

INSPECTION REPORT

**MORVEN PARK PRIMARY AND NURSERY
SCHOOL**

Kirkby in Ashfield, Nottinghamshire

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122717

Head teacher: Mr P G Walter

Reporting inspector: Miss K Manning
20267

Dates of inspection: 26th February – 1st March 2001

Inspection number: 209844

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary and nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: School Street
Kirkby in Ashfield
Nottinghamshire

Postcode: NG17 7BT

Telephone number: 01623 459 395

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Christine Gear

Date of previous inspection: January 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
K Manning 20267	Registered inspector	Design and technology. Equal opportunities.	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school. The school's results and pupils' achievements. Teaching. Leadership and management.
J Chesterfield 13874	Lay inspector		Curriculum and links with the community. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance. Pupils' welfare, health and safety. Partnership with parents and carers.
A Lowson 30834	Team inspector	English Physical education. English as an additional language.	Assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic performance, personal development and attendance.
G Halliday 22881	Team inspector	Science History. Religious education. Special educational needs.	
A Welch 31012	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography. Music.	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
M Spark 18342	Team inspector	Art and design. Information and communication technology. Foundation Stage.	Personal support and guidance.

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
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London
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Morven Park is a large primary school serving the local community. Pupils come from predominantly English backgrounds and all but one speak English as their first language. Almost a third of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is more than in most schools. The number of pupils who start or leave the school part way through their education is high. This happens when families move in and out of the area. There are 166 boys and 188 girls in classes from reception to Year 6. A further 35 boys and 25 girls attend the nursery either in the morning or afternoon. Many children have limited experience of books and number when they join the nursery and their attainment on entry to the reception class is below that of most four-year-olds. The number of pupils who have special educational needs is higher than in most other schools. One hundred and ten pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs because they have learning, physical or emotional difficulties. Of these, three pupils have statements of special needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Sound leadership ensures that the school is improving steadily and no longer has serious weaknesses. Pupils are keen to learn and the good teaching is starting to raise standards, though there is a long way to go before all pupils reach the standards of which they are capable. The cost of achieving this is higher than in most other schools but improvements in all aspects of its work means that it is now giving satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Good provision for pupils' personal development ensures that they have positive attitudes to learning and behave well.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' moral and social development.
- In lessons, more than half of the teaching is now good or better and this is starting to raise standards.
- Teachers are good at assessing what pupils know and can do and are using this to set challenging targets for raising standards.

What could be improved

- Children in the Foundation Stage do not make enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The way science is taught in Years 1 and 2 prevents standards being higher.
- Pupils throughout the school do not make fast enough progress in English and mathematics.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use computers and standards in information and communication technology are lower than they should be.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was judged to have serious weaknesses when it was inspected in January 1999. Since then, the school has continued to improve at a steady rate and although there is still some way to go, all of the key issues have been tackled systematically. The most important issue was to identify what needed doing first and then to agree a long-term plan for development. The headteacher and governors have achieved this and now have a plan that will help the school continue to move forward. Teachers have a much better understanding of what they can learn from tests and assessments and how they can use the information to set targets for raising standards. Through checking the quality of teaching, senior staff pinpoint what works well and identify gaps in teachers' knowledge. As a result, there is more good teaching and less unsatisfactory teaching than at the time of the last inspection. This is beginning to raise standards but pupils need to make faster progress if they are reach the levels expected nationally. Significant changes to the curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes have helped, but more work needs to be done in order to raise standards. The hard work is beginning to pay dividends in

that the school's results in National Curriculum tests are rising faster than the national trend.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	E*	E	E
mathematics	E*	E*	E	E
science	E	E*	C	B

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

During their time in the nursery and reception class, children make good progress in personal and social development. They also make steady gains in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative development. Children do not make fast enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This means that they already have some way to catch up when they start in Year 1. Children's physical development is restricted by the lack of space and equipment for outdoor play.

Last year the standards achieved by most seven-year-olds were well below the levels expected for their age in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils in Morven Park performed poorly compared with those in similar schools. Inspection findings show that standards are improving but remain below those expected for seven-year-olds.

Standards in English, and mathematics were well below average for 11-year-olds and pupils performed poorly compared with those from similar schools. Inspection findings show that standards in English and mathematics are improving but remain below those expected for 11-year-olds. Standards in science rose tremendously and were typical of 11-year-olds. Pupils performed better than those in similar schools. This is a real success for the school and is due to the emphasis teachers give to investigating and experimenting in science.

Test results are affected by the above average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and the high number of pupils who start the school part-way through their education. The school's own results show that pupils who join in nursery and leave after Year 6 make steady progress in English and mathematics; though this is not enough to help them achieve the standards expected for their age because many are behind when they start in the nursery.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' have good attitudes to learning and enjoy school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Most pupils are behave well and are courteous in lessons and assemblies. There is a little unsatisfactory behaviour when pupils are not supervised sufficiently at breaks and lunchtime.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils like and respect their teachers and form good relationships with other children and adults.

Attendance	Attendance is well below average.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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.

Teaching has improved since the last inspection. Just over half is now good or better. Thirty-seven per cent is good, a further 13 per cent is very good and one per cent is excellent. Forty-three per cent is satisfactory and six per cent is unsatisfactory. Teaching is strongest in classes in Years 5 and 6.

Strengths of teaching: the methods teachers use to teach literacy and numeracy are beginning to be effective in raising standards ~ teachers manage pupils very well and as a result most pupils concentrate and are able to get on with their work ~ teachers ensure that pupils who start school part-way through their education are given the help they need to settle in and get on with their learning ~ teachers make good use of homework, particularly the homework club, to support pupils' learning.

