally well. However, the teachers' comments written in pupils' books too often do not sufficiently help the pupils to move to higher levels of attainment. Good learning was evident when the teachers listened carefully to what the pupils said in their answers and showed by their response that they valued the pupils' thoughtful comment. When the teaching were poor in the Year 5/6 class, the pupils were not sure what they had to do and found the tasks insufficiently challenging. Over a period of time they have had a succession of different teachers and show little interest in scientific investigation.

135. The current co-ordinator and the colleague who is to take over responsibility for the subject in September are fully aware of the need to restore the impetus in the drive to raise standards of attainment and to improve pupils' progress throughout the school. The recently introduced plans, though good, have not had sufficient time to impact on pupils' learning. This is especially true of the sequence of activities pupils undertake when learning to perform scientific investigation by themselves. Pupils' work is not always consistently and accurately marked. As a result pupils do not always know what they have to do to improve their performance. New equipment is being purchased and the intention to buy equipment to use with computers for measuring time intervals and other quantities, such as change in temperature, is good because of its importance in practical experimental and investigative work.

ART AND DESIGN

136. It was only possible to observe one lesson in the infants during the inspection. Evidence from teachers' planning, the satisfactory progress that can be seen in pupils' work, the range of different media and techniques that the pupils experience and the generally good quality of display around the school, confirm that standards achieved at the ages of seven and eleven are appropriate for the age and ability of the pupils. Throughout the school there is evidence that a small minority of pupils achieve better than expected standards. This is a similar position to that found at the time of the last inspection in 1999. The range of experiences offered to the pupils indicates that the quality of teaching is good, and that pupils are making good progress across the school. The use of sketchbooks is a positive feature of the curricular provision, and provides further evidence of the good progress they make. Pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language make similar progress to other pupils.
137. In the lesson observed, teaching was satisfactory and pupils enjoyed using a 'camera viewfinder' to look at portraits and landscapes. Pupils have many opportunities to paint in two-dimensions and three-dimensions. They enjoy creating face paintings of themselves, using paint for the background colour and materials such as wood shavings, curled paper or wool for the hair. There are strong links with work in literacy as pupils in Years 1 and 2 create pictures of stories they have heard such as "The Three Little Pigs". Pupils in Year 2 particularly enjoyed reading "Can't you sleep little Bear?" and "Owl Babies" by Martin Waddell, and the paint and cut out illustrations of the stories that they produced were of a high standard. The pupils enjoy trying to paint in the style of famous artists. Opportunities to use clay, to create collage with a range of different materials and to make observational drawings can be seen. In the class for reception and Year 1 pupils, they link the story of "Noah's Ark" with pictures of the rainbow that gave them the opportunity to experiment with mixing colours. Similarly, links with the seasons of the year were seen in large and effective wall paintings on display. Pupils in the Speech and Language Unit produce art of satisfactory quality and some, such as their paintings of faces showing emotions like happiness and sadness, are of good quality. Pupils in the Years 2/3 class use a computer competently to produce interesting patterns and pictures of different characters.
138. Good progress continues through the junior stage and the techniques learned in the infant years are further developed. For example, paintings of the human figure become increasingly sophisticated. There are good links with other subjects, as can be seen in Years 3 and 4, when children paint realistic pictures of their favourite pizza and then cut them into segments to illustrate different fractions. In the Years 5/6 class, pupils use crayons to produce draw

observational pictures of sound quality. These are based on plants and fruits linked with their project on plants. Work about the Second World War acts as a stimulus for the children's drawing and painting. The development of skills in figure drawing is used in Year 6 to design figures and their costumes in design and technology. The pencil drawings on display were above the standards expected for pupils of this age. Pupils in Year 6 had obviously enjoyed experimenting with a range of different techniques - texture, thick paint and mixing colours, matching the right paint to the appropriate paper - to make their work bold and bright. Links with literacy were evident in the book jackets they designed. Good progress in observational drawing across the infant and junior stages is evident in good quality paintings of themselves, from photographs, done by pupils in Year 6.

