

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **RYTON PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Worksop

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122737

Headteacher: Mr P Hunt

Reporting inspector: John J Williams  
22516

Dates of inspection: 10 - 13 June 2002

Inspection number: 207597

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

© Crown copyright 2002

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

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary with Nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Memorial Avenue  
Worksop  
Nottinghamshire

Postcode: S80 2BW

Telephone number: 01909 472442

Fax number: 01909 483581

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs E Parker

Date of previous inspection: 19 October 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22516	John Williams	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities Physical education	What sort of school is it? How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
19366	Bill Walker	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? How well is the school led and managed?
19623	Michael Cahill	Team inspector	Design and technology Information and communication technology Mathematics Music	
23196	Susan Chesters	Team inspector	English as an additional language Foundation stage Religious education	How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements
25509	Judith Clarke	Team Inspector	English History	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
15236	Morag Thorpe	Team inspector	Special educational needs Art and design Geography Science	

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd

Demeter House  
Station Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2RS

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

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

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
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	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>28</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated close to the centre of Worksop. With 306 pupils it is a larger than average primary school; an additional 80 pupils attend the nursery on a part-time basis. It has a very small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language and none for whom English is at an early stage of acquisition. High mobility is a particular feature of the school with approximately one quarter of the pupils leaving or joining the school each year at other than the usual times. The social and economic backgrounds of the majority of the pupils are considerably disadvantaged and part of the school's catchment area is recognised by Nottinghamshire as a social priority area. Unemployment in the area is high. Forty seven per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, a figure well above average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs (37.3 per cent) is above the national average. No pupils have a statement of special educational need, due to the local education authority's policy of not making formal assessments.

In the week before the inspection the school's main hall was flooded and put out of action for the inspection week. This affected the school's provision for assemblies and physical education.

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

In 1998 the school was put into special measures because it failed to provide a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. As the result of an inspection carried out in 2000, the school had improved to such an extent that it was taken out of special measures. This is an improving school that now gives a satisfactory standard of education. It gives satisfactory value for money.

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

- It provides very well for the children in the nursery and reception classes, ensuring that they achieve very well and receive a very good start to their education.
- Pupils from Years 1 to 6 achieve well and this results in standards showing an upward trend in Years 1 – 5.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Relationships in school are good.
- There is a good range of activities outside of lessons.
- Staff work hard to ensure that this is an inclusive school.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are not high enough.
- Subject leaders in science and non-core subjects are insufficiently empowered to monitor work in their subjects.
- The use of assessment information in subjects other than English and mathematics is underdeveloped.
- In some lessons teachers do not focus sufficiently on what they want pupils to learn.
- Unsatisfactory standards of internal decoration hamper teachers' efforts in creating an environment in which pupils can be inspired to learn.
- Many parents do not involve themselves sufficiently in their children's learning.
- Punctuality and levels of attendance are unsatisfactory.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The quality of teaching throughout the school has improved since the last inspection, as has the progress of pupils. Standards are slowly rising in English, mathematics and science though they are not yet high enough. Standards in the remaining subjects are slowly beginning to rise. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development has improved and is now good. Teachers use assessment information well in mathematics and writing to set targets for pupils' progress. The school development

plan identifies clear priorities for improvement. The headteacher, senior management team and staff demonstrate a shared commitment to improving standards.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E*	E*	E*	E
Mathematics	E	E	E*	E
Science	E	E	E	C

**Key**

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

(Similar schools are those which have a similar number of pupils entitled to free school meals. E\* indicates that the school's standards are in the lowest 5 per cent nationally)

The above table shows that the results of the 2001 national tests for pupils, at the end of Year 6, were in the lowest five per cent nationally in English and mathematics, and well below average in science. When compared with similar schools pupils' attainment in English and mathematics was well below average. Attainment in science was average when compared with that of pupils from similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that in the current Year 6, a year group where there has been mobility of over 60 per cent and one third of the pupils are on the register for special educational needs, standards are very low in English and well below average in mathematics and science.

In Year 6, standards are below average in information and communication technology, and geography. They are average in history and above average in art and design. No judgements were made for design and technology, music and physical education because not enough lessons or pupils' work could be seen during the inspection. Standards in religious education are in line with expectations. Although in the current Year 6 standards in most subjects are low, the pupils achieve well in relation to their previous attainment. However, the majority have moved schools at least once and have not had a long enough time at this school to make sufficient progress to reach average standards. Standards in all other year groups show sign of distinct improvement, although still below average in English, mathematics and science,

In the 2001 national tests and tasks at the end of Year 2, pupils attained well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools, results were average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. For the current Year 2 pupils, standards are below average in English, mathematics, science and geography. They are average in information and communication technology, art and design and history. No judgements were made in design and technology, music and physical education due to lack of evidence. Standards in religious education meet expectations. Children achieve very well in the nursery and reception classes but because of their very low skills as they start school, very few will reach the goals set for the Foundation Stage by the beginning of Year 1.

Pupils with special educational needs, including those with specific learning difficulties and behaviour problems, make good progress. There is no significant difference between the attainments of boys and girls. The school sets itself realistic targets for improvement each year and is beginning to achieve them.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
--------	---------



Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. The majority of pupils are happy and interested in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The behaviour of most pupils is good. However, a substantial minority of pupils find sustained concentration difficult and do not always behave well.
Personal development and relationships	The school's provision for personal development is good. The result is that the majority of pupils know how to behave sensibly. Most pupils relate well to each other and to adults.
Attendance	Punctuality is a problem and rates of attendance are below the national average.

Good relationships are a strength of the school.

## 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 majority of pupils learn well at this school. One of the reasons for this is that the quality of teaching is good. During the inspection teaching in three-quarters of the lessons observed was good or better. In one quarter it was very good. The consequence of this good teaching is that the pupils learn and achieve well. Teaching, in both literacy and numeracy, is good. In the best lessons teachers succeed in making their lessons exciting, by challenging all groups of pupils effectively. All staff contribute to a strong team and work well together. This results in the purposeful atmosphere in school, in which the majority of pupils thrive and learn successfully. The minority of pupils who find concentration difficult and do not behave well do not make such good progress.

A major strength of the teaching is the way in which staff have a very wide range of strategies to keep pupils motivated and behaving well. They teach the basic skills, especially in literacy and numeracy, consistently well and have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve. As a result, most pupils know exactly what is expected of them and they work hard. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and receive good quality support from the learning support assistants. Hence these pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils of all abilities and from all backgrounds are fully included in all lessons and make good progress. The school has begun to identify its gifted and talented pupils and offers them challenging work in lessons.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of visits and visitors into the school which brings the curriculum to life and makes it more interesting for the pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall. The co-ordinator gives good leadership and management, ably supported and guided by the senior teaching assistant who is also a governor. The teaching assistants are effectively deployed and pupils gain as a result. Insufficient reference is made to children's needs in teachers' planning. Insufficient time is allocated to some pupils.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The pupils are given good guidance to help them become useful members of the community.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a caring community. Teachers deal with pupils' problems with courtesy and respect. Systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, whilst good in English and mathematics, are underdeveloped in other subjects.

Despite the school's best efforts many parents do not involve themselves in the work of the school. Most parents do not make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning at school, or at home.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, supported by his two deputies, gives satisfactory leadership and management. With the exception of English and mathematics, subject leaders are not yet empowered to monitor standards and provision in their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are supportive of the school and fulfil their statutory duties. They are beginning to be more involved in shaping the direction of the school and in understanding its strengths and weaknesses. They do not yet take a sufficiently active role in strategic planning.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school monitors its teaching effectively. It carefully tracks progress in English and mathematics. It needs now to evaluate progress in other subjects in order to bring about improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is satisfactory although there are some deficiencies. The school seeks to gain the best value when purchasing goods or services.

There is a good number of well-qualified and experienced teaching and non-teaching staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. Learning resources are satisfactory in most subjects although there are deficiencies in design and technology and physical education. There is also a shortage of good quality reading books. Teachers mount good quality displays but the poor quality of the internal décor of the building detracts from their efforts to motivate pupils' interest and inspire high quality work.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teaching is good</li> <li>They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem</li> <li>The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best</li> <li>Their children make good progress in school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Behaviour in school</li> <li>The amount of homework their children take home</li> </ul>

It was difficult to determine parents' views as there was a very limited response to the questionnaire. Only 33 questionnaires were returned of the 386 sent out. 10 parents attended the Parents' Meeting.

Inspection findings confirm the generally good views of this small number of parents. Most pupils behave well in school. The amount of work the school expects pupils to do at home is satisfactory.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Pupils begin school with low levels of attainment. As they move through the school they achieve well, regardless of their background or ability. However, very few pupils start and complete the whole of their primary education in the school and this has a negative impact on standards. Each year group in school has a high level of mobility. This destabilises the classes and adversely affects attainment. In some year groups, over three-quarters of the pupils have joined the school at times other than at the beginning of Year 1. Another factor affecting standards is that a high proportion of pupils in each year group is on the register for special educational needs. These needs range from mild to more severe learning difficulties and behavioural problems. It is against this background that pupils across the school achieve well, although standards do remain low.

#### *Foundation Stage*

2. The initial assessment of children's abilities when they first enter the nursery shows that most start school with poor levels of attainment for three-year-olds in all areas of learning. Many children have particularly poor communication and social skills as they start in the nursery. They achieve very well because of the consistently good and often very good teaching and the good quality curriculum that enthuses the children. Nevertheless, by the time they move to the reception classes, the levels of attainment of the majority are still well below average. This is borne out by the first assessments made of their ability in the reception year. All children continue to achieve very well because of the quality of the teaching that they receive. By the end of the reception year about a quarter of the children are on target to reach the Early Learning Goals<sup>1</sup> set for the age group. However, this is still below average for the group as a whole, even though it does represent very good progress in the Foundation Stage.

#### *Years 1 and 2*

3. Results in the Year 2001 national tests and tasks show that standards for the pupils in Year 2 were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools, these results were in line in reading and writing but below average in mathematics. In science, teacher assessments show standards were well below average. Indications are that results in the 2002 national tests and tasks show slight improvement in all subjects and are likely to compare more favourably with schools in similar contexts.
4. Inspection findings show that, for the current group of pupils in Year 2, standards in English, mathematics and science are below average. Standards have improved since these subjects were last inspected. This upward trend is due to the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. These are now beginning to impact more positively on standards. Another factor contributing to the upward trend in the core<sup>2</sup> subjects, is the improved quality of teaching since the school was last inspected.
5. Standards in information and communication technology are average, which is an improvement since the last time the subject was inspected. Standards in art and design and history are average and have improved since the last time they were inspected. Standards in geography are below average. There was not enough evidence from lesson observations, nor from pupils' work, during the inspection to make judgements about attainment in design and technology, music or

---

<sup>1</sup> QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Early Learning Goals' for children in this stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of six. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

<sup>2</sup> The 'core subjects' referred to are English, mathematics and science. 'Non-core subjects' are art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education.

physical education. Standards in religious education have improved considerably since they were last inspected and now meet expectations.