What could be improved: children in the Foundation Stage are not given enough opportunities for reading, writing and mathematics ~ children in the reception class are occasionally asked to sit for too long without taking part in lessons ~ in mathematics, teachers' planning does not always ensure that work is pitched at the right level for pupils of different abilities.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is extended by a reasonable range of extra-curricular activities. Children in the Foundation Stage do not have a separate outside play area or equipment. Some aspects of information and communication technology are not taught in sufficient depth.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are given the support they need to make steady progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school does all it can for pupils who speak English as an additional language and they make steady progress in all subjects.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Pupils' spiritual and cultural development are promoted satisfactorily through lessons and assemblies. Good provision is made for their social and moral development in the day-to-day work of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is not doing a good enough job of ensuring pupils' health and safety. The way the school checks pupils' behaviour, personal development and attendance is good. The school checks pupils' academic progress and attendance to a satisfactory level. Teachers work in close partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher has led the school through the steps necessary to remedy the serious weaknesses. While teachers monitor the quality of teaching more rigorously than at the time of the previous inspection, it is not as sharp as it needs to be to identify gaps in planning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil most of their duties well and are very much involved in the school's work. They do not fulfil requirements to have a governor whose responsibility is to oversee the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Staff have a clear view of what needs to be done to improve teaching and raise standards. They have rightly identified planning as an area for development.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses all of its resources well and for the benefit of pupils. Satisfactory use is made of the time and talents of teachers and support staff to provide help for pupils with special educational needs.

Governors and teachers make thorough comparisons of pupils' performance in tests with local, similar and all other schools. This is helping them to set realistic targets for raising standards and appropriate objectives for the management of the school. Governors try hard to ensure that they get the best possible value for money from spending, particularly when allocating large amounts, for example, on computers. Parents' views about the school are sought on important matters, though this is not always done in a formal way.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are pleased that their children like school. • They believe that their children are making good progress in school. • Parents think that most of the teaching is good. • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. • Parents are pleased that their children are expected to try hard and do their best. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant number of parents would like a more interesting range of activities outside lessons. • A number of parents feel that they do not get enough information about how their children are doing. • Some parents feel that their children do not get the right amount of homework.

Inspection findings support most of parents' positive views of the school. There is a substantial amount of good teaching. Pupils are generally expected to do their best but work in mathematics is not always challenging enough. While pupils make steady progress, it is not as good as parents believe and this is one of the areas the school needs to work on. At the start and end of each day, teachers make themselves available to talk with parents. Parents' concerns about homework, lack of information and activities outside of lessons are unfounded. Teachers set homework in English and mathematics and pupils who attend the homework club benefit considerably from the extra teaching. The written reports, given to parents at the end of the year, are of good quality. Every pupil has the chance to visit an adventure activity centre and a wide range of after-school clubs and activities extend pupils' learning and enjoyment of school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. When children enter the reception class, their early achievements are below those of most other four-year-olds. They make good progress towards, and in some instances beyond, the goals established for their development in personal, social and emotional growth, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Progress is steady in the development of language and literacy and mathematics but is prevented from being faster because children are not taught to read, write and use numbers in a systematic way. This means that they already have some way to catch up when they start in Year 1. Children's physical development is restricted by the lack of space and equipment for outdoor play.

The results of national tests

2. Standards are improving, though they are still not high enough in English, mathematics and Information and communication technology. In science, they are not high enough by the end of Year 2 but pupils have caught up by the end of Year 6.
3. Two important factors cause standards to be below average. Morven Park has a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than most other schools and a high number of pupils start the school part-way through their education. This happens when families move into the area. Last year, more than a third of the pupils in Year 2 had special educational needs. Similarly, in Year 6, almost half of the pupils had special educational needs and close to a quarter had started at this school part way through their education.
4. In last year's National Curriculum tests in reading and writing, a high proportion of seven-year-olds failed to reach the level expected for their age. Fewer achieved a higher level in reading and no pupils achieved a higher level in writing. The results of national tests for 11-year-olds were better. Test results rose sharply and the school exceeded the target it had set for raising standards. Despite this, pupils performed poorly compared with those in similar schools. In addition, comparisons with test results from 1996, when they were seven-year-olds, showed that they had not made fast enough progress during their time in the juniors.
5. In mathematics, the results of national tests for seven-year-olds in 2000, showed that almost a fifth of pupils failed to reach the level expected for their age and far fewer than in other schools achieved a higher level. The results of national tests for 11-year-olds were better than the previous year and the school exceeded the target it had set for raising standards. However, pupils performed poorly compared with those in similar schools and comparisons with tests at the age of seven, showed that they had not made enough progress in junior classes.
6. In science, teachers' assessments of pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2000 showed that standards were well below the national average. Almost a quarter of pupils failed to reach the level expected for their age and far fewer than in other schools achieved a higher level. However, standards are average for 11-year-olds, largely because a similar number of pupils to most other schools achieved a higher level. This is a real success for the school and has shown that, with good teaching, pupils can do well. In addition, it means that pupils in this school perform better than those in similar schools. Inspection findings confirm that standards are below average by the end of Year 2 and

typical for 11-year-olds by the end of Year 6.

7. There is very little difference in the performance of boys and girls in Year 2, although over the last five years, girls have done slightly better than boys in reading and writing. There is no pattern to the performance of boys and girls in classes in Year 6. In some years girls do better than boys but this is not always the case. When judged together, standards in all three subjects are improving at a faster rate than the national trend. This is largely the result of improved teaching in junior classes, which has led to more pupils achieving the standards of which they are capable.