139. The subject has been led effectively by the present co-ordinator who has raised standards since the school's last full inspection in 1997. The new co-ordinator, who takes full responsibility for the subject in September, is knowledgeable and has already identified key priorities for development. In particular she is working with other staff to adapt recent national guidance to meet the needs of the school and to improve the quality of assessment. She is working with a colleague to establish a specialist teaching and resource base for art and design and design and technology. There are cross-curricular links with music, with skills learned in art being used to draw accurate pictures of musical instruments in both key stages. Resource provision is good and resources are used well across the school. All the indications are that the school is well placed to further raise standards.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

140. At the time of the previous inspection standards were in line with those expected nationally at the end of both key stages. In the intervening period sound progress has been maintained and current standards are at nationally expected levels. It was only possible to observe two lessons in the subject, though some design and technology was taught in an art lesson for pupils in the Year 3/4 class. There was limited work evidence for scrutiny, mainly in the form of photographs, but scrutiny of planning and discussion with the staff confirms this judgement. Overall the quality of teaching observed was satisfactory, though there were elements of good quality teaching in these lessons.
141. By the time they reach the age of seven, pupils are beginning to develop skills in designing and making. In a lesson for Years 1/2 pupils, for example, they were designing a cover for a class poetry book. The teacher had provided planning sheets for the initial design. These had been used to sketch out the basic design and colours to be used and this had been followed with the pupils making a final copy. Between the two stages the pupils had discussed their designs with each other and with their teacher. As a result of the discussions, they had made adjustments to their designs before the final piece of work was produced. They showed how they could use colour effectively to make attractive designs and realised that the lettering they used was an important part of the design. During their time in the infant classes pupils are given opportunities to develop skills in designing and making such articles as finger puppets and simple vehicles.
142. In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make sound progress. By the time they leave the school at the age of eleven they create more complicated designs and have developed more flexibility in their making skills. In a Year 3 lesson pupils develop the vehicles they have made in the infants when they add moving axles to them, thus enabling them to move freely. They further build on their learning in Key Stage 1 when they make more complicated puppets. They utilise a wider range of materials and techniques. They use papier-mache, for example, when they make puppet heads to display expressions of happiness, sadness and fright. In a lesson for pupils in the Year 5/6 class, the pupils were designing posters about "Food hygiene", stemming from their food technology work in making bread. They were conscious of the need for careful use of colour and lettering to create a good impact.
143. The teachers generally plan effectively to help the pupils to make progress in their learning. They utilise a series of planning sheets for the pupils to create their designs. These sheets become progressively more challenging as the pupils get older. In Year 1, for example, they ask the pupils to draw a picture of what they want to make; in Year 2 the sheets ask pupils

about the tools they need to make their models. The sheets for Years 3/4 pupils demand greater evaluation of the finished product, whilst those for Years 5/6 ask for descriptions for the model's use. The teachers generally display very good management of pupils and this has the positive effect on their maintaining attention and concentration during the lessons.

144. The subject is well led and managed by the experienced co-ordinator. She has recently produced an action plan for the subject which incorporates the monitoring of the curriculum and the effects which the introduction of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidelines has had on the subject. Resource provision overall is good, though there are plans to develop the range of larger equipment following the loss through theft of a large amount of stock. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are catered for well and they make good progress in their learning. The subject is used effectively to develop the pupils' numeracy and literacy skills. They discuss their plans and write about their designs. They label their designs and the final products. Pupils measure and calculate lengths and weights when, for example, they cut wood or make bread.