#### *Years 3 - 6*

6. The results achieved by pupils in Year 6 in national tests in the year 2001 for English and mathematics were very low and in the bottom five per cent in the country. In science, they were well below average. This has been the pattern over the past four years. These results are well below those of similar schools in English and mathematics and in line with similar schools in science. Indications are that the 2002 results show an upward trend, particularly in mathematics.
7. Inspection evidence shows that standards in Year 6 in English are very low. In mathematics and science they are well below average. There is a high mobility factor in this year group (over 60 per cent). Also one third of the pupils are on the register for special educational needs. This has a significantly negative impact on attainment. Improvement is now discernible but has been slow over the past four years. However, in Years 3 to 5, improvement in standards has accelerated. They are closer to average attainment in English, mathematics and science and this trend puts the Year 5 pupils on target possibly to attain average levels by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6. This improvement is a result of the consistently good teaching, the implementation of the national strategies and the good emphasis placed on these core subjects by all staff.
8. Standards in other subjects are also slowly improving. Standards in art are above average. In history they are average. In information and communication technology and geography standards remain below average at Year 6. However, they are closer to average in Year 5. This shows a continuing upward trend. It was not possible to make judgements for physical education because of difficulties in providing lessons during the inspection week. No judgement was made of standards in design and technology or music, other than in singing, which is average. Standards in religious education have improved considerably and now meet expectations

#### *Across the school*

9. There is no significant difference between the attainments of boys and girls. The school monitors the situation carefully and if a difference is noted it adjusts the curriculum to redress the balance. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. They regularly meet the targets set for them in their individual education plans. They are supported effectively in lessons by learning support assistants, who work in very close partnership with class teachers to meet pupils' specific learning needs.
10. The school sets itself appropriate targets and strives to achieve them. Staff are committed to raising standards. The satisfactory coverage of the curriculum, throughout the school, ensures that pupils achieve well during their time in school. Also, when teachers set clear learning objectives in lessons, this has a positive effect on raising standards.

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

11. The personal development of pupils is good and the improvement in behaviour that was noted in the last inspection report has continued. It is generally satisfactory, but there is still a significant minority of pupils whose behaviour is at times unacceptable. The response of pupils to teaching is usually good, and at times, particularly in Years 3 to 6, it is very good. Relationships across the school are good and pupils have a high regard for their teachers. Older pupils take advantage of the opportunities offered to exercise some responsibility in the daily life of the school. The attendance rate is unsatisfactory and there is much unpunctuality.
12. Ryton Park is an inclusive community with a broad spectrum of ability. Pupils come from varied domestic backgrounds. Most have a positive approach to their education; they attend regularly and on time, quickly get involved in daily routines and are keen and interested to be involved in whatever the school has to offer. Others show less interest and commitment. Many arrive looking tired, with an attitude which suggests compliance rather than eager anticipation. They seem to lack a sense of urgency, unconcerned when they are late, indifferent if they interrupt the class. Sometimes these pupils engage in challenging behaviour during lessons and it is only the good classroom management of the teachers that prevents them from disrupting the learning of the whole class. Despite the best efforts of the teachers, the day often gets off to a slow start.

Pupils generally are not over confident and some, even amongst the older pupils, have difficulty articulating their ideas and comments. Initially they seemed reluctant to approach inspectors to ask questions or talk about their school. Nevertheless, once engaged in conversation many spoke happily about their work, indicated pride in their school and quite markedly expressed appreciation for their teachers “who will always help you if you have problems”, and whom the older ones say they will miss when they move on to another school.

13. Pupils benefit greatly from the provision made by the school to cater for their many and varied needs. They get off to a very good start in the nursery where they quickly become accustomed to routines in the warm and friendly environment which they find there. This positive experience benefits them as they move up the school. They come to recognise the high expectations which their teachers have of their response in the classroom. The great majority listen well, avoid calling out unless invited to do so and concentrate on their individual tasks. In many lessons they give every indication of enjoying their learning, an impression supported by the comments of pupils who talk about their teachers being “really friendly” and “making learning fun”. Overall, the behaviour in the classrooms is usually good and often very good. This makes a positive contribution to pupils’ learning.
14. Pupils with special educational needs show positive attitudes to their work in most lessons, especially when they work in small groups. They relate well to classroom support staff and show greater interest when they are well supported. Pupils with emotional and behavioural needs behave appropriately when taught individually or in small groups but, as reported in a previous inspection, problems occur both in class and out of lessons when there is insufficient support for them throughout the week.
15. About the school pupils’ behaviour is generally satisfactory. Most of them move about the building in a calm and orderly way. They almost invariably hold open doors, defer to adults, and offer to help visitors who may be lost or unsure of their intended destination. For the most part they play together amicably and enjoy themselves. There are, however, many instances when individuals or small groups of pupils act in an unacceptable way. They take advantage of situations when they are not directly supervised to engage in fighting, jump on to the fencing surrounding the playground, use the pretext of visiting the toilet to run about inside the building, sometimes causing damage to property. On occasions their behaviour is oppressive. Pupils themselves are well aware of these problems. They know the difference between right and wrong and are very conscious of the impact their actions can have on others. Many of the older pupils accept the challenge to improve the situation by volunteering to support the midday supervisors in their work, or acting as arbitrators to try and resolve individual disputes. In this and in their enthusiasm for the recently established school council they show a readiness to accept responsibility and become more involved in seeking to improve the daily life of the school. However, in lessons they do not yet play a sufficiently active part in planning and organising their own work.
16. Throughout the school relationships are good. Most pupils collaborate well in class, enjoy each other’s company at play and clearly have a great regard for their teachers and other members of the staff. Several pupils talked about the good friendships which they develop and the way in which they help each other to do what is right. These good relationships, which extend across age groupings, are graphically illustrated by the success of the weekly “paired reading” scheme whereby older pupils assist younger colleagues with their literacy skills. This has both educational and social benefits and is particularly helpful to those who do not have an opportunity to be heard reading at home.
17. There have been no permanent exclusions at the school in the last year. Proper use is made of short, fixed-term exclusions as an appropriate sanction for unacceptable behaviour.
18. There is a difficulty in establishing the precise, overall attendance rate at the school. The numbers on roll vary sometimes from day to day. The school’s system for recording attendance lacks the rigour that is needed to make an accurate calculation. However, available evidence showed high absence rates and much unpunctuality.





## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Three quarters of the lessons observed during the inspection were good or better. One quarter of the lessons observed were very good. This is an improvement since the school was last inspected, when one third of lessons were judged to be good. Weaknesses in teaching in the last inspection were reflected in the low expectations some teachers had of their pupils. This is no longer the case. The strength of teaching in the school is now significant. It is consistently good and often better. This is because of the more effective monitoring of teaching and learning now undertaken by senior managers. It also reflects the enthusiasm with which all staff have tackled recent changes and the way in which they work together for the benefit of all pupils.
20. The overall quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and often very good. It is also good, overall, in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching in lessons seen ranged from satisfactory to very good. In Years 5 and 6, the teaching seen was good or better in the majority of lessons. This good teaching results in good learning throughout the school. Learning is good in Years 5 and 6 because of the good quality teaching and, also, because in most subjects, the pupils begin to use the key skills they have learned previously more effectively. Staff work very well as a team, which results in a consistent approach to teaching.
21. Throughout the school, the teaching of literacy in English lessons and numeracy in mathematics lessons is good. The teachers have worked hard to implement both strategies, which they have done well. Interesting texts and a good range of carefully selected big books, guided reading texts and relevant reading books have ensured that literacy lessons are challenging and relevant to the needs of the pupils. Numeracy lessons have good mental warm-up sessions in which the vast majority of the pupils are engaged and clearly focused on improvements in their mental agility.
22. The teaching of literacy and numeracy supports learning in other curriculum areas. For example, in science lessons the pupils have the opportunity to measure accurately and to record the results of their experiments, explaining what the results show. Teachers are beginning to promote sound cross-curricular links and, in this way, the pupils begin to see the relevance of their learning and the way it develops. They use information and communication technology as a tool in other subjects. For example, pupils use a data-handling program to generate graphs and diagrams to display results from their mathematical and scientific work.
23. Throughout the school, the teachers show commitment in their drive to improve their teaching. Senior management monitors teaching carefully and is well aware of strengths and weaknesses throughout the school. All staff strive to improve their own practice and provide the best possible teaching for their pupils. The support and assistance that the teachers give to each other has a positive impact on the quality of teaching within the school.
24. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress according to their targets in the basic skills of numeracy and literacy. They are assessed thoroughly and their progress is carefully recorded. However, in a number of lessons, especially in science, no reference is made to their particular needs. This impedes their progress.
25. The teaching of the children in the Foundation Stage is good and often very good. The teachers have a clear understanding of the needs of young children. Their enthusiastic, supportive and patient approach enables the children to be confident in their learning and, consequently, they achieve very well. Careful planning ensures that the needs of all children are successfully met.
26. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach. They use the correct subject specific language to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of each subject. This is particularly evident in English, mathematics and science.
27. In most lessons, teachers place a significant level of demand upon all individuals, to ensure that they are fully involved. In less successful lessons, the challenge may not be made absolutely

clear to all pupils. Thus, pupils are unsure of what it is they are to do and lose interest in the tasks, with a subsequent drop in the pace of learning. However, in most lessons, pupils listen carefully to the good instructions that they receive and know exactly what they are expected to do. Most work hard and learn well.

28. Teachers' planning is satisfactory. In literacy and numeracy, the teachers plan closely to the structured frameworks. They plan all lessons well and, at the beginning of each lesson, recap and revise previous learning effectively. Most share the learning objectives for each lesson with the pupils. They return to the aims at plenary sessions to ensure that the objectives have been met. In other lessons the best learning occurs when teachers have a very clear idea of exactly what it is they want their pupils to learn. Teaching could be improved if precisely focused in this way, with clear learning targets for pupils of all abilities. Occasionally, teachers do not reiterate the aims of the lesson during the session, which results in pupils not focusing clearly on their learning.
29. Teachers' expectations of the pupils and their work are high. They question pupils well to establish what pupils know and understand and to help them to think for themselves. All staff have high expectations that pupils will behave well and work hard. The majority of pupils live up to these expectations. Teachers praise and encourage them so that they give their best performance. This ensures that most pupils are fully involved in their lessons, work hard and concentrate well. As a result, pupils achieve well.
30. Teachers manage the pupils very well. They constantly strive to find ways to reward and encourage good behaviour and work. They are very sympathetic and positive with the minority of pupils who find sustained concentration difficult. Lessons are well organised. Teachers use time and resources effectively and, as a result, lessons move along at a good pace. The learning support staff give good support to pupils and considerably enhance their learning. They are appreciated by the school as a very valuable resource.
31. The quality of day-to-day assessment is good. Teachers monitor the pupils' work well and give support and advice, as needed. There is much good practice. However, there is not a consistent approach, throughout the school, to assessing pupils' attainment and progress and using the outcomes to inform planning in all subjects. Teachers usually mark pupils' work in an encouraging and supportive manner, sometimes indicating what the pupils need to do to improve further. Homework is used satisfactorily to supplement work done in class.