Inspection findings

8. As a result of satisfactory teaching and support from other staff, pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make steady progress. Pupils in Year 6 benefit from the additional support they get in *booster classes* and in the homework club. These are significant factors in improved standards in English and mathematics.
9. Standards in information and communication technology are below what is expected of seven and 11-year-olds. They have improved significantly in the short time since the school gained the computers it needs to teach the subject successfully. Despite this, older pupils have a lot of catching up to do. Younger pupils are becoming familiar with many of the programs on the school's computers but their progress is limited by the amount of time they get to work on computers. Teachers are trying to solve this problem by taking computer laptops into classes more regularly. In religious education, standards meet those prescribed by the locally Agreed Syllabus for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6.
10. In art, geography, history, music and physical education, standards match the levels expected of seven and 11-year-olds. In art, pupils use a reasonable range of techniques to produce pictures and models of a satisfactory quality. In geography, pupils have a sound understanding of their own area and contrasting localities. In history, pupils are beginning to develop skills of researching facts from books but are not yet using computers in their research. In music, standards are typical of seven and 11-year-olds. Pupils sing, play instruments, compose and appraise music. In physical education, pupils gain experience of athletics and outdoor activities during residential visits to adventure activity centres. Most pupils are competent gymnasts and enjoy sports and dancing. Nearly all pupils swim the recommended distance of 25 metres by the end of Year 6.
11. Pupils with special educational needs make steady progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. They benefit from extra support in lessons and generally achieve as well as they can. Pupils who start the school part way through their education are also given extra support, to help them settle in and to find out what they know. Once this is done they too make steady progress and achieve their own personal best.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils' attitudes to school are as good as they were during the previous inspection. Their enthusiasm for school is very apparent as they talk about their favourite lessons and activities. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are particularly enthusiastic about taking part in the sporting and musical activities at lunchtime or after school, and the number of residential visits on offer during the juniors. In lessons, when their teachers' expectations are high and they are clear about what they have to do, pupils are eager to take part and work hard. In a geography lesson in Year 5, the pleasure felt by pupils

was obvious when they met their teacher's challenge to find the names of a number of desert regions in a very limited time. Pupils with special educational needs are confident and have positive attitudes to their work because of the extra support they get and the success they enjoy from activities planned to match their needs. Teachers make sure that they are included in discussions and they achieve success because questions are chosen carefully to match their ability.

13. The school has been successful in maintaining the same good standards of behaviour that it had at the time of the last inspection. Pupils throughout the school behave well in class. They settle quickly, listen attentively and do as they are told without fuss. Those who have special educational needs related to behavioural problems are helped to play a full part in lessons and they respond by following instructions. As a result, teachers do not have to waste time establishing order and pupils are able to learn. Outside in the playground, pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. They generally play and get on well together, but a lack of effective supervision means that boisterous and confrontational behaviour often goes unchecked. Bullying is handled firmly by the school. There were two temporary exclusions during the last school year, but there have been none since September 2000.
14. Pupils' personal development remains good. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and form the basis of pupils' positive attitudes to learning. They are not afraid to join in and *have a go* because they are well aware that their contributions will be valued, whether they are correct or not. Pupils in a class in Year 5, for example, were not put off by getting their mental arithmetic wrong and immediately bounced back with another answer. Relationships between pupils are generally positive within lessons. They work together amicably and share equipment sensibly. Pupils in Year 2 took turns to either play an instrument or record the musical pattern without any fuss. Consequently, no time was lost and they made good progress in developing their musical skills. Pupils are generally polite and courteous and visitors are made to feel very welcome. However, relationships in the playground are not as consistently positive and, at times, a lack of tolerance is evident in their behaviour to one another.
15. Pupils are willing to take responsibility for tasks and routine jobs, such as taking the register or organising the milk. The problem is that they do not get enough opportunities. When they are given the chance to show they can behave in a mature way, for example, to make sure that all lap top computers are ready for use, they are pleased to be asked and take the task seriously. Representatives to the School Council are proud to have been elected by their classmates and are sensible about dealing with issues, such as litter in the playground and the pros and cons of wearing school uniform. In assemblies and religious education lessons, pupils reflect on the feelings, values and beliefs of others.
16. The level of pupils' attendance has improved steadily since the last inspection, though it is still well below the national average. Most absence is caused by illness and there is little unauthorised absence. An increasing number of parents are disrupting their children's education by taking them out of school for holidays during term time. Punctuality is satisfactory. Most pupils arrive on time each day so that the morning session can begin promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Although teaching was good or better in just over half of the lessons seen during the inspection, a scrutiny of teacher's planning revealed gaps in teaching that prevent it from being good overall. However, there is more good teaching and less unsatisfactory teaching than there was a year ago.
18. Some of the unsatisfactory teaching is in the Foundation Stage. This happens when children in the reception class are expected to watch and listen to the teacher for too long. For example, in one lesson, the teacher spent a long time showing children how a floor robot worked. Only a few children got to have a go. Most became restless and inattentive and learned very little.
19. Children in the Foundation Stage are not taught the skills of reading, writing and using number that will help them learn at a faster rate. For example, not enough emphasis is given to learning the sounds of letters or using this knowledge to spell words. Work in mathematics is sometimes repeated in the reception class and children are sometimes given work that does not take them beyond what they can already do. This has happened because the nursery and reception class teachers have previously planned work separately. Teachers now recognise the need to plan together to ensure that there is progression in what is taught.
20. A strong point of the teaching in the Foundation Stage is the way staff promote children's personal, social and emotional development in everything they do. This is one of the reasons why children gain confidence and settle quickly into school. It is evident in their eagerness to learn and in the way that they go about the everyday business of being in school. For example, they know what to do at tidy away time and lunchtime, sort out their snacks and get hats and coats on when they need them.
21. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is sound. This is most noticeable in the way they are given extra help and support in many lessons. Assessments of what children can do when they start reception class are used to diagnose which children have difficulties learning or behaving. Teachers have started to make good use of these tests to plan the right sort of support. For example, children who do not speak often are encouraged gently to repeat words and sentences. Further up the school, teachers make sensible use of classroom assistants to support small groups of pupils and to ensure that pupils, whose special educational needs arise from emotional and behavioural problems, do not disrupt the lesson for others. This is beginning to raise standards and the school's records show that many pupils with special educational needs make steady progress towards the targets in their programmes of work. Pupils in Year 6 are given the extra push needed to help them do as well as they can in National Curriculum tests through *booster classes* which focus on English and mathematics. All pupils benefit from these, not just those with special educational needs.
22. Teachers ensure that pupils who start the school part-way through their education get a fair deal. Their needs are assessed quickly, through testing or from records passed on from other schools. Once this is done, most settle quickly into the school's routines. These pupils are helped to feel at home because teachers take the time to explain the school's rules and procedures. They also ensure that pupils understand the work; for example, in a class in Year 5, the teacher asked pupils to explain what they were doing for the benefit of a pupil who was fairly new to the school.