GEOGRAPHY

145. Standards of attainment, by the end of Year 2 are in line with those expected nationally and have good features. Standards of attainment by the end of Year 6 are just about in line though the quantity of work produced is small. Progress as pupils move through the school is satisfactory overall but better in the infant classes than it is in the juniors. Since the previous inspection in 1997 improvement has been satisfactory. The newly devised weekly plans are beginning to have a good effect and the co-ordinator for the subject has a good vision of future developments for this subject. Resources continue to improve and the school works effectively with a local cluster of schools to continue to raise standards.
146. By the end of Year 2, pupils draw plans and simple maps to show the location of the school. They observe and record features of the local environment and classify them appropriately. They identify key buildings and talk about the human activities associated with them. Pupils distinguish between attractive and unattractive features of the landscape. They know the direction of France and they can show alternative routes to that country on a map. Pupils use colour on maps thoughtfully. However, they do not always include a key to show what the colours mean. Pupils use the four points of the compass correctly when, for example, they locate the sun in the evening. They compare pictures of Thurnby Lodge with a town off the West Coast of Scotland by picking out key features from photographs. They identify both physical and human features of the landscape but rely quite heavily upon the teacher when asked to give reasons why human activities are specific to a particular place. They do not set up their own surveys about the environment. Aspects of their written work are satisfactory.
147. By the end of Year 6 pupils show, on their own maps, the locations of key features. Sometimes they give their maps a correct title. Pupils in the Years 5/6 class are beginning to understand co-ordinates and scales though they are not yet confident in their use. They satisfactorily make decisions about the quality of their local environment but in the process, they display a limited range of geographical skills. Computers are not used sufficiently to improve map work nor to speed up their analysis and presentation of graphs and charts.

148. The teaching overall is satisfactory and it has good features. The planning is good and is linked effectively to the national requirements. However, pupils' progress is sometimes too slow because their work is not sufficiently well marked to enable them to take the next learning step for themselves, as they progress to more challenging tasks. Good comments are made in the pupils' books. For example, one pupil who was told to mark the position of each of the named cities with a black dot knew exactly what he had to do before the book was returned to the teacher. The teachers encourage their pupils with generous comments but there are no satisfactory procedures to enable colleagues to agree about standards when marking work. In a very good lesson seen the teacher ensured that the pupils gained confidence rapidly as they compared their home location with one in Scotland. She ensured very good progress by effective questioning and the lively use of humour to maintain pupils' attention. She used good quality pictures and big books very effectively to support pupils' learning. Key facts or words to be learned were written clearly on the white board to make the whole class think about their learning. Her very good subject knowledge and very good class management skills ensured that all pupils were challenged effectively. The pupils also received good support from a well-managed learning support assistant. The teacher also effectively encouraged the pupils to continue their learning at home. The lesson ended with very positive exchanges between the pupils, their parents and the class teacher as they worked together to ensure a cheerful and orderly departure. However, the work throughout the school indicates that too few pupils, especially the higher attainers, do not achieve above the expected levels.
149. The co-ordinator has clear priorities for the continued development of the subject. However, marking procedures need to be improved so that pupils' progress through the school can be more effectively monitored. Resource provision, though satisfactory overall, is unsatisfactory in relation to the use of computers for map work and data handling and for practical aspects of geography, such as fieldwork. The further development of literacy and numeracy skills is also seen to be desirable and this is good.

HISTORY

150. Only two history lessons were observed during the inspection. Both were in Key Stage 2, one in a mainstream class and one in the Speech and Language Unit. In one, the teaching was good, and it was satisfactory in the other. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in their learning throughout the school. By the time they leave the school, the quality of their work is at an appropriate level for pupils aged eleven. The consistency of planning across the school is an improvement since the last inspection and is an indication of the good leadership of the co-ordinator who is giving her colleagues a clear sense of direction for the future development of the subject. Taking all the evidence available into account the quality of teaching is good.
151. Based on the scrutiny of written work and displays, the youngest pupils clearly develop a sense of chronology and understand that things and people change over time. In Year 1, for example, pupils think about their own families and develop simple ideas about how we find out about the past. Pupils are able to make comparisons between old and new, through examining a good range of artefacts before and after the introduction of electricity. They learn to use terms associated with the passage of time and are beginning to think about why things happen. By the end of the infant stage, most understand a time line, they have studied the history of transport and clothes, and enjoyed topics such as the journey of the Pilgrim Fathers in the Mayflower and the flying achievements of the Wright brothers.
152. Pupils in the Years 3/4 class enjoy studying about Ancient Egypt and learning about how the Egyptians lived, and the kinds of foods that they ate. There are strong links with literacy as the pupils and their teacher read a range of non-fiction books, and with art as they draw and paint pictures related to the topic. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils use the skills they have learned earlier to interpret events in the Second World War, dealing with serious issues such as the Blitz of London and German cities and the diary and death of Anne Frank. The stimulus provided by this topic has provided opportunities for extended factual and imaginative writing, poetry and art.