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

32. The quality and range of the curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory. All statutory requirements are met. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant for the pupils. This is a similar position to that at the time of the last inspection. The school works hard to provide many enriching experiences for the pupils, through visitors to the school and visits for the pupils to places of educational interest. This makes a positive contribution to the subjects the pupils are studying. For example, a poet has recently worked with pupils in the school and he gave them insights to writing their own poetry. The expertise and interests these experts share with the pupils enable them to see the rich diversity of opportunities available to them. There is a clear emphasis on engaging the pupils' interests in their learning. Pupils who wish to learn to play a musical instrument are given the opportunity to do so and music specialists come to the school to teach the pupils. A range of instrumental tuition is available including the hand-bells. Religious education was originally taught using the "Here I am" syllabus; more recently the school has adapted and linked this scheme to the requirements of the government- recommended scheme of work.
33. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage has been reviewed in light of the recommended Early Learning Goals for children aged under six. The teachers' planning is good and covers a range of

suitable topics highly relevant to the children. Daily planning is thorough and clearly defines what the children are to learn. The emphasis is on developing the children's skills. They learn through first hand experiences and through play. During the reception year, the teachers have been extending the time spent on teaching numeracy and literacy. At the time of the inspection, both classes were implementing the full numeracy and literacy hours most effectively.

34. The school has endeavoured to keep a broad curriculum whilst maintaining a clear emphasis on the core subjects of English and mathematics. This is because the school perceived there was a lot of work to do to improve standards in English and mathematics and so a lot of time has been rightly allocated to these subjects. Planning is thorough and consistent throughout the school. The teachers plan together and this ensures that parallel classes learn the same topics and have equality of opportunity. In some cases planning is not detailed enough to tightly focus on what the pupils are to learn. Plans have learning objectives but they sometimes focus on what the teachers are to teach, and not exactly on what the pupils are to learn. All subjects are supported by schemes of work. These are mainly drawn from the government-recommended schemes of work.
35. Staff have satisfactorily implemented the National Strategies of Literacy and Numeracy. The school has amended the literacy hour format and has provided a separate structured reading session for the pupils. This refinement has enabled the teachers to spend more time in literacy lessons focusing on the pupils' writing skills. This has been a whole-school focus for improvement. Similarly, the adoption of the Numeracy Strategy has produced satisfactory results, evidenced in the improving achievement of pupils in mathematics throughout the school. The school has also introduced extra structured support systems for pupils in mathematics and English who would benefit. The school also provides booster lessons, which help the older pupils to improve their work.
36. There is good equality of access and of opportunities for all pupils in this school. Small class sizes enable the pupils to have good levels of help with their work and so they achieve well. Pupils who are from Traveller families have very good support from the school. They have packs of work to guide their learning as they travel and when they are in school every effort is made to fully integrate them into the life and work of the school. For example, pupils in the school are taught about the Traveller way of life, so that they fully understand their importance and value within society. Social inclusion for all pupils is a strength of the school. All staff make every effort to include pupils of all abilities and backgrounds into all activities.
37. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and, as a result, most pupils make good progress. The school ensures that pupils with special educational needs are included in the same range of lessons, activities and visits as the other pupils. Pupils benefit from the good support given by teaching assistants to ensure that they are fully included in all activities. Where pupils are withdrawn for learning in small groups, they benefit from activities which enhance their progress as the teaching assistants know them well and plan the activities with the teachers.
38. The provision for gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory but at a very early stage of development. There is a co-ordinator who has received appropriate training and is well informed. The school includes on its register the more able pupils as well as any gifted and talented pupils. There is a detailed policy and the headteacher and co-ordinator teach a range of thinking and reasoning skills to selected pupils. Most pupils on the register are identified as having strengths in English, mathematics or art and design, but very few are identified as having strengths in science. This reflects the fact that lesson plans in science do not include provision for gifted and talented pupils or even more able pupils in the large majority of lessons.
39. Each pupil is valued in this school and all are helped to succeed and develop. The school has many strategies in place to help the pupils to come to terms with their own strengths and areas for improvement. Pupils' personal development is well addressed through a programme that includes personal, social and health education, drug awareness, citizenship and sex education. These opportunities help to prepare the pupils to play an active role as citizens within the school and wider community. They give them confidence to talk about their own thoughts, ideas and feelings.

40. The provision of extra-curricular activities is good. There are a number of activities that cover a wide range of interests and talents. For example, the homework and information and communication technology clubs are well attended and give the pupils an opportunity to complete their homework under the careful guidance of the teachers present. The contribution the community makes to the life of the school is good. Members of the community and the governing body come to the school and help the pupils with their work. For example, a gentleman comes to school each morning to help the pupils with their reading. The pupils value his presence and the impact upon standards of reading in this group is measurable.
41. Relationships with other schools are good. The school has links with the local family of schools, which includes the local high school. There are a developing number of educational links with these partner institutions, which have the potential to be highly effective in promoting a seamless transfer for the pupils. The pupils value the links with the high school and feel that their visits help them to prepare for their next phase of education.
42. There is good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when spiritual and cultural development was judged satisfactory. The good provision represents a clear commitment and encouragement for the pupils to become more reflective about themselves and the world around them.
43. Spiritual development is promoted well. The pupils are encouraged to explore their thoughts and feelings through poetry and prayer. They are encouraged to think not only about themselves but also about the thoughts and feelings of others. For example, the pupils employ strategies in the playground which stop them falling out with each other. They learn to recognise when arguments are about to start and how to set about resolving these situations. These experiences and strategies help the pupils to prepare for life outside school and help them to see how they can manage difficult situations. Pupils are encouraged to work together, to consider others and to include those who find behaving well or learning difficult in their work and play. The pupils have many opportunities to watch and care for animals. For example, pupils have watched butterflies emerge from their chrysalis. Whilst the nursery children are watching with interest the birds who are beginning to enjoy the contents of the feeders and bird tables in the newly created garden. The pupils are given many opportunities to express their own ideas and thoughts. The school council is an ideal vehicle for their comments. Indeed, the pupils were pleased to talk about their work, their likes and dislikes. Some of the accommodation of the school does not help the teachers as they strive to provide a stimulating and challenging environment in which to educate their pupils. For example, the dining hall, which is at present being used for school assemblies, has a cold hard floor, on which the pupils sit. The plaster in some parts of the dining room walls is so defective it is covered over by black tape.
44. Moral development is well promoted throughout the school. Staff are concerned to enable the pupils to choose the right pathway and understand the consequences of their actions. In this way the pupils are given guidance which prepares them to take their place as reasonable and responsible citizens. The pupils have a clear sense of moral awareness. The school runs as an orderly establishment where good behaviour is expected. Those pupils who find it difficult to behave well are helped to become more thoughtful about their behaviour and are encouraged to behave better. The pupils are clear that they are listened to when they express their ideas and thoughts. They recognise that their views are respected. The secure relationships within the school provide a firm basis for the development of a clear moral understanding. Pupils are taught right from wrong. Positive reinforcement of good behaviour brings rewards to the pupils and these rewards provide the pupils with incentives for good behaviour. All members of staff are consistent in delivery of the school's expectations and so all have a clear understanding of what is expected of them.
45. Social values are well promoted by adults throughout the school and pupils are encouraged to care and take responsibility for others. For example, the older pupils work with younger pupils, they hear them read and they help the younger pupils to learn and practise their spellings. Pupils willingly accept the responsibilities placed upon them by the teachers, for example when

distributing materials during and after lessons. The restorative justice strategy and 'playground peacemakers' all contribute to the social development of the pupils and provide ways for them to make choices and be supported when they find things difficult. The pupils are also encouraged to understand problems in the wider context. They look at the needs of their own locality and conduct surveys to find out other people's views. In the same way they are encouraged to look at their own school environment and consider how it could be improved; the pupils talked about the need to improve the toilet facilities in the school and the problems caused by litter. The successful inclusion of pupils with special educational needs, Traveller pupils, and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds supports the pupils' social development and promotes positive attitudes to all those who contribute to the school population.

46. Provision for cultural education is good. The pupils have a good understanding of their own community and the diversity of the facilities it provides. They understand how their town has evolved over time, for example, as they study the census data. The pupils visit many places of interest in the immediate and the neighbouring locality. There are many opportunities to prepare pupils for living in a multi-cultural society with the teachers preparing many interesting and diverse displays. Visitors have been welcomed to the school to share their cultures, traditions and religious ideals with the pupils. This enables the pupils to develop an awareness of the differences and similarities between the different groups who make up modern British society. The pupils study ancient civilisations and gain a good understanding of the life and time of these ancient peoples and how they have impacted upon our lives today.

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

47. This is a very caring school where teachers know their pupils well; the warm and trusting relationships which they have built up with pupils enable them to recognise and react swiftly to any areas of concern. Illustrative of this is the provision on the staff of a teacher who is a trained counsellor and who is always available to pupils who may have worries or concerns that they do not wish to share with their own teacher. All the members of staff are particularly sensitive to the needs of those whose home circumstances warrant special care and they work closely and sympathetically with parents, carers and support agencies to ensure their welfare. They have all received training and guidance on child protection issues and the headteacher ensures that the latest guidance is made available to them. The governors have a responsible attitude towards health and safety matters. They have appropriate arrangements in place for regular risk assessment and routine maintenance of fire and electrical equipment. However, their policy has not been reviewed for some years and there are some shortcomings.
48. The school gives high priority to encouraging good behaviour and eliminating bullying. The behaviour policy is well established and makes very clear the school's intolerance of bullying. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and skilfully manage the pupils in the classroom. Behaviour at play is less well controlled, despite the best efforts of the lunchtime supervisors, who are very active and conscientious. A particular difficulty is that of maintaining supervision throughout the playing area, particularly when, for example, pupils enter the building on the pretext of visiting the toilet. The school has been very imaginative in creating positions of responsibility for pupils such as the "lunchtime specials", the "playground peacemakers" and the "restorative justice" counsellors, to help improve behaviour and maintain an orderly environment. These initiatives have not resolved the problems but they have certainly helped.
49. The unsatisfactory attendance is an issue which requires early attention. The headteacher recognises the significance of attendance and punctuality in raising attainment. He accepts that the policy and procedures currently in use have not been effective. Much time and effort is spent in collating records manually and identifying individuals with attendance problems. This information is, however, not being used to provide clear, consistent and reliable data which would enable the school to compare its performance with other schools, both locally and nationally. The school is not working closely enough with the education welfare officer in achieving that objective and in developing the common policy for local schools to which there is reference in the school improvement plan.

50. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early when they enter school, and are regularly and thoroughly assessed against the targets set for them. Pupils' reviews are carried out regularly in order that their progress can be monitored. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has made wide-ranging efforts to involve the parents of children with special educational needs. Every effort is made to keep them well informed of all aspects of their children's progress and assessment and the provision made for them. Although a few more parents now attend meetings and visit school, there are still many parents who do not. Information about special educational needs is easily accessible and visible as parents bring their children to school, and the SENCO ensures that those who have not attended meetings are informed of the outcomes.

51. The school carries out statutory requirements with regard to assessment. Each class maintains detailed record sheets, which record assessment data and results. These are used effectively in English and in mathematics to identify target groups of pupils who demonstrate the capacity for improvement, or who need more teacher support. This has allowed the staff to provide focused help for pupils who need it, and improve standards, particularly effectively in English. This has not yet been extended to help raise standards in the other subjects. Co-ordinators monitor curriculum coverage and standards effectively in English and mathematics. Detailed assessment files are kept for both literacy and numeracy. Assessment and record keeping for science and the foundation subjects are less well developed and are as yet less formal. The good systems for monitoring and assessment, in place in English and mathematics, are not used in other subjects with a view to further raising standards.
52. The use of assessment information to guide curriculum planning is satisfactory overall. In English for example, it is used very well to identify pupils who are in need of support because they are making insufficient progress over time. Pupils who show the potential for rapid improvement can also be identified and the curriculum adjusted accordingly. However, this system is less well used in other subjects and the school has recognised this as a means of raising standards further, particularly in science and other curriculum subjects.