23. Teachers are increasingly successful in using the National Literacy Strategy to raise standards. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught to sound out letters and look at pictures for clues to help them read unfamiliar words. This gives them the confidence to have a go and they are pleased when they finally get difficult words right. However, in junior classes, teachers rarely use phonics to help pupils spell correctly. In addition, while teachers emphasise the importance of punctuation and spelling in written work, there is not an agreed method for teaching handwriting and many pupils do not form letters correctly. This affects the quality of their handwriting as they get older.
24. Similarly, while teachers are beginning to use the National Numeracy Strategy more effectively, there are still some aspects of planning that need improving if pupils are to make faster progress. The most important of these is that teachers are not using what they have learned from assessments to pitch work at the right level for pupils. In some infant classes work is not challenging enough for the brightest pupils and occasionally the work that pupils do in junior classes is either too difficult for lower attaining pupils or too easy for higher attaining pupils. One of the best aspects of the teaching of mathematics is the mental arithmetic session at the start of each lesson. Pupils really enjoy this part of the lesson because it is fast and makes them think quickly. This was evident in an excellent lesson in Year 5 when pupils had to count and calculate metres and kilometres. Almost every hand went up to answer questions, because they made pupils think hard. A success of this lesson was that pupils with special educational needs made good progress. By the end of the lesson they were not only more confident at using measurement but also were sometimes as quick as others to answer difficult questions.
25. A strength of the teaching is the way that teachers manage pupils. Their success is built on the good relationships that all staff have with pupils. Adults treat pupils kindly and with respect and pupils respond by trying to please their teachers. Pupils in a class in Year 6, for example, chuckled at their teachers' selection of slippers. Pupils who have problems behaving well are dealt with firmly but sensitively so that the disruption to lessons is always minimal. This was evident in the way a teacher in Year 1 dealt quietly with one or two boys who were behaving in a silly way in a physical education lesson. As a result, all of the class were able to enjoy their carnival procession.
26. A further strength of the teaching is the use made of homework to support pupils' learning in school. This starts in the Foundation Stage when children are encouraged to take books home to read with parents. Older pupils are expected to learn spellings and multiplication tables and those who do benefit from the extra work. However the real gem in the school's provision is the homework club. Twice a week, a significant number of pupils in Year 6, choose to stay behind after school for additional work in English and mathematics. The club is formal in that teachers test pupils and set work but it is informal in its approach, which is to help pupils do well in national tests. Pupils say that they enjoy the club very much and those who attend make considerable leaps in their understanding of literacy and numeracy. In addition, they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
27. During the inspection, a number of temporary teachers were working in the school. Their teaching was generally of a sound quality and some of it was good. This meant that pupils' learning was not disrupted and they continued to make steady progress.

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

28. The school offers an appropriately broad and balanced curriculum to the pupils in its infant and junior classes. Shortcomings in the provision for mathematics, geography and music, noted in the last inspection report, have now been addressed. The amount of teaching time per week is above the government's recommended minimum in the infant classes. In the juniors, however, it is slightly below, so that the pupils lose approximately a day's education a year. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been effectively introduced and are having an impact on standards across the curriculum. The school pays appropriate attention to equal opportunities and the inclusion of all pupils.
29. The provision in the nursery and reception classes has improved since the last inspection, when it was a key issue. The introduction of the curriculum for the new Foundation Stage has helped staff to plan suitable work. However, there are still insufficient opportunities for physical development in both classes because of the lack of a secure and accessible outdoor play area.
30. The school still offers pupils a good range of extra-curricular activities, as it did at the time of the last inspection. Parental concerns in this respect are not justified. Pupils in all years of the juniors have the opportunity to go on a residential trip, and this is a particular strength. As well as these and other, shorter, trips, pupils have access to sporting, music and homework clubs, which give them the chance to develop their skills and their confidence.
31. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. There is a carefully planned scheme of work for every class, and there are some good new initiatives designed to boost pupils' self-esteem and to increase their consideration of others. The recent introduction of a School Council is a good example of this, as well as the themed day on the topic of leaders from other cultures. Work such as this is helping to introduce greater multi-cultural awareness into the school successfully. Sex and drugs education are appropriately planned into the curriculum. Drugs education in particular is well taught through the DARE (drug abuse resistance education) project, run in conjunction with the police.
32. The school has maintained sound links with the community since the last inspection. Pupils visit the local library, shops and churches and volunteers from the community come into school to hear pupils read. There are effective transfer arrangements with the local secondary schools to enable pupils to move on smoothly to the next stage of their education.
33. The school's provision for pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall, as it was at the time of the last inspection. The promotion of pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are given some good opportunities to think about the nature of the world beyond themselves. For example, in a science lesson in a class in Year 1, the teacher enabled the children to marvel at the properties of magnets. Further up the school, junior children have produced thoughtful work on the meaning of prayer in their religious education lessons. These opportunities are not, however, consistently planned throughout the school and across the curriculum. The school meets the requirement for a daily act of collective worship. Study of literature, art and music increases pupils' knowledge of their own and other cultures. This is supplemented by visits to theatres and concerts. There are some good, new initiatives actively recognising the multi-cultural diversity of society, and exemplified by a lively display on cultural leaders in the hall.
34. Pupils' moral and social development is promoted well. In lessons and assemblies,