153. The curriculum is enriched through the use of artefacts, posters and videos, and through fiction that is read to the pupils and then discussed with them. Teachers make effective use of historical videos and give pupils the opportunities to listen to music from the time they are studying, such as the Tudors and the Second World War. The pupils also have the opportunity to visit a number of historical sites. There is a need, however, to adapt the national guidance that the school is using to match the specific needs of the school and to improve the present satisfactory provision and use of resources. Although the informal, monitoring and assessment procedures currently in use are satisfactory, there is a need to formalise them and to make recording more precise. The co-ordinator has already identified these areas as priorities for improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

154. Standards of attainment in information and communication technology by the time pupils reach the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below those expected nationally for pupils of these ages. The progress in learning as pupils move through the school, is good throughout both key stages. This is largely because of the high quality teaching pupils receive. They produced good quality printed work, which they understood and would be able to use again.
155. Almost all pupils are able to use computers to produce these printed sheets but the work was exceptionally good in Year 2 and Year 4. Pupils in Year 2 produce accurately written sentences and questions. Pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 use the "delete" and "backspace" keys to edit their own writing. Pupils in Year 4 used the computers to produce graphs and charts of the results they had collected from their own research projects. The pupils explained clearly what the charts were showing and how to use them. Pupils in the Years 2/3 class use the computer to produce pictures. Pupils in the Years 5/6 class used the Internet to obtain information about, for example, Cowboy Boots and they talked enthusiastically about their work. These pupils are very well aware of the vast amount of information available on the Internet. The school is very careful to ensure that this access is carefully supervised and controlled. This group of pupils is also aware of the need to eliminate inaccurate data before entering the values into the computer. However, they are not as competent as they should be in using computers to collect and analyse data. Older pupils know that the school needs to update its equipment but many also perceive the computer as a toy rather than a useful tool. The amount of work they produce is too small
156. In 1997 when the school was inspected, the subject was identified as having attainment below expected levels, inadequate teaching plans and poor resources. As a consequence the pupils made unsatisfactory progress. Pupils were not confident in using information and communication technology and computers were rarely switched on. There was no provision for collecting data. The teachers had low expectations of the pupils. In 1999 a second inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectors noted the improvements that had been made, though standards were still below those expected nationally. Current inspection evidence confirms both of those judgements. Standards have improved, good plans are in place, some pupils are making very good progress and the computers are used for much of the time. The range of activities in which pupils show confidence, however, is too narrow. During the inspection the only equipment designed to enable pupils to learn about control, a programmable robot, was unserviceable. Too little use is made of computers to support learning in other subjects. For example, there is no provision for computer-aided manufacture in design technology and insufficient work with spreadsheets in mathematics. The computer suite is too small to take a whole class and it is not adequately furnished nor equipped. There are neither demonstration nor projection facilities and the pupils have no free flat surfaces on which to do their work away from the computers. In most classrooms there is just one freestanding computer, although these are relatively new and reliable.
157. The quality of teaching is good overall and this is reflected in the good progress made by pupils. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 gain considerable benefit from a project on spaceships when they put on their 'space suits' and solve problems which involve matching shapes and moving the pointer on the screen. They gain good experience of multimedia presentations and large screens when they make a visit out of school. Their progress was good because they were very well cared for and properly instructed in the use of up-to-date equipment. Pupils