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

53. There is too little evidence to determine with any certainty parents' views of the school. Over at least the last four years parents have shown a reluctance to express views when they have been invited to do so. In response to the OFSTED questionnaire just 8 per cent of parents returned the relevant form, whilst only 3 per cent attended the meeting. This experience reflects the problems experienced by the school: for example, a recent survey of opinion on the sex education provision sent out to 386 parents and carers elicited just 15 responses. The very small number of parents who did respond to the OFSTED questionnaire and to the meeting with inspectors consider that their children like school, work hard, make good progress and are helped to become mature. They think that the teaching is good and the great majority have a high regard for the management, find the school approachable and consider themselves well informed about their children's progress. A minority have reservations about behaviour and about the homework provision. Views were sought from a few parents during the inspection and these largely reflected the positive views indicated in the questionnaire. It seems reasonable to speculate (and perhaps to use as a working hypothesis) that whilst most parents do not enthuse about the school, they do not have serious concerns either. Inspectors agree with the generally favourable comments of the few parents who responded.
54. The previous inspection report of May 2000 identified as a key issue the need to improve the pupils' quality of education by strengthening links with parents so that they play a greater part in their children's learning. The school's considerable efforts in this regard were evaluated by the local education authority in their progress review of November 2001 and, whilst some improvement was acknowledged, the effectiveness of parental links was still considered unsatisfactory. The school continues with its efforts to provide new skills for parents and to ensure that they are well informed. The quality of its documentation is quite satisfactory, although the annual reports on pupils contain more information about the curriculum than the child and may well not be helping parents to support their child's education. Teachers are very approachable and make themselves readily available to speak with parents who choose to take advantage of the opportunity. It seems clear, however, that many parents do not feel comfortable in the school environment, and it is incontrovertible that the strategies currently in use to involve parents more formally in the educational process are not succeeding. Only three parents attended a five-week course to learn about the Numeracy Strategy; an average of little more than one parent per class attended a morning briefing on the same subject; a course on computer skills was attended by four parents; less than half the parents, on average, attend the consultation evenings with teachers each term. The reasons for this apparent apathy about educational issues may be many and various but they have not yet been identified either by the school or through the medium of inspection. Recent experience suggests that parents are unlikely to respond in significant numbers to written

communication. They may well be more receptive to verbal contact, as the inspectors found during their time in school.

55. There are, however, positive elements in the school's liaison with parents which give cause for optimism and certainly warrant further exploration. These are:
1. All parents of children in the nursery, when approached, spoke very warmly of the provision for their children. They have all been involved in creating a baseline profile for their child and have been interested to find how they can support the child's intellectual, physical and emotional needs. On a daily basis, they enter the nursery, speak with the teacher and teaching assistants and show much interest in the progress and development of their children. They give every indication that they are pleased to be involved.
  2. Thirty parents gave very positive responses in the OFSTED questionnaire and have a high regard for the efforts being made by the school.
  3. The small number of parents who recently re-started the Friends of Ryton Park Association are very anxious to help but in conversation they appear to be unsure of their role.
  4. A number of parents were very active recently in helping to create the nursery garden.
  5. A good number of parents support special assemblies and other events involving their children during the school day.
56. It is probable that these parents are among those who do attend consultation evenings but it is also very possible that, for whatever reason, they do not wish to attend courses in literacy, numeracy or computer skills, such as are listed in the school improvement plan. In fact the strategies which have been selected may not be appropriate for most parents at this school. It remains the case that links with parents are not yet making a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning at school or at home and that the school improvement plan has not identified strategies which may be more effective for this parent body.

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

57. The school has made sound progress since the last inspection. The headteacher is a considerable presence in the school and he has been effective in building a well co-ordinated senior management team and motivating all members of staff to bring about change. Good support is provided by a loyal and increasingly knowledgeable governing body. The school now has a clear sense of direction, identified in the school improvement plan. There is a good sense of community and all share a commitment to improving the educational provision and raising standards.
58. Over the last four years the school has faced the considerable challenge of changing the ethos of the school in order to put much more emphasis on attainment and progress. The inspection report of May 2000 recognised the effective contribution that the headteacher had made in that process. He has since continued to collaborate effectively with the local education authority and his own senior management team in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the school, prioritising educational objectives and drawing up action plans to move the school forward. The school is functioning effectively and providing a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils.
59. The governing body is very supportive of the school and fulfils its statutory responsibilities satisfactorily. There have been several recent changes but members have taken on new responsibilities with interest and enthusiasm. They have reacted positively to the shortcomings identified in the last inspection report in relation to their monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. After consultation with the headteacher they have introduced a monitoring report form which is intended to bring to their notice strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision and enable them to establish that appropriate remedial action has been taken. This system is at an early stage of development but is indicative of their determination to develop their role. Governors have also begun to visit lessons to help them gain a better understanding of classroom practice. Individual members show knowledge and expertise, particularly in the field of finance and of



special educational needs. There is a well co-ordinated committee structure and it is apparent from the minutes that governors have a proper understanding of the budgetary process and are taking a more active part generally in questioning developments within the school. They have agreed a development plan for the next two years which is well focused on the school's educational objectives. It includes the relevant priorities to secure improvement and has a clear focus on raising standards through, for example, analysing the performance of all groups of pupils. However there is a lack of detail in financial planning which seriously limits the effectiveness of the governing body in strategic planning. Governors still lack training and support in this area but, given the short time span since the last inspection, and the fact that governors have recently approved a comprehensive finance policy based on the good practice outlined in the Audit Commission's guidance document, satisfactory progress has been made on this key issue.

60. Pastoral leadership is strong. The headteacher and his senior management team have much experience in this field. They give very high priority to the care and support of all pupils. They know them very well and provide many opportunities for sympathy and guidance to those who have problems. Pupils themselves speak with much warmth and appreciation about their teachers.
61. Good progress has been made in improving the evaluation and development of teaching standards. Good systems are in place to monitor teaching and learning. This is proving effective and the quality of teaching is now good throughout the school. Training is scheduled so that lesson monitoring can be extended to include all curriculum co-ordinators to enable them to evaluate the teaching in their subject. Delegation in this area is good, with each co-ordinator having a budgetary responsibility and being required to carry out an annual audit, write an action plan with costings, and submit a bid for resources which is prioritised by the senior management team. This good practice plays a positive role in raising attainment.
62. Procedures for day-to-day financial control and administration are good. Systems are unobtrusive and efficient. The administrator makes good use of modern technology to monitor expenditure, determine costs and prepare information for the headteacher and governing body. She is familiar with the governors' statement on best value and uses good business practice to ensure that the school gets value for money with its routine expenditure. The most recent audit, in March 2002, found that financial controls were sound. Action has been taken to implement the few recommendations made. Teachers and other classroom staff benefit from the good administrative support which enables them to focus more fully on their work in the classroom.
63. All aspects of special educational needs are well managed by the SENCO. As a result of wide-ranging in-service training for teachers and teaching assistants, the school is very well placed and has begun planning for the new Code of Practice. The SENCO and headteacher (the named person for special educational needs) have rightly given special educational needs a high priority as nearly a third of the pupils have such needs. The senior teaching assistant, who is also the governor for special educational needs, effectively manages the time allocated to the teaching assistants in order that pupils know the people they are working with, relate well to them and their time is used efficiently. There are sufficient resources for pupils with special educational needs, which are well audited and catalogued.
64. The school has experienced and well qualified teachers who have the expertise and subject knowledge to teach the National Curriculum, children under five and pupils with special educational needs. They are very well supported by the teaching assistants who share in the planning and record keeping and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. All members of staff benefit from staff development and the provision is well managed to address the needs both of the school and the individual professional. The induction procedures for newly qualified teachers are good, according fully with local and national guidelines. The school also makes good provision for the induction of non-teaching members of staff.
65. The accommodation in the school is adequate for the demands of the curriculum. Significant improvements have been made since the previous inspection in the provision of a suite for the teaching of ICT and in the more recent very successful enhancement of the outdoor area for the

nursery. However, the internal décor is generally poor and, whilst this does not affect teaching and learning directly, it inhibits teachers in their attempts to create an attractive and stimulating environment in which pupils can be enthused to learn. It also detracts from the quality of life in the school. Some of the toilets are unhygienic and malodorous, whilst many parts of the building appear unkempt and cluttered. The outdoor play area is adequate in size and has some attractive marking and apparatus. The surrounding fencing is old and damaged and detracts from the appearance of the site. The school has a satisfactory range of learning resources to meet the demands of the curriculum for all subjects except physical education and design and technology where they are lacking, and in English where many of the reading books are in a dilapidated condition. The resources for several subjects, particularly science and geography, are enhanced well by visits to local places of interest.

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

66. In order to further improve the quality of education and standards achieved, the headteacher, staff and governors should

- (1) raise standards in English, mathematics and science by
- continuing to use assessment information to set clear targets for improvement for individuals and for groups of pupils

*(paragraphs 51, 82, 92, 93, 111)*

- (2) raise standards in other subjects by
- empowering subject leaders to monitor provision and standards in their subjects
  - using assessment information to plan improvement
  - improving lesson planning to include exactly what teachers want different groups of pupils to learn, closely related to National Curriculum levels

*(paragraphs 10, 28, 31, 38, 51, 52)*

*These issues are already identified in the school's development planning.*

- (3) improve the fabric and décor of the building to help the staff in their attempts to provide an attractive, stimulating environment in which pupils are enthused to learn

*(paragraphs 43, 65, 120)*

- (4) improve links with parents so that they play a greater role in their children's learning

*(paragraphs 53, 54, 55, 56)*

- (5) improve punctuality and attendance.