teachers emphasise the difference between right and wrong and the need to consider others. The way teachers treat other adults and pupils makes them good role models. The school is particularly strong in its development of pupils' personal confidence and self-esteem; for example, through residential trips and events such as the *millennium moment*. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility or use their initiative for the benefit of the school community, although opportunities for younger pupils to read with older ones and for *buddy* systems in the playground have been tried with some success. Pupils have the chance to raise money for charities and they enjoy taking part in national events, such as *Children in Need* and *Comic Relief*.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school has maintained appropriate arrangements for child protection. The headteacher has responsibility for this, and the school follows the local area guidelines. The school's policy provides suitable guidance for staff, and pupils are taught about keeping safe through their planned programme of personal, social and health education.
36. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is based on teachers' knowledge and is mainly informal. All the staff care about the pupils and treat them with kindness and consideration. However, the organisation of the school's daily routines means that they are not always able to give pupils the attention necessary to ensure their welfare. At break, there are too few staff on duty to supervise all the pupils effectively. This means pupils can loiter in cloakrooms, classrooms and corners of the playground with no one to monitor their behaviour. At lunchtimes, midday staff are not effectively deployed. This is because too many rooms are used for sandwich lunches so that supervisors have to look after several classes at once. This is particularly significant for the infant pupils who eat lunch in the mobile classrooms. Two separate mobile classrooms share one supervisor and as a result these young pupils are unsupervised while they are eating for varying periods of time. Additionally, a number of health and safety issues, relating to the management of the site, have been reported to the governing body for their urgent attention.
37. The school monitors and promotes attendance well. As a result, attendance has improved slowly but surely since the time of the last inspection. Good use is made of the computerised recording system to keep checks on individual pupils, and outside support from the educational welfare service is called in where needed. Class totals are also kept and used for the award of a weekly attendance trophy. This motivates the children, as they are keen for their class to win it.
38. Good behaviour is promoted satisfactorily. Teachers throughout the school manage behaviour well. They have a positive approach, and set good examples to pupils through their own behaviour and relationships. Their standards are clear and consistent, so that pupils know what to expect. Rewards and sanctions are fair, and pupils understand the systems. Outside in the playground, though, the lack of sufficient supervision means that unacceptable behaviour sometimes goes unnoticed and uncorrected.
39. Since the previous inspection, procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress have improved and are now good. Teachers are now using information from assessments effectively to plan more challenging activities, which are linked to national standards of attainment. In English and mathematics, assessments of what pupils know, understand and can do are good, and this information is being used to raise standards. The school uses teachers' assessments, together with standardised and national tests to record pupils' progress. These are then used to set targets for classes, groups and individuals. The assessment of pupils' progress in most other

subjects takes place informally. Co-ordinators have begun to keep portfolios of work, which provide useful evidence of what pupils know and can do.

40. The school has appropriate procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the Foundation Stage. However, teachers have not used the information they get to alter the way they teach reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, pupils do not make the necessary progress to prepare them for work on the National Curriculum when they start in classes in Year 1.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The school has successfully maintained its positive relationship with parents since the time of the last inspection. Parents are pleased with the school and believe that their children are happy there. They feel that staff are approachable and have high expectations of their children. They also feel that the teaching is good and that their children make good progress. These views are justified, although in the past, teachers' expectations have not always been high enough. Now, however, improvements in teaching are enabling pupils to make better progress in infant and junior classes. Some parents have expressed concern about the extra-curricular activities available, the homework their children receive, and the information they receive on their children's progress. These concerns are unfounded. The school provides a good range of additional activities, particularly residential trips, and homework is used well to support pupils' learning in school. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress.
42. The school's links with parents are satisfactory overall. The accessibility of staff is a strong feature. Parents are able to see their children's teachers before and after school and make appointments to talk to them for longer if necessary. Parents now also have the chance to speak to governors at their regular surgeries. The *Learning Together* courses run for parents provide them with a good opportunity to learn how to support their children in literacy and numeracy.
43. Information for parents is satisfactory. The governors' annual report and the prospectus contain all the information required by law. The prospectus is well presented and gives parents a good impression of the school's daily life and work. Well written, helpful newsletters are sent to parents. However, they only go out every half-term. No information is sent to parents about the curriculum their children are covering. This means that their ability to support their children's learning at home is limited.
44. Reports to parents on their children's progress are good. The school has successfully acted on the recommendations of the previous inspection report to improve their quality. Most reports now give a clear indication of exactly how well pupils are doing compared with national expectations for their age, and what they need to do in order to make further progress. This good practice is not consistent across the whole school, however.
45. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to the work of the school and to their children's education. Many hear their children read at home and make sure that they complete their homework. Some are able to give practical support as governors, as members of the parent-teacher association and as helpers in class and on trips. The school makes effective use of their skills and values their help.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The governors, headteacher and senior teachers have worked hard to ensure that the leadership and management of the school are stronger than they were at the time of the previous inspection. As a result they are now satisfactory.
47. Training and support from the local education authority have helped everyone gain a much sharper vision of what the school needs to do in order to rectify its serious weaknesses. This has resulted in a far more purposeful plan for school development, which recognises that the most important step for the school is to raise standards. Priorities for improvement are generally more focused than they were previously, though one or two are still too broad.
48. As a response to criticisms by Her Majesty's Inspectors, the headteacher and governors have made changes to the management of the school. From next term, a newly appointed deputy and an assistant headteacher will play a greater role in holding staff to account for standards. This has already begun in English and mathematics, where co-ordinators make regular reports about pupils' progress to the headteacher and governors. As a result of these initiatives, staff are beginning to work as a team and morale is higher than it was a year ago.
49. The headteacher has introduced a more rigorous system of checking the quality of teaching. Senior teachers, and the co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy, have observed their colleagues teaching English and mathematics. This highlighted some of the weaknesses in teaching that prevented pupils making the progress of which they were capable. The changes made as a result of this have helped raise standards in both subjects and is one of the main reasons why the school's results are rising at a faster rate than the national trend. Heartened by this success, the headteacher and staff have extended the monitoring of teaching to include science and information and communication technology.
50. Co-ordinators have a much clearer understanding of their responsibilities than they had previously. They are now monitoring the curriculum in a more purposeful way than ever before. In the main, this has helped them identify weaknesses in their subject. For example, that there are not enough electrical or mechanical resources to help pupils in junior classes reach the level expected for their age in design and technology. However, it is sometimes too general to reveal weaknesses; for example, that the work planned for children in the Foundation Stage does not take sufficient account of the short time that some children have in reception class and that teachers' practice has not improved.
51. Governors fulfil most of their statutory duties in helping to shape the direction of the school. The exception is that they do not have a governor to oversee the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs. There have been some changes to the governing body since the time of the previous inspection and this has strengthened the leadership of the school. They have taken a strong lead by appointing a deputy headteacher and an assistant head teacher. The new chair of governors and a finance committee also keeps a close eye on spending. Getting value for money is one of their priorities and they are monitoring the effectiveness of the money spent on new computers very closely.