with special educational needs make especially good progress in these contexts, for example, when learning how to make labels and to write questions about the stories in the books they have been sharing with their teacher. In small groups and with good interactions with adults some pupils learn well. Each pupil is able to take the most appropriate next step for them. Pupils who have special educational needs were making good progress because of the teacher's good knowledge and good class management to make the best possible use of the single computer. In this lesson the pupils took turns and worked well in pairs. This was the result of the teacher having made her expectations of both behaviour and attainment very clear. The pupils knew the criteria for a well-written story, that is, correct letter shapes, proper spelling and punctuation and careful editing, so they could begin to assess their own progress. Pupils acquire basic skills quite rapidly when both the teacher and the learning support assistant are clear what they want the pupils to learn. When the number of computers is sufficient for each pupil to have a prolonged period of time at the keyboard and knows that help is at hand when needed, pupils make good progress. Pupils in Year 1, work individually with good support from learning support assistants to make good progress with the development of their literacy skills. Similarly, pupils in Year 4 make very good progress in the development of their numeracy and research skills because both the teacher and the learning support assistant are confident not only with the computer skills but also with mathematics. All pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language were enthusiastic and clearly set to continue the good progress. The access to e-mail and the Internet is possible and carefully controlled. This is good.

158. The school has made sensible investments both in equipment and in teacher and learning support assistant training. Indeed teachers have worked out class management strategies to minimise the negative effects of overcrowding and technical hitches such as printers becoming overloaded or equipment not working. The computer suite, though an important aid for learning, is too small and is insufficiently well equipped or furnished. The development of the computer room was at a time when the school was short of funding, though was the result of good management strategies. This investment has already benefited many pupils.

MUSIC

159. By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment in music is in line with that expected nationally. All pupils achieve well and progress is good, especially in performance music. This is in marked contrast to the previous inspection report where standards and progress were below national expectations. All elements of the music curriculum are taught, including singing. Pupils sing well in assembly and in class. They have a good awareness of phrase and meaning and their diction is clear. What they sometimes lack in pitch is amply compensated for by their enthusiasm.
160. In Key Stage 1, pupils create and explore long and short sounds using percussion instruments and their voices. Pupils know that different notes have different lengths and clap simple rhythms. They sing action songs such as "Six Little Ducks That I Once Knew", and accompany themselves on percussion. Pupils know the names of the instruments and know how to make the best sound. They learn how to play together and that each has an important contribution to make. Pupils demonstrate their growing awareness that music helps to create and sustain a mood. Pupils from the Speech and Language Unit join the singing class and are perfectly integrated into the group. One boy is confident enough to sing solo. All pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.
161. In Key Stage 2, pupils become more adventurous in their music making. In one class, pupils form a percussion band and play, under the baton of a fellow pupil, from a simple graphic score. They assess their own performance and know how to modify it to reach a desired effect. In another class, pupils sing "Yellow Submarine" and embellish the performance with dramatic actions. Pupils in Year 5 compose mood music to simulate their entry into school and perform admirably on a range of percussion instruments. Older pupils listen to and compose their own music on computer.
162. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. It is consistently better than at the previous inspection. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Teachers prepare lessons well as part of a clearly set

out scheme, so that learning is continuous and progressive. Teachers expect good work and behaviour and they are not disappointed. Pupils respond positively and enthusiastically. They enjoy taking part. Pupils are very well managed. Teachers usually find a good balance between creativity and control. Resources are enterprisingly used to ensure that the emphasis is upon making music. Teachers and learning support assistants work very well together. A visiting pianist provides very good support.