*(paragraphs 49)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	73
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	75

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	25	52	22	1	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	40	306
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	152

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	10	101

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	56
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	62

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	23	22	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	20	21
	Girls	16	17	18
	Total	32	37	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (45)	82 (63)	87 (86)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	15
	Girls	18	20	13
	Total	38	40	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (51)	89 (80)	62 (47)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	23	24	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	7	19
	Girls	13	9	19
	Total	19	16	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	40 (29)	34 (31)	81 (63)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	7	19
	Girls	11	9	19
	Total	16	16	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	34 (23)	34 (34)	81 (49)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	310
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.1
Average class size	23.8

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

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	186.75

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	40

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Number of pupils per FTE adult	20
--------------------------------	----

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	10	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001-02
----------------	---------

	£
Total income	781,127
Total expenditure	806,266
Expenditure per pupil	2,282
Balance brought forward from previous year	47,800
Balance carried forward to next year	22,661

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.8
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	386
Number of questionnaires returned	33

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	36	55	9	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	45	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	42	24	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	45	21	3	6
The teaching is good.	48	52	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	45	6	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	45	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	39	3	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	27	61	12	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	36	52	9	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	55	3	3	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	52	9	3	9

## **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**

67. Previous inspection findings indicate that the school made good provision for children under five in the nursery and reception classes. Current inspection findings show that this provision has improved and is now very good. Opportunities planned for these young children are good and make learning fun. They are planned to increase children's awareness of the world around them which helps them to achieve very well. Children enter the school's nursery classes as soon as they are three. They and their parents are welcomed into any of the sessions that they wish to join, from the age of 2 years 10 months. This close and regular contact with the nursery prepares them well to begin one of the half-day sessions as soon as they become three. They usually move to one of the reception classes at the beginning of the term in which they are five, although there is some flexibility in this. All staff are very skilful in providing work that effectively meets all children's needs and abilities. This ensures that all of the children are included in all activities and have equal access to the curriculum.
68. The first assessments of the children show that most begin school with very low skills in all areas of learning. This is particularly pronounced in their social and speaking and listening skills. Although they make rapid progress in the nursery, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development, their attainment by the time they start in the reception classes, is still well below that expected of the age group in all areas of learning. They continue the very good achievement started in the nursery and about a quarter reach the goals set in all areas of learning by the time they start Year 1. Children start Year 1 with below average levels of attainment overall. Even so, because of the good teaching that they receive, they achieve very well in the Foundation Stage.
69. Teachers make every effort to provide stimulating and exciting classrooms for the children. However, the nursery has been converted from a number of class and store rooms that, although spacious, would be uninspiring if it was not for the constant effort and attention the staff put into displaying children's work in a colourful and lively way. Similarly, the reception classrooms are cramped and not conducive to good learning. Here again, staff work very hard to ensure that they liven up the rooms with useful information and displays of children's work. This improves the ambience of the rooms and ensures that the children learn in as exciting an environment as staff can provide.
70. There is a pleasant and secure outside area adjacent to the nursery which is used very well as an outdoor classroom. Staff provide very good activities related to all areas of learning in this area and it is used as often as the weather allows. The addition of a sensory garden adds an important dimension to the children's learning.
71. The quality of teaching in all areas of learning is good and often very good. This applies both to nursery and reception classes. It is particularly good in promoting children's personal and social development. Teachers and support assistants work together extremely well. The teamwork is seamless. All staff are calm, patient and sensitive to the needs of young children. Adult interaction with children is stimulating and enthusiastic. All staff fully involve themselves in all activities. This results in very good relationships and a good degree of trust between adults and children. The good quality teaching results in the children achieving very well in all areas of learning.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

72. Children flourish as they work and develop an increasing awareness of their own worth. All the children learn to respond well to adults and to each other. They begin to work cheerfully alongside each other, learn to share equipment happily and begin to communicate with each other with good humour. This was particularly noticeable, in one session, when reception children



played together with polar bears and simulated polystyrene icebergs in the water tray. They enjoyed sharing their ideas, laughing spontaneously when their ideas worked. Staff encourage the children to discuss what they are doing. For example, in a Circle Time session, children discussed ways of sorting out squabbles. Staff encouraged them to “Stop, let’s talk about it” and “Let’s make friends”. This approach successfully helps to develop the children’s awareness of the need to care for, and respect, each other’s ideas. It also helps their communication skills. All the children work with a clear sense of enjoyment and purpose. This is a direct result of the good quality teaching and seamless teamwork of all staff.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

73. Throughout the nursery and reception classes staff work hard to provide opportunities for children to improve their very low level language skills. Staff ensure that the children learn to listen carefully and follow instructions accurately. They teach them the vocabulary associated with the activities that they do. They give children specific tasks using specific vocabulary - for example, when making a model of Humpty Dumpty with moving joints. Staff carefully use correct terminology, such as ‘fasteners’ and ‘treasure tags’ to reinforce accurate vocabulary and good language patterns. Teachers teach children how to say their sounds clearly and audibly; for example, by breathing ‘h’ onto their hand so that they can feel as well as hear the sound ‘h’ in ‘Humpty’ and ‘horse’. Even so, many children have problems articulating all of their sounds. One child, for instance, in an attempt to say how long the cress had been growing in an egg shell said a “ong, ong, ime”. He made himself understood but completely missed the starting sound of each word.
74. All staff ensure that children have opportunities to see the value of reading and writing. For example, children have constant access to a selection of books in each classroom. However, these books are not all in good condition. This devalues the staff’s efforts to encourage reading. Children choose to share what they have read in books with each other as part of the daily routines. This enables them to understand the different uses of books. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories. The constant reinforcement of reading for a purpose is one of the strengths of the teaching. It makes children want to read and write. They often choose to write - for example, practising writing letters in custard paste in the reception classes. Nursery children have regular access to a writing table, where they enjoy mark making. The more able children are already beginning to form letters correctly. This good learning reflects the good quality of teaching. All children have regular opportunities to use the role-play areas, which are currently doctors’ surgeries. Children in the Foundation Stage follow most appropriately the National Literacy Strategy for children of reception age. This contributes successfully to the development of literacy skills.

### **Mathematical development**

75. Staff make number activities very interesting. They take every opportunity to develop children’s awareness of the sequence of numbers and their relationships; children quickly begin to develop a secure knowledge of mathematical language. For example, many already know the names, and some of the properties, of regular shapes. They describe triangles and circles mostly accurately. They begin to use a selection of criteria, such as colour or number, to sort objects. Some children achieve the levels of accuracy expected for their age as they match and count numbers. By the reception year, they begin to count more confidently and recognise numbers to ten and a few children count beyond ten. However, not many children reliably use one-to-one correspondence when counting by moving or pointing to objects.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

76. The good quality teaching ensures that children begin to use the computers confidently and accurately in both nursery and reception classes. For example, in the nursery children use the mouse successfully to move objects on the screen. The school provides opportunities for the children to use headphones to listen and follow stories. This helps to develop their interest in

books and reading and makes good links to language and literacy development. Children explore the properties of a variety of different media, such as cornflour paste and wet and dry sand. They investigate which materials are fragile and which are not. Staff make sure that the children learn, and use correctly, the vocabulary associated with these tasks. As a result children in reception begin to sort materials, such as polystyrene, egg shells and metal according to whether they might break or not. These opportunities and the good quality of teaching ensure that children begin to make sense of the world around them.

### **Physical development**

77. The provision for the development of children's physical skills is very good. In both nursery and reception classes, children's physical skills are underdeveloped. Many children in the nursery cannot put their coats on successfully. Staff provide well-planned activities to enhance these skills. They teach the children ways to help themselves dress and undress. The range of equipment available to children during all sessions is good. They have very good opportunities for outdoor and indoor explorative play and use the secure outdoor garden area very well to develop their learning. Children also have ample, good quality opportunities to develop their ability to control pencils, scissors and brushes. They experience a variety of activities, such as cutting and using malleable material, that help them practise and refine their manipulative skills. Currently, the school hall is unavailable for physical education lessons. However, staff ensure that the children do not miss these sessions by using the dining hall for games with small apparatus such as throwing and catching balls, circle games and rhymes.

### **Creative development**

78. Staff have suitably high expectations of children's attainment in this area. As a result, children use paint confidently. Staff teach them to mix their own colours using powder paint. Children quickly learn to predict which primary colours will make the colour they choose. This was demonstrated in the reception classes when the children mixed their own colours to paint the Humpty Dumpty models. They have good access to areas for imaginative role-play. For example, in the doctors' surgery they use the phone and make appointments and act out the role of doctor or patient. This helps children very effectively to develop and express their own ideas. The children have ample opportunities to express themselves through singing and moving to music. They learn new words quickly and enjoy putting actions to songs. They sing with gusto, if not complete accuracy.

### **Summary**

79. The provision for the Foundation Stage is very good. One of its significant strengths is the quality of teaching for these young children. Staff plan adult-led activities very carefully. This ensures that all children have opportunities to express themselves as well as to experience direct teaching. The procedures to review and identify developing and changing needs are very good and very effective. Staff analyse results of the first assessments and use these to plan work for groups and individuals. They have a clear understanding of how young children learn and develop. This ensures that all children, whatever their ability or background, achieve very well.
80. Another major strength of the Foundation Stage is that the staff are fully involved in all of the work of the school. The nursery is situated in the centre of the building with access to all parts of the main school. Thus, the Foundation Stage leader (also one of the nursery class teachers) has constant contact with all other members of staff. She has time allocated away from the nursery to allow other staff time to monitor their own subjects. This means that, as well as monitoring her own curriculum area by working alongside her colleagues in the reception classes, she teaches in all year groups. This enables her to track the achievement of pupils throughout the school. Consequently, the nursery is an integral and important part of school life and does not work in isolation. Its very good practice is beginning to permeate the whole school.

## ENGLISH

81. Test results show that the pupils in Year 6 are particularly low attaining. This year group contains a high percentage of pupils who have moved from other schools and a large number of pupils with special educational needs. Although their attainment is low they have achieved well; this can clearly be seen in the work they have produced. Throughout the school the pupils achieve well in their English and literacy lessons. This is because of the good teaching they receive. The current Year 6 are a low attaining year but attainment of the other year groups in the school is generally higher although remaining below the national average. Standards in English are gradually rising. This is because of the consistently good teaching the pupils receive and the very good methods of assessment that the teachers use to show the pupils how they can improve their work. The pupils also receive good guidance to encourage and challenge them to do better. Those who have special educational needs, Traveller children and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are fully included in every lesson and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. At the time of the last inspection pupils' attainment was seen to be improving but was below the levels expected and so standards, overall, remain similar.
82. There are a number of factors contributing to the improving standards in the school. The English co-ordinator, although new to the school, has looked at pupils' writing and identified specific areas for improvement in each year group. The teachers have worked hard to bring about improvement in the targeted areas. They have created a separate lesson each day for guided reading, which has enabled them to focus more sharply on improving writing within the literacy hour. The teaching of spelling and handwriting has a high profile in the school and the pupils are encouraged to produce work that is neat and well presented. Clear identification of pupils' needs brought about by careful analysis of test and task results and careful tracking of the pupils' attainment has enabled teachers to target particular and focused help where it is needed. As a result the pupils know what they have to do to improve and are encouraged to do it. The teaching assistants also play a significant role in helping the pupils who learn slowly and those who find concentration and application very difficult to achieve. A significant amount of targeted help is given to those pupils who are identified as having particular areas of weakness in their work. All the teachers work hard to ensure that the pupils' confidence and self-esteem in their English lessons are maintained, and praise and help are all employed to achieve this aim.
83. Speaking skills are developed through effective teaching and the opportunities the teachers create to enable the pupils to improve. The children enter the nursery with speaking and listening skills that are particularly poorly developed. In Years 1 and 2 the teachers encourage the pupils to give their ideas and suggestions during lessons, and their speaking skills develop well. Listening is difficult for some pupils who find it a challenge to listen to others' ideas, especially when they wish to speak themselves. In Year 3 the pupils speak confidently about their survey of the school and their findings, showing a good awareness of the need to express themselves clearly. The older pupils in Year 6 talk appropriately about their lessons in school and their particular likes and dislikes. They speak about their expectations of the high school and how they are looking forward to the school camp.
84. Most pupils achieve well in their reading although standards throughout the school remain below average; they are particularly low in Year 6. Reading is well promoted in the school although many of the reading books are old, with significant numbers distressed and torn and in need of renewing. This is particularly serious for the younger pupils who need to be excited and thrilled by the books they choose to read. It is clear from the pupils' attitudes that most enjoy reading although not all have help at home from their parents or carers. A member of the community comes to school each day to hear pupils read from one class. He has a significantly beneficial impact upon the reading standards that these pupils achieve. The older pupils have regular timetabled sessions help the younger pupils with their reading and spelling and this enables the younger pupils to practise their skills. In Year 2 the pupils talk about the stories they are reading and use a range of strategies to tackle words that they find difficult. The higher attaining pupils are confident readers and show good levels of interest in their books. In Year 4 the higher attaining pupils are beginning to use good expression as they read, whilst lower attaining pupils develop fluency in their reading. In Year 6 the higher attaining pupils demonstrate good levels of fluency

and expression. Average and lower attaining pupils talk about their books and their choices of books but lack expression as they work hard to “read” and follow the text accurately. The pupils in Year 6 are particularly interested in poetry. This is because they have been privileged to have a poet working with them in school. He has encouraged them not only to read poetry but also to write their own. The pupils regularly use non-fiction books in their work and, although the school has no library of its own, it is able to add to its own selection of books from the local authority resources. The school also makes good use of the nearby public library.