52. The school has sufficient, suitably qualified teachers and support staff to teach the curriculum fully and effectively. Arrangements for the induction of new staff and newly qualified teachers are appropriate, and procedures for appraising the performance of teachers are in hand. The school has successfully addressed the issue of meeting staff's professional development needs, raised in the last inspection report. Systems have been put in place for identifying individual and whole school needs, and these are underpinned by the requirements of performance management.
53. There have been some improvements in the school's accommodation since the time of the last inspection. It is now adequate to teach the curriculum fully, apart from some aspects of physical education, and the physical development of the children in the nursery and reception classes. This is because there is no playing field, and no secure and accessible outdoor play area for the youngest children in the school. The staff room is too small to accommodate more than half of the staff. This is divisive, as it hampers efforts at team building. The mobile classrooms have not been replaced since the last inspection and are in poor condition. These classrooms are not well suited to housing classes of infant children, as they do not have toilets, and a great deal of time is wasted as pupils go backwards and forwards to the main building.
54. Resources for information and communications technology have improved since the last inspection, but they are still unsatisfactory. There are also gaps in the resources for geography, design and technology, and art. The library contains a number of outdated and misleading books, which are not appealing to pupils.
55. Financial planning and monitoring are satisfactory. The school development plan makes the link between planning and spending clear. Senior management and governors are starting to look at the impact of their spending decisions on standards, in line with the recommendations of the last inspection report. The school uses its funding appropriately, including grants which are targeted at the school's priorities. Governors ensure that the school gets best value from its spending by looking carefully at how money is spent. Reserves have been sensibly reduced by increasing the resources for information and communications technology. The school intends to maintain a small level of reserves to cover contingencies.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. Governors, headteacher and staff should;

Ensure that children make faster progress during their time in the Foundation Stage by

- teaching the basic skills of reading and writing in a more structured way (*paragraph 62*),
- giving more emphasis to teaching of phonics in order to help children read and write (*paragraph 63*),
- ensuring that there is progression in the skills and knowledge taught in mathematics from one year to the next (*paragraphs 64 and 65*).

ENSURE THAT PUPILS MAKE FASTER PROGRESS IN ENGLISH BY

- agreeing and implementing an approach to teaching handwriting (*paragraph 84*),
- checking the work of pupils in Years 1 and 2, to ensure that letters are formed correctly (*paragraph 84*),
- making more use of phonics to teach spelling to pupils in junior classes (*paragraph 81*),
- planning more frequent opportunities for pupils in infant classes to use the school library (*paragraph 80*).

Ensure that pupils make faster progress in mathematics by

- planning work that is more challenging for pupils in Year 2 (*paragraph 91*),
- ensuring that teachers plan for progression in what pupils learn and that work is not repeated (*paragraph 92*),
- ensuring that work is pitched at the right level in junior classes (*paragraph 91*).

Raise standards in science in Years 1 and 2 by

- planning opportunities for pupils to investigate and experiment for themselves (*paragraph 101*).

Raise standards in information and communication technology by

- timetabling computers to be used more regularly by all classes (*paragraph 109*),
- using computers to teach other subjects and particularly English and mathematics (*paragraph 110*),
- providing training for teachers so that they have sufficient knowledge and confidence in teaching all aspects of information and communication technology (*paragraph 111*).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	13	37	43	6		

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	30	354
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a	105

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	110

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	29

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	6.9
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	30	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	19	22
	Girls	14	18	21
	Total	33	37	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	62 (63)	70 (73)	81 (81)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	21	22
	Girls	18	18	19
	Total	39	39	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (63)	74 (77)	77 (71)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	27	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	21
	Girls	16	13	18
	Total	28	25	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58 (27)	52 (29)	81 (43)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	14
	Girls	13	13	15
	Total	24	26	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (37)	54 (35)	60 (41)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	329
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.3
Average class size	25.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	210

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

Number of pupils per FTE adult	15
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	99/2000
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	£
Total income	701552
Total expenditure	722335
Expenditure per pupil	2058
Balance brought forward from previous year	35747
Balance carried forward to next year	14964

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	382
Number of questionnaires returned	147 (38.5%)

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	32	6	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	44	49	4	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	47	9	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	41	15	3	10
The teaching is good.	46	48	3	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	36	14	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	27	5	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	31	2	2	4
The school works closely with parents.	39	40	11	4	6
The school is well led and managed.	29	51	8	4	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	45	8	1	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	32	17	14	14

16 (11%) of parents made additional comments

Strongest points in order

- The school does its best for individual children, but there is sometimes too much emphasis on getting the school's 'statistics' right.
- Changes of class teachers throughout the year don't help children to make the best progress.

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

57. Children in the Foundation Stage are taught in the nursery and one reception class, although a further class will be created after the Easter holiday. They are admitted to the nursery on a part-time basis in the term before their fourth birthday and transfer to the reception class at the beginning of the term in which they will be five. This means that children with summer birthdays have only one term in the reception class before they start in Year 1. When children start nursery, their achievements vary widely but are mainly below what is usually found in children of their age.

Personal, social and emotional development

58. This area of learning is taught well. Many children lack confidence and independence when they start nursery. Before children come to school, staff make sure that they and their parents are familiar with the teachers, the building and some of the routines and requirements of school. In this way, children start school confident that they will be well cared for and eager to explore new learning. Good provision for children's personal, social and emotional development helps children in the nursery settle quickly into the school's routines and those in the reception class to gain confidence. Consequently, by the time they start in Year 1, children have achieved or exceeded many of the planned goals for their learning.

59. The small groups in which the children so often work in the nursery create a sense of belonging and enable staff to develop close bonds with the children in their care. They form a strong basis for the school's training in social and moral values and responsibilities. All children are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to make decisions for themselves. As a result, children learn to co-operate with one another, share resources and take their turn.

60. The same good care for children's personal development is evident throughout the school day. Because teachers and support staff watch out for them, children in the reception class learn to be independent and take care of themselves.

Communication, language and literacy

61. When they start in the nursery, a significant number of children are shy when talking to adults; some do not speak clearly and many are unused to listening for long periods. Teaching is good and, because staff encourage children to answer questions and talk about what they are doing, they make rapid progress and quickly gain the confidence to take part in and initiate conversations with other children and adults. Those who have real problems get the support they need from speech therapists and other specialists. Despite making good progress, many children have a limited vocabulary when they start in Year 1.