163. Music in the school is enthusiastically managed and very well organised. Good support is given to teachers in the preparation and the delivery of lessons. There are many extra-curricular activities. There are two recorder groups, for example, and an excellent school orchestra. A good number of pupils learn to play instruments with tuition from visiting teachers. A wide range of recorded music is a regular and planned feature of morning assembly. Pupils listen attentively. The school choir sings regularly for the enjoyment of senior citizens. There are end-of-term concerts where pupils experience the stimulus of live performance. Music has a much firmer place in the curriculum than at the previous inspection and contributes well to the cultural life of the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

164. It was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection, but evidence gleaned from teachers' planning and through discussion with them, indicate that standards are in line with those expected nationally for pupils at ages seven and eleven. This judgement is similar to that made at the time of the previous inspection. It was not possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching from the limited evidence available, though in both lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good and the pupils made good progress in their learning.
165. In the lesson for pupils in Years 1/2, the pupils knew that before they started exercise they should warm up their bodies in order that they do not hurt themselves. After a short warm-up session they created a series of balances using different parts of their bodies; feet, hands, bottoms, stomachs and knees. The teacher gave good demonstrations of the types of balance which the pupils could practise. This led to the pupils building sequences of linked movements. They worked hard at this to put together a good sequence, with varying degrees of success. As the lesson progressed the teacher made greater demands of the pupils. They were asked to work in pairs to create reflective balances. The pupils discussed their work sensibly before trying to make their balances.
166. In the games lesson for pupils in Year 6 the teacher enjoyed good relationships with the pupils and this resulted in them working hard to progress and please the teacher. This, in turn, meant that the pupils learned well in the lesson. After an effective warm-up session pupils were involved in a series of small games involving throwing, hitting and catching skills. The games incorporated rounders and soft-ball cricket. The boys and girls played well together and both sexes were involved in both games. By the time pupils leave the school aged eleven, about three-quarters of them can swim the required 25 metres. They have swimming lessons each term at a local pool.
167. The range of extra-curricular sporting activities arranged by the co-ordinator has a positive effect on the development of skills. Pupils are given opportunities to have coaching in and to play football, rugby, netball, athletics, cricket and tennis. Staff from Leicester City Football Club's "Soccer in the Community" scheme come to the school to lead the coaching. The co-ordinator leads the subject in a satisfactory manner. The school has recently introduced the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work for the subject and has adjusted it to ensure coverage of each aspect of the subject during each two year period. The policy for the subject is out-dated, but a review is planned for the next school year.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

168. By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. The standards noted in the previous inspection report have been maintained. There is now a greater emphasis placed upon the comparison of world religions. The key focus is

upon the similarities and differences of Christianity and Islam. Pupils' knowledge and understanding is enhanced by visits to places of worship and more are planned.

169. Pupils make sound progress at both key stages. Pupils' understanding of the religious dimension to life grows steadily. There is a good link between assembly themes and religious education lessons. The link between belief and behaviour is always emphasised. This was well illustrated in a Key Stage 1 lesson that was planned to demonstrate the practical nature of religious belief. A large quantity of plastic balls was rolled onto the floor and pupils, individually and in pairs, tried to pick them up. It was only when the whole class worked together that it was possible to complete the task. The pupils quickly understood and are unlikely to forget how the problem was solved.
170. Pupils in Key Stage 2 know the stories of the Bible and the parables of Jesus. They understand the meaning of the parables of "The Good Samaritan" and "The Prodigal Son". Some older pupils are able to engage in discussion and present their own views and relate their own stories. Pupils learn about the five pillars of Islam and understand the reasons for prayer. They begin to see the significance of religious belief and, in a small way, they begin to question the meaning of life.
171. The quality of teaching varies widely. It ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. Overall, it is sound. In the better lessons, teaching and learning is well prepared and well organised. Good use is made of resources to emphasise key points. Effective use is made of videotape and artefacts from the world religions. Pupils are managed well and questions are well used to encourage interest and response. In the unsatisfactory lesson, many pupils were not engaged in the discussion and were not sure what they were expected to do. When asked to say how a piece of music makes them feel, there is so much extraneous noise in the classroom that they cannot hear it. Consequently, pupils make little progress.
172. The management of the subject is satisfactory and there is a clear plan for its development, including provision for the assessment of pupils' work and the monitoring of teaching. The implementation of the plan, augmented by further in-service training, will ensure a firmer place for the subject in the school's curriculum.