85. Standards in writing are consistently below average throughout the school. The school recognises that this is an area of particular concern and is providing many opportunities for the pupils to practise their writing. The teachers are effective in the consistent and supportive way they show the pupils how to plan, draft and re-draft their writing. They give the pupils a clear framework within which to work and develop their ideas. This technique is used consistently throughout the school and enables the pupils to write within a very clear setting. For example, in a Year 1 / 2 lesson the teacher gave the pupils sentence beginnings to guide their writing on stick insects; in Year 5 the teacher built up a story plan to show the pupils how to plan their "Anansi" story. The teachers help the pupils work on their understanding of the deeper meaning of texts. For example, in a Year 6 lesson the pupils wrote about their thoughts on the poem "Changed" by Dave Calder and their writing conveyed their particular ideas on the significance of the text.
86. A cursive style of writing is taught throughout the school. The pupils' work is generally neat and well presented. The most able Year 2 pupils write well. They use capital letters and full stops consistently and are beginning to consider their audience as they write. The lower attaining pupils do not always use capital letters and full stops in their work. In Year 6 the pupils' writing skills cover a spread of abilities, from those pupils who write effectively using accurate punctuation and paragraphs, to those pupils who need help to organise and articulate their ideas. The pupils achieve well in their writing as a result of patient, careful teaching. There is, however, more to be done and writing standards need to develop and improve still further. Indeed, this still remains a focus for the work within the school. The teachers ensure that they match the pupils' tasks to their specific and individual needs. The pupils write for a range of purposes and audiences. Poetry is strongly promoted within the school and provides a good stimulus for writing. Information and communication technology is used throughout the school to help the pupils in drafting and re-drafting their work.
87. The teachers have good subject knowledge and this is demonstrated in the way they lead discussions with the pupils about their work. The school has fully adopted the National Literacy Strategy and it is used consistently across all year groups. The class teachers have high expectations of the pupils and improvement is clearly expected. For example, in a Year 4 class the teachers' consistently high expectations of the class meant that the quality of the pupils' work has improved throughout the year.
88. In lessons tasks are well matched to the pupils' needs. Relationships between the teachers and pupils are strong so that pupils are confident and as a result try hard. The teachers use the good range of "Big Books" and guided reading books in the school to engage the pupils, consequently they learn well. The class teachers are effective 'on building upon the pupils' enthusiasms. For example, in some classes the pupils were asked to speed-read sets of words. In this way the pupils learnt to read the set of words and tried hard to improve the number they read in the previous session. Teachers' planning is effective. Learning objectives are shared with pupils and in some cases the class teachers involve the pupils in generating the learning objectives so that the pupils are very clear about their learning. These strategies enable the pupils to know what they are learning and why.
89. The teachers regularly use literacy skills in the support of other curriculum areas. In this way the pupils have many opportunities to develop and extend their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. The school recognises that the pupils' abilities to record their work lags behind their reading and speaking skills and so every effort is made to give the pupils as many opportunities to develop their writing skills further. Marking of pupils' books is consistently good throughout the school. The teachers regularly mark the pupils' work and they make supportive and evaluative comments. Each pupil has a clear idea of where they need to improve and the older pupils know which level they are working at. Tests and assessed work help the teachers to track the progress that the pupils are making. This information is also used to make sure that those pupils who need additional support receive it so that they are able to make the best possible progress.

## MATHEMATICS

90. Standards seen in mathematics are below national expectations at the end of Year 2, as they were at the time of the last inspection in May 2000. Results in the 2001 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 were well below the national average and below the average for similar schools. Since 1998 the school's results have shown considerable improvement, although there was a very slight dip in 2001. Nevertheless, 87 per cent of pupils achieved the national standard of Level 2 in 2001. Very few pupils achieved the higher Level 3. The indications are that results for 2002 are better, with more pupils achieving Level 3.
91. Standards observed in mathematics at the end of Year 6 are well below what is expected of pupils of this age nationally. Results in the 2001 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 were very low compared with the national average and well below the average for similar schools. However, a high proportion of pupils in that year group were not at the school for the whole of their junior years, many having joined the school during Years 5 and 6. The results, although very low, nevertheless represent a continuing small improvement. This trend is likely to be continued in the 2002 results.
92. Analysis of how pupils had performed in the National Curriculum tests that they had taken shortly before the inspection revealed that many Year 2 pupils were not confident about adding numbers such as  $32 + 26$ . The teaching observed in one of the two classes of Year 2 pupils was sharply focused on this and pupils made good progress. The teacher's explanations were very clear and she used the white board very well to show pupils exactly what they should do. In the other lesson seen, Year 2 pupils were helped to grasp the connection between  $10 - 3 = 7$  and  $7 + 3 = 10$ . Again, extra adult support was important in enabling most pupils to make at least satisfactory progress. Over the infant years as a whole, most pupils make good progress in their mathematical learning.
93. Most pupils continue to make good progress during the junior years as a result of teaching that is based well on the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils in the present Year 5, for example, who have been taught according to the strategy since they were in Year 1, show levels of attainment that are in line with what is expected of their age-group nationally. The subject co-ordinator has led the introduction and use of good assessment records. These not only allow teachers to keep good track of the progress of individual pupils but also to set them appropriate targets. Examination of these records supports the judgement that many pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who have the potential to do better than the average, are now making good progress and that standards are rising.
94. Pupils in Year 5 made very good gains in their understanding and use of analogue and digital clocks, and the 12 and 24-hour systems. The teaching was very clear and questions used particularly well to check and extend understanding. In addition the teacher was very mobile, marking work as pupils completed it to give them immediate feedback on how they were getting on. In this lesson, as in many others, the work of the teaching assistant was very important in ensuring that all pupils, including those who were having most difficulty, were helped to make progress.
95. Teachers of Year 6 pupils have given them opportunities to apply the mathematics they have learned to real-life situations - for example, in drawing and describing tree canopies and considering shape in packaging. During the inspection pupils made sound progress in work that was based on menu prices. Although a few are able to point out that £3.6666 is not a realistic price, several struggled to use a calculator to calculate a total and didn't recognise that the answer shown was far too big. Others, however, as a result of good use by the teacher of a prepared fraction grid made definite progress in their understanding of how to work out one-tenth of something if you already know one-fifth.
96. There is a strong emphasis on number work but pupils also show a satisfactory level of knowledge about common shapes and their properties. Pupils in Year 6, for example, have produced some attractive tile patterns by repeating the same shape in different positions and

show sound understanding of symmetry. Work on measures, apart from length, was not well represented in the books examined. However, the lack of water and sinks in some classrooms makes it difficult to organise appropriate practical work on capacity, for example.

97. Pupils increasingly take care with the presentation of their work as they move up the school and this in itself helps their learning. Their teachers have successfully built up most pupils' confidence in tackling written work through setting tasks that are appropriate. Pupils contribute best to the oral and mental parts of lessons when they are encouraged to write their answers on white boards to show the teacher rather than say the answer. Some teachers, particularly of younger pupils, are building confidence by having the whole class answer questions together; this is good practice. Overall, attitudes to learning and using mathematics are positive.
98. The overall quality of teaching throughout the school is good. Strong features of the better teaching seen, include:
- teachers being clear about what they intend pupils to learn during the lesson and telling them;
  - good use of questioning to revise and extend learning;
  - good management of pupils and organisation of the classroom;
  - good team work between teachers and other adults in supporting pupils;
  - a good pace to lessons with a balance of listening and doing.
99. Some lessons were not so successful, although still satisfactory, because:
- pupils had to sit for too long listening in whole-class sessions;
  - not enough time was given to the final session so that the lesson was not rounded off properly;
  - the pace of the lesson was too slow and there wasn't enough challenge, usually for the more able pupils.
100. There were good examples of mathematics being used in other subject areas - for example, when Year 5 pupils costed, produced and sold the newsletter that they had produced. There is scope for more planned use of mathematical skills in other subject areas, for example, science, geography and design and technology. Most classrooms now have a modern computer and there were good examples of pupils using programs that were related to the lesson being taught. The use of the resources of information and communication technology to support and extend learning in mathematics can now be developed further.

## **SCIENCE**

101. Although standards at the end of Year 6 are still low in comparison to national standards, they have steadily improved since 1998, when they were very low. The number of pupils who are expected to achieve the national average has slightly increased since the time the school was last inspected, but very few are expected to achieve higher levels and a significant number are expected to achieve lower levels. Standards at the end of Year 2 are below the national average.
102. Considering the high proportion of pupils with special education needs in the school and the high mobility levels of pupils, they achieve well. During the inspection, pupils used accurate scientific terms for a range of forces, how materials change and the lifecycle of insects. They named some of the bones and organs of the human body and explained their purposes. However, their written recording is barely satisfactory in most classes and this reflects their low standards in literacy.
103. At the end of Year 2, pupils classify an appropriate variety of plants and animals and have studied the characteristics of living things. They have made connections between different creatures and their environments. They know pushes and pulls are forces and can change the direction and speed of some vehicles. The majority have difficulty in explaining their predictions and have a weak understanding of some of the scientific principles they have studied.
104. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of different parts of the human body and are beginning to understand the value of a healthy diet and exercise. They extend their knowledge of plants and know the functions of roots, leaves and the main parts of a

flower. Pupils have studied the conditions needed for plants to survive. They also classify a wide range of manufactured and natural materials and know that the properties of materials affect their uses. They have not regularly devised or carried out their own experiments and rarely consider the implications of the scientific topics studied apart from the work on plants and animals. The analysis of pupils' written work shows insufficient independent work in investigations, research or recording. Standards of written work in science are low and reflect pupils' skills in literacy.

105. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Good features of their scientific knowledge are their understanding of the features which contribute towards a healthy lifestyle. They also classify a wide range of manufactured and natural materials into many categories and consider their use for different purposes. Year 5 pupils' explanations show a clear understanding of the changes of the state of water and pupils explained evaporation and condensation very clearly.
106. Although teaching and learning were good in the majority of lessons observed, the analysis of pupils' work reflects satisfactory teaching but insufficiently challenging work for the more able pupils. This was also a weakness in some lessons observed, especially in Years 2 and 3. The level of work planned suits the abilities of the average attaining pupils, less able and those with special educational needs but not always the needs of the more able. Teachers maintain pupils' interest by lively discussions and through the range of information given. Good teaching was observed in Year 5 where demands placed on the more able pupils resulted in higher standards.
107. Teachers manage their classes well and, consequently, most pupils are well behaved and interested. Pupils' work is marked regularly but the quality and range of written comments are inconsistent throughout the school. Teachers' knowledge and understanding and their teaching of basic skills are satisfactory overall. The analysis of pupils' work shows that pupils in most classes have not been given sufficient opportunities to become more independent, either in planning their own experiments or recording them. For example, pupils in a Year 1 class investigated a wide range of materials and matched the materials with their uses. However, in a Year 2 class where pupils studied forces, they identified pushes and pulls and had time to observe and follow instructions but insufficient opportunities to work independently with partners and devise their own tests.
108. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall and progress at the same rate as the rest of the pupils in the class. There are insufficient activities planned for more able pupils in most classes and this results in standards not being as high as they should be. Although there is a register of gifted and talented pupils, very few pupils are on this register for science although more able pupils were observed in the lessons.
109. Pupils are interested in science in most lessons. They enjoy the lessons and answer questions enthusiastically. Most pupils concentrate well and the behaviour is consistently good.
110. The school has not established a rigorous enough approach to the assessment and recording of standards in science. The quality and use of assessment are at a very early stage and there is little evidence that the results and assessments are then used to focus the teaching where the need is greatest, or give more challenging work to more able pupils.
111. The recently appointed co-ordinator has made appropriate plans for increasing her responsibility. However, she has placed too much emphasis on the development of a scheme of work, which is already in place, and resourcing it, but insufficient reference to improving standards and progress. At present, there is insufficient monitoring of pupils' written work and test results. Neither teaching nor standards are monitored rigorously enough, especially to ensure that all teachers plan for different ability groups, including the more-able pupils. Strengths and weaknesses are too dependent on teachers' planning and range of investigations and not the leadership and management of the subject. There are sufficient resources which are carefully stored and regularly audited but at present there are too few information and communications resources (ICT) which would enhance pupils' learning.





## **ART AND DESIGN**

112. Standards are good in all aspects of art and pupils achieve well as a result of effective teaching and leadership and management. Starting from low levels of attainment as they enter Year 1, pupils in most classes achieve well in art. Consequently, standards are average by the end of Year 2, and by the end of Year 6 pupils' work reaches a standard which is above average. These standards show an improvement compared to the time when the school was last inspected.
113. Pupils work with sensitivity and care when using a wide range of techniques and materials. Particular strengths are in their skills in observational drawing. For example, Year 1 pupils' drawings of the local church show accurate and good shapes, proportion and detail; by the end of Year 6, they progress to using a wider range of pencils with increased sensitivity and accuracy. They observe closely and incorporate a wide range of skills which give texture and perspective to their work. Pupils use technical terms and evaluate their work well.
114. By the end of Year 2, pupils use pastels to good effect when drawing plants and mix colours well when painting to add texture and tone to their illustrations of fruit. They use pencils skilfully to give contrasting textures and good perspective to sketches of a range of objects. They make still-life pictures which include paintings of whole fruit and pencil sketches of fruit cut in half to compare and contrast texture, tone and detail.
115. Teachers provide well for pupils with special educational needs and, in most cases, for the more able pupils resulting in all pupils being well included into all artistic activities including extra-curricular activities. Art contributes well to pupils' spiritual, cultural and multi-cultural development.
116. Art is successfully used to promote learning in other subjects. For example, there are skilful paintings of important aspects of the Sikh religion, and pupils' understanding of literacy and history are enhanced by paintings and sketches.
117. Factors which contribute to improved standards are the good leadership and management, high quality teaching and pupils' positive attitudes.
118. Teachers' planning and explanations about the skills to be learned are clear and concise. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher's introduction and useful review of the skills learned in a previous lesson resulted in high standards of work. The teaching of basic skills and developing pupils' observation and awareness skills encourage pupils to evaluate their work. Learning is good because teachers manage pupils well and organise resources thoroughly. Teachers' preparation, subject knowledge and the emphasis on the learning of artistic skills are all key factors which contribute to high quality learning.
119. The subject is effectively led and managed. The co-ordinator has already encouraged teachers to plan the teaching of artistic skills in a rigorous manner and has already developed clear guidance on the progression of skills in each aspect of art, linking this to the National Curriculum levels. She also plans to further extend the contributions of the local community. As a result of her leadership and teachers' awareness of the ability of more able pupils, the school is beginning to develop young artists who are confident and take pride in their work.
120. The displays of pupils' work reflect the value placed on their achievements. However, the unsatisfactory décor and condition of the surrounding areas detract from the very high impact which this quality of work could make.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

121. There was insufficient evidence on which to base judgements about pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching.

122. No lessons were timetabled for Years 1 or 2 during the inspection. The planning framework for both year groups includes a project of between 6 and 11 hours each term and work is often linked with other subjects. Puppets made to illustrate the story of the Good Samaritan were well finished.
123. During the inspection, pupils in Year 5 were evaluating the clay models that they had made. Most had designed containers with a good feel for shape, colour and purpose. For example, a pupil who wants to be a vet had designed a dog basket while a boy who wants to be a chef had designed a pan with rice and peas inside.
124. Pupils in the Year 6 classes were at the early stages of designing and making a fairground ride based on rotation. The project had been introduced well a fortnight earlier by showing pupils a video of a fairground. The time allocated to the lesson during the inspection wasn't long enough for at least some of the video to be shown again in order to re-focus the pupils. However, the teacher effectively reviewed the four main options and pupils sketched designs, most of which were at a very basic level, showing little detail. Pupils then clearly enjoyed the practical challenge of using the materials provided to put together a turning mechanism on a ride. Some of their constructions showed good imagination and satisfactory practical skills. However, they didn't have time to finish them and most pupils have designed turning mechanisms in isolation from the proposed ride and in ignorance of the fact that turning will be motorised.
125. Although termly projects are identified and the co-ordinator ensures that teachers have the resources they need, the development of skills, knowledge and understanding in all aspects of the design process is not clearly and sharply planned for. The potential of the subject for developing and using skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT is not being realised.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

126. No geography lessons were observed during the inspection and it is therefore not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching during lessons. Additional evidence was taken from discussions with pupils and teachers and the analysis of displays and work in pupils' books.
127. Although standards at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are well below the levels expected for pupils of this age, progress throughout the school is satisfactory and pupils in the present Year 5 class are well placed to attain higher standards than these, when they reach Year 6. Standards have therefore deteriorated since the last inspection. Factors which result in low standards in Year 6 are pupils' poor literacy skills, especially their reading for information and writing for recording geographical work. There is also a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and a high level of mobility within the school. However, the co-ordinator has organised a wide range of visits to develop pupils' mapping skills and knowledge of the local area, including social habits and environmental awareness. Pupils with special educational needs progress at the same rate as other pupils in the class.
128. At the end of Year 2, pupils identify some countries in the British Isles and Europe. They also know key features of a seaside resort. Pupils enjoyed the book 'Katie Morag' and as a result compared the lifestyles of people on an island off the coast of Scotland with those on the mainland, especially in terms of transport and communications. They follow the journeys of Barnaby Bear and use the travels of this bear to find different countries and understand some of their geographical features. However, the standards of writing and reading for information are low. Although pupils show an awareness of localities beyond their own when talking about holidays, families and food, the standard of recording is low in comparison to standards expected of pupils in this age group.
129. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of visits. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to visit Norfolk where they learn mapping and orienteering skills. In order that geography is fully inclusive for all pupils, those who do not want to go to Norfolk take part in the

full range of skills on a visit to Derbyshire. Furthermore, the school has effective links with the secondary school and, as a result, Year 6 pupils take part in a curriculum day which focuses on geographical skills at Clumber Park.

130. Teachers plan a wide variety of geographical activities based on national guidance. For example, in Year 3, pupils compare lifestyles of the people in Ghana with those in Kenya and know that Africa is a continent composed of many countries. They also compare life in some African countries with life in Britain. Pupils in Year 4 consider geographical aspects of the world and also key historical and geographical facts about Worksop. The quality of teaching and use of information and control technology (ICT) enhance Year 5 pupils' knowledge and understanding of the effect of pedestrianisation and the construction of a by-pass on people's shopping habits and transport needs. This was a particularly well-handled survey which incorporated literacy and numeracy skills and the use of ICT. Pupils in Year 6 identify important features of a river and know the names of some mountains and mountain ranges.
131. In most classes, pupils are aware of environmental and conservation issues, both locally and in other parts of the world. For example, they know some of the efforts made to keep the water supply pure. They also know that many geographical features, such as oceans and mountains and their local environment, can be harmed by careless attitudes of human beings. In this way, geography contributes towards pupils' moral and social development. However, pupils' abilities to read and research information and record it independently are low and these are the main elements which result in low standards.
132. The analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning shows that work is not consistently planned in all classes to meet the needs of the more able pupils. Good examples were seen in the Year 5 surveys of Worksop and in Year 4, where pupils compared geographical features of the town over 40 years ago to the present day. Their use of postcards for reference enabled them to comment on the use of different buildings and also reflected high standards in their use of visual material for finding information.
133. At present, there is no whole-school assessment system. However, the enthusiastic and recently appointed co-ordinator has a well-developed plan for the subject which includes more reference to the National Curriculum, the development of an assessment system and curricular planning for pupils of different ability groups. There are sufficient resources for geography and the co-ordinator has recently ordered more up-to-date atlases. The resources are further enhanced by a good range of visits both locally and further afield.

## **HISTORY**

134. The pupils' standards in history at the end of Years 2 and 6 are at the levels expected of pupils of their age. Pupils make good progress in their history lessons. This is an improvement since the subject was last inspected, when progress in history was judged to be satisfactory. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of people from the past and the changes brought about through the passage of time are at the level expected for pupils of their age. However, their skills in recording their findings are hampered by their underdeveloped writing skills, which inhibit the way in which they express their historical ideas and thoughts on paper. The improved achievement of the pupils is the result of a drive within the school to improve the progress the pupils make in their historical enquiry skills. The good teaching the pupils receive and the stimulating and relevant curriculum packed with first hand experiences also make a significant contribution.
135. By the end of Year 2 the pupils have studied different people from the past and how they lived, for example, by studying what life was like for Florence Nightingale. The pupils understand that hospitals in Florence Nightingales' time were very different places than they are today. The pupils recognise that patients were treated in hospitals that were dirty and as a consequence many patients died. The pupils gain a good understanding of how life used to be in the recent and distant past.

136. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have a good knowledge of different periods of British history and distant ancient civilisations. In Year 6 the pupils study census materials from 1841 and are intrigued by the information they glean from these documents. They find that over 50 people lived in just seven houses and only eight of these people were in work. The pupils worked hard to consider this information in the light of the other knowledge they had of this time in British history. In this way they begin to understand the importance of these documents from the past and how they help us to find out about life in the past. The pupils learn about the advent of the workhouse and also famous Victorian inventions of postage stamps and light bulbs. The pupils have used the Internet to gather information about workhouses and what they were like and why they evolved. In this way pupils gain an understanding of the way of life for poor people at this time in our history.
137. The teaching throughout the school is clearly rooted as far as possible in first hand enquiry. To support this policy of learning through first hand experiences and the use of source materials and artefacts the teachers organise visits to a wide range of local educational venues. Pupils gain further knowledge and understanding of these periods in time through visitors to the school who role-play and bring objects from the past. The use of timelines clearly fixes the pupils' learning in the correct chronological sequence.
138. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has good ideas for the further development of the subject throughout the school. Assessment is as yet in its earliest stages of development. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

135. Standards have improved a lot since the last time that the subject was inspected. This owes much to the energy and expertise of the co-ordinator who has been in post for some three years. He has led the considerable improvement in provision, including the development of a computer suite, and very effectively supports his colleagues. The standard of pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is close to national expectations. Pupils currently in Year 6 did not have the benefit of the improved facilities and teaching in earlier years and in most respects their attainment is below what is expected for their age. Many pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 have the nationally expected level of skills, knowledge and understanding for their age.
136. No lessons were observed in Years 1 or 2 during the inspection. However, it was evident from work on display and observing pairs of pupils using computers in other subject lessons that they had successfully built on their learning in the Foundation Stage. They confidently open programs, use a simple word-processing package, find information from CD ROM and control floor robots. Skills at using a mouse are developed to a satisfactory level as is the use of the basic number and control keys on the keyboard. Pupils also confidently operate the listening stations in their classrooms.
137. The quality of teaching in the junior classes is good and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Pupils in Year 3, for example, have clearly developed their skills when writing their versions of children's stories with illustrations that they have assembled. They confidently alter fonts, size, colour and orientation and import pictures to illustrate their text. During the inspection pupils in this year group were being effectively introduced to databases through considering a manual library card system. Pupils were completely involved in this and made good progress in developing the concepts of record and field as well as appreciating the advantages of a computerised system. Keyboard skills in terms of knowing where to find the letters are not well developed and this slowed down the process of entering information.
138. During the inspection, learning about databases was being taken a stage further in well-taught lessons in the two Year 4 classes. Pupils developed a good understanding of the use of Yes/No questions as an aid in sorting information, as a result of well-planned teaching, partly in the classroom and partly in the computer suite. Teachers gave very clear explanations and wisely

used the computer suite for 'hands-on' practical work and the classroom for the whole-class introduction and for consolidation of learning at the end.

139. Discussion with pupils in Year 5 and examination of their work shows that they have satisfactory skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, the class anthology of poems is attractively presented and indicates that word-processing skills have developed well. A project on how the A57 by-pass has affected Worksop provides a good example of pupils using their developing ICT skills to improve learning in other subject areas, in this case geography and literacy. Cross-curricular work of this sort is a strength in Year 5 and one class has produced newsletters for sale within the school. Other pupils confidently demonstrated their skills with spreadsheets, using the correct technical language, when analysing the information gained from an activity in physical education.
140. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated a satisfactory level of skill in terms of using the Internet to gain access to a slide show on life in Victorian schools. Most also explained successfully what they were trying to do in terms of making their own slide show and had made sound progress with the task. Lack of familiarity with the keyboard meant that some pupils were slow in entering text and some had difficulty combining their text with the images that they had successfully selected and imported. Their skills in using the mouse and navigating through menus are satisfactory.
141. Pupils are encouraged to use computers at an after-school club and there is a good take-up for this. Older and responsible pupils also use the suite at lunchtimes. These aspects of the provision are good and lend themselves to expansion as the school seeks to raise standards across the curriculum.

## **MUSIC**

142. Four lessons, all singing based, were observed during the inspection and further evidence was obtained from the singing in acts of collective worship. The overall quality of teaching is good and pupils' attainment in singing throughout the school is satisfactory. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in this respect. There is insufficient evidence on which to base judgements on pupils' attainment in other areas of the music curriculum.
143. Pupils in Year 1 show a good understanding of musical terms such as tempo and dynamics and know the names of common instruments - for example, tambourine and castanet - and how they are played. They sing with angry and sad voices and responded well to the teacher as conductor when they were learning 'I hear thunder'. In an assembly, pupils from Years 1 and 2 listened well to Ravel's Bolero because the teacher focused their attention on changes of dynamics. They sang 'The Music Man' with a good feel for style, accurate pitch and rhythm, and with enthusiasm. Pupils in these classes benefit from such weekly opportunities to develop their skills in making music.
144. Teaching in the junior classes is mostly based on a commercial scheme that provides good support for class teachers. Current work in Year 3 is focused on learning about music from Africa and India, both of which have been studied this year in other subject areas. In the lesson observed, pupils successfully learned the words of an African call and response song and sang it in two parts. They suggested that the song might be appropriate to a celebration and the teacher sensibly took the opportunity to make a point about the universality of music. The lesson successfully promoted pupils' listening and singing skills.
145. Pupils in a Year 5 class sang well with recorded accompaniment, clearly and with a good sense of rhythm. When they were learning a new song, 'Syntax Error', the teacher added further challenge by having pupils add accompaniment with shakers and chime bars. He made clear his expectation that the quality of performance would improve and it did. All pupils were fully included in the lesson, readily taking turns and showing interest. Some made correctly critical comments about the different sounds of the two chime bars and the match of the shaker rhythm to the song.

The lesson was well focused on improvement and enjoyment and the quality of pupils' learning was good.

146. Pupils in Year 6 responded well to the enthusiasm and knowledge of their teacher, their performance benefiting from his insistence that they stand and breathe properly. Their listening to three pieces of *a capella* singing was focused well by the teacher asking them to identify whether they were listening to voices, instruments, concord/discord, unison/harmony. Pupils correctly identified differences between pieces and one pupil commented that the African piece made use of sounds rather than words. Their understanding of ostinato was improved through singing 'ostinato, makes a pattern, on and on, keeps repeating', to the tune of 'London's Burning'. Good further challenge was added when this was sung as a round and when pupils added ostinato accompaniment on chime bars. The lesson promoted good learning and enjoyment of music.
147. There is room for improvement in the provision for music, especially with respect to composition and appreciation, and at present the co-ordinator does not have opportunities for supporting teaching and learning in the junior classes. This is a weakness, as is the relatively small amount of use made of information and communication technology to support and extend learning in music. The curriculum is enhanced for those pupils who learn to play instruments, including hand-bells, and take part in musical productions.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

148. The school's main hall was out of commission during the inspection. Some lessons were observed in the dining hall, a room not suited for physical education. However, it was not possible to make judgements about attainment and the quality of teaching in such adverse circumstances.
149. A review of the school's documentation confirms that the school's provision meets requirements. The curriculum is currently based on national guidelines, which the subject leader is reviewing. The school provides equal opportunity for pupils of all abilities and from all backgrounds to learn well. The subject has not been given a high profile of late. If provision is to improve and standards to rise, the co-ordinator needs to be given the opportunity to monitor provision of the subject more closely. A plan for improvement could then be developed to include staff training and the provision of better resources, which at present are unsatisfactory.
150. Teachers' planning confirms that throughout the school pupils learn about the importance of warm-up when taking part in exercise. They understand well the heart's function and the health-related benefits of exercise. Teachers teach the value of health and safety; for instance, how to bend the knees when landing after jumping with feet together. Pupils learn to play games and understand the need for rules. In school swimming lessons, pupils in Years 3 and 4 develop their water competence via a series of exercises designed to improve their basic swimming strokes. By the time they leave the school, the majority of pupils achieve the national standard of swimming of twenty-five metres unaided. School teams participate in soccer and netball matches against other schools.
151. There is equal access for all to all activities and pupils develop and improve their skills. Progress in dance lessons leads to refinement of movements, improvement in physical control and appreciation of space. In athletics, pupils benefit from a range of activities each designed to offer them further challenge. Both boys and girls have the chance to make progress in developing appropriate skills in out-of-school coaching activities in soccer, cricket and other sports. Dance is sometime included in broad-based themes such as the recent topic about the Aztecs.
152. Pupils' response in the limited number of lessons seen is usually good. The vast majority of pupils enjoy their lessons. They participate well and their enjoyment is evident. Pupils work hard to develop their skills and the majority work co-operatively during group and team activities. They are happy to demonstrate and take pride in their physical prowess.
153. Teachers' planning indicates satisfactory subject knowledge which enables them to provide appropriately challenging activities. They give the pupils lots of opportunities to practise and to improve. Activities are well planned and ensure the progressive development of skills. This encourages pupils to work hard. Teachers use pupil demonstrations effectively to assess



performance and to help pupils to improve. In lessons seen there was a strong emphasis on the importance of safety. Teachers also consistently point out the benefits of regular exercise on the body.

154. When the main hall is in operation the school's facilities for physical education are just about satisfactory for the number of pupils. Although the school has no playing field they do have use of a nearby playing field and pupils swim at a local pool. Resources such as small equipment are unsatisfactory in quantity and quality for the number of pupils in the school.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

155. The school has adapted the syllabus 'Here I am' to bring it in line with the QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) guidelines. The syllabus is tailored carefully to meet the needs of the school and it meets all statutory requirements. Standards at the age of seven and eleven meet the expectations of this syllabus. Standards have improved since the time the subject was last inspected.
156. The quality of teaching is good overall and often very good. This results in pupils, whatever their background or ability, achieving well. Teachers plan their lessons well and the development of ideas and themes is carefully structured. Teachers are successful because they use the pupils' experiences and feelings as means of developing and extending their knowledge and understanding of the different religions and cultures studied. The major world religions of Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and Judaism are studied. Pupils' understanding of the religious beliefs of others enriches their own spiritual, moral, social, and cultural lives.
157. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy stories from the Bible such as Jonah and the Whale. By the age of seven, the pupils have deepened their knowledge of Christianity. They have also had the opportunity to learn a little about Islam and Judaism. They know the Bible is a special book for Christians and the Qu'ran is special for Muslims. They compare similarities and differences in the way different religions celebrate major festivals. This helps them to recognise and celebrate cultural diversity.
158. Teachers have good knowledge of the different areas of the subject and plan their work well. In Year 4, pupils study why the Baisakhi Festival is important to Sikhs. The teacher's very good input and explanations held the pupils' interest very well. This resulted in sensible suggestions and group discussions which moved all pupils' knowledge and depth of understanding forward considerably. Similarly, in a Year 5 lesson, the teacher gave the pupils good opportunities to share and discuss their ideas on making choices. Consequently, the pupils were very interested in the lesson. They suggested good ways of resolving dilemmas and gave good reasons for the choices that they would make in given circumstances.
159. Teachers challenge the pupils well through good questions which revise previous knowledge and extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding. This was seen particularly clearly in a Year 6 lesson introducing the concept of the spiritual importance of objects. The teacher shared with the class her own 'special objects' explaining why they were of importance to her. Her good presentation illustrated very effectively that special objects do not have to have great material value. The pupils enjoyed and understood her explanations. This resulted in them achieving well and producing lists of their own important objects.
160. The subject leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She has a clear vision for further development of the subject. She provides colleagues with effective guidance and advice when needed. She recognises the very important part that this subject plays in promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and multi-cultural development of the pupils. Resources are of good quality and carefully matched to the current curriculum. They, together with the good quality visits and visitors to the school, enhance the provision and help to ensure that pupils achieve well.