62. Children's early reading skills are very limited when they start in the nursery. Most of the teaching is satisfactory and teachers ensure that there are daily opportunities for children to look at books and listen to stories. However, a weakness to the teaching is that children are not taught the skills that will help them read for themselves. For example, not enough emphasis is given to learning the sounds of letters. This means that when children are trying to make sense of unfamiliar words they do not have the strategies to help them make a good guess. Consequently, by the end of the Foundation Stage, very few pupils hear and say the initial and final sounds in words, and

stumble over words that are similar, for example, *Dad* and *Dan*. Similarly, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to point out the names of characters or important words from the text when they are reading big books. In addition, teachers do not always point to the words they are reading, which means that children do not see the links between words and story.

63. Very few children attempt to write when they start in the nursery. As with reading, teachers plan activities that encourage writing, such as writing a letter or a list in role-play. They do not ensure that writing is taught in a systematic way and this limits the progress that children make. Teachers do not plan sufficient opportunities for children to practise their writing or show them how to form letters correctly. The work in reception class does not build on what children have learned and because they are unsure about the sounds of letters, children have trouble spelling even simple words. On the other hand, some of the work set is too demanding and children struggle to understand what it is they are writing. This happened when children copied sentences written by their teacher. Very few could read back what they had written. All of this means that by the end of the Foundation Stage, few children write as well as they should for their age.

Mathematical development

64. Although most of the teaching is satisfactory, there are weaknesses to the teaching of mathematical development that prevent a significant number of children from achieving the early goals of mathematics by the time they leave reception class. Teachers provide plenty of opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage to count and look at numbers but not enough opportunities for them to relate addition to combining two groups of objects or for them to solve problems involving take away. In the nursery, children make good progress in learning to count and recognise numbers to ten. Some of this work is repeated in the reception class, and although they count beyond ten, the work children are given does not always move them forward at a fast enough rate. For example, when adding, children were reasonably successful at adding fingers to five but less accurate when asked to add five and two fingers or three and seven fingers. Many struggled to get the right number of fingers on each hand and only a few promptly held up a hand to show five.
65. Teachers are sensitive to the inappropriateness of large amounts of recorded work at this early stage, and concentrate instead on providing children with a range of practical activities to extend their mathematical understanding, mental response and oral work. For example, through working with sand and water, children begin to understand the mathematical concepts of volume and measurement and use phrases such as *mines got more in than yours* in their conversations with other children. However, the work that children do in the reception class does not always build on what they have learned in nursery. For example, children in the nursery learn the names of colours and shapes and can copy a simple pattern. This is not extended sufficiently in the reception class and children do not move on quickly enough to devising and recording their own patterns, or creating more complex patterns.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. Children make good progress in this area of learning and by the end of reception class, most children's knowledge and understanding of the world is typical for their age. By providing opportunities for speaking and listening, and directing discussions, staff check and extend children's understanding of family relationships, celebrations and events. Teachers make effective use of registration time to talk about the weather and days of the week. Stories are also a good source of information about different situations and

people. In the nursery the teacher used the story of *Jack and the Beanstalk* to develop children's knowledge and understanding of growth. The children planted a range of seeds and, after their initial disappointment at the lack of an immediate beanstalk reaching to the ceiling, they peered excitedly through magnifying lenses to find the first shoots.

67. Teachers are good at planning activities that involve experimenting and finding out. For example, children in the nursery enjoyed making pancakes as they measured the ingredients, stirred the mixture, and observed the changes as different ingredients were added to the flour. Those in the reception class smelled, felt and looked carefully at the colours of fruits before painting pictures of them. Role-play that is linked to a topic about health and the *eye clinic* provide children in the reception class with an insight into testing eyes and wearing spectacles. Most children enjoy these imaginary activities.
68. When children are not able to take part in activities, they get restless and do not learn what the teacher intends. This happened in a lesson when the teacher in reception class spent a long time showing children how a floor robot moved, but very few children got to have a go. In these circumstances, teaching is unsatisfactory because the teacher's expectations are not realistic and children make little progress.

Physical development

69. Teachers do the best job they can. Children do not have access to a safe outdoor play area and have very few opportunities to play with wheeled toys, such as bikes, cars and prams. This restricts their physical development and most do not reach the goals for early learning.
70. Despite this, children in the nursery move to the sound of music and stop when it does. They enjoy stretching, bending and trying to march in time. In the reception class, children learn to move around without bumping into one another. Sometimes children get over excited and when the teacher is unsuccessful in keeping discipline, lessons are unsatisfactory.
71. Most children make steady progress in the dexterity they demonstrate when using paintbrushes, pencils, and crayons, completing jigsaw puzzles, building with construction toys and pouring water into containers. They move the cursor on the computer with the control needed to operate programs. Many children use scissors with a good level of competence and when they cannot they ask for help. All children have the opportunity to use materials, such as plasticine and play dough and children in the reception class enjoyed making and decorating clay eggs, similar to those made by the African Masai tribe, which they had examined at the beginning of the lesson.

Creative development

72. Good teaching helps children make rapid progress towards the planned objectives for their creative development. Consequently, by the time they start in Year 1, most achieve the skills expected for their age. They create imaginative pictures and models from a wide range of materials including fabric, feathers and paper and sing and play musical instruments enthusiastically. Sometimes, their imagination is stifled because of the lack of materials available to them but teachers make the best of what they have and are good at improvising.

73. Teachers ensure that children have frequent opportunities to explore the school's excellent range of musical instruments. They teach children to hold them correctly and through regular use children learn their names and know what sounds they make. They also know where instruments come from. This was evident when one child called out *ole* as castanets were taken from the music box. Any spare moments are used for singing or action rhymes, and by the end of the reception class, most children have an increasing repertoire of songs and rhymes.
74. Children's imagination is further evident in role-play, when they enjoy acting out parts. This was evident when a small group of children took on the characters of optician and patient in the *eye clinic* and animated discussions took place about the letters on the eye chart.

ENGLISH

The results of national tests

75. The results of national tests for seven-year-olds in 2000, showed that standards in reading and writing were well below average in national terms and in comparison with those reached by pupils with similar backgrounds. This picture is much the same as at the time of the previous inspection and has been consistently low over the last four years. Far fewer pupils than in most schools reached the expected level. Fewer pupils achieved a higher level in reading and none achieved a higher level in writing.
76. Tests for 11-year olds showed that standards in were very low in national terms and compared with similar schools. A large proportion of pupils failed to reach the expected level and very few achieved a higher level. Girls have performed slightly better than boys in four of the last five years but the difference in attainment is very small. The school exceeded the target it had set for raising standards.

Inspection findings

77. Since the previous inspection, teachers have worked hard to raise standards. Their efforts have started to pay dividends and standards are beginning to rise though they are still too low for both seven and 11-year-olds. Clear strategies are now in place to raise levels of attainment, in particular:
- the quality of teaching has improved throughout the school and is satisfactory overall, with good and sometimes very good teaching in evidence
 - there are good procedures in place for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress.
 - teacher's competence and confidence in teaching the national strategy for literacy continues to improve.
78. Teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to speak to small and large groups or to listen attentively to explanations and to others in discussions. So, although pupils' vocabulary widens as they get older, it is not as broad as it should be by the time they reach the age of 11. The weakness lies in their ability to find the words to express themselves when talking about books, poetry or their work in general. On the other hand, teachers expect pupils to use technical terms in subjects such as mathematics, science and geography. This increases pupils' vocabulary considerably and they use words such as *factors*, *evaporation* and *environment* confidently and accurately.

79. Throughout the school, teachers use a good balance of approaches to the teaching of reading. The youngest pupils read to teachers and other adults several times a week and also have at least one session a week when they read with a group of other children in the class. Most of them enjoy these opportunities to read to adults and are keen to talk about their favourite stories, books and authors. Older pupils are expected to read books, magazines and information on computers in English and in lessons in other subjects.
80. A good feature of the teaching of reading is the way that pupils in junior classes are encouraged to use the nearby library. Each week, pupils are taken there to research information as part of history and geography topics. As they do this, they also learn how to locate books using the library's systems. Pupils in infant classes rarely get the chance to use the school's library, which prevents them from browsing through books and learning to use the library system.
81. One of the strengths of teaching in infant classes is that teachers place a great deal of emphasis on teaching the sounds of letters. Consequently, when pupils see words they cannot read, such as *creepy* and *cobwebs*, they sound out the letters. Teachers began to use this strategy when they started to use the National Literacy Strategy to plan work and it is now beginning to have a good effect on pupils' reading and is also helping raise standards in spelling. The same successful strategy is not being used in junior classes. Teachers do not ensure that pupils know the sounds of letters. This prevents pupils from making faster progress with their reading and spelling. For example, many pupils spell words as they sound but do not know that pairs of letter; such as *ea* and *ee* sound the same.
82. The school has an improving range of books for older pupils and teachers encourage them to read in class and at home. Consequently, higher and average attaining pupils read good quality fiction books of a more adult nature with fluency, expression and understanding. They understand the term *genre* and give examples of fantasy, mystery and crime genres. Lower attaining pupils read at a steady pace, but with limited expression.
83. The co-ordinator analysed the results of national tests and identified writing as an area where standards were low. As a result, more time is spent teaching pupils in infant classes how to write stories and pupils in junior classes are expected to write at greater length than they were at the time of the previous inspection. This is paying dividends. Average and lower attaining seven-year-olds plan stories that have characters and a plot. Higher attaining pupils use interesting words to make their stories interesting. For example, pupils in a class in Year 2 used the phrases *one gloomy afternoon* and *Rachel the lovely princess* in their stories. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 use interesting phrases, with similes used appropriately to enrich their descriptions, for example, *Her eyes glinted in the dark like daggers*. All pupils use a range of writing styles and are developing the ability to edit and re-write their work. They do this thoughtfully when working with a partner or within a small group.
84. One of the weaknesses with teaching handwriting is that teachers do not do it in a systematic way. Everyone has their own approach and style. Consequently, by the time they are seven, pupils' handwriting is poor because many letters are incorrectly formed or positioned on the line. This is made worse as teachers often fail to correct poorly formed letters, or ensure that pupils hold their pencils properly. Some pupils in junior classes still write letters incorrectly and this prevents them from writing in a good style. Older pupils write neatly in handwriting books but often fail to put the same amount of effort into other writing. Their books show work that is printed or rushed.
85. Teachers give sufficient attention to the use of grammar and punctuation in writing. By

the age of seven, most pupils punctuate their work with capital letters and full stops. Older pupils learn to use commas, speech marks and paragraphs by the time they are 11.

86. As a result of the satisfactory help and support they get from teachers and classroom assistants, pupils with special educational needs make steady progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Classroom assistants also play an important part in helping pupils who are new to the school settle in and do as well as they can. Their time and talents are put to good use to work with small groups and individuals.
87. The management of pupils is consistently good, so that pupils develop a positive attitude to learning. Pupils enjoy good relationships with adults and each other and behaviour in classrooms is always good. Teachers use classroom support assistants effectively to work with individuals or groups and as a result, pupils have the support they need to make sound progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Teachers do not make sufficient use of information and communication technology to help pupils draft and publish their work.
88. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory and the co-ordinator now has a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses in English and what needs to be done to improve standards further. A particularly strong feature of management in the subject is the way in which portfolios of work have been assembled. As a result of this careful work and analysis of the results, challenging but achievable targets have been set, linked to national standards. Such focused work is now beginning to reap benefits, although standards still need to be tackled in a rigorous way.

MATHEMATICS

The results of national tests

89. Although standards have risen over the last three years, national tests in 2000 show that they remain well below those achieved by seven and 11-year-olds in most other schools. Results were affected by the high proportion of pupils in both year groups who had special educational needs. In addition, a significant number of pupils in the Year 6 class had joined the school part way through the juniors and this had a detrimental effect on standards. However, even taking these factors into account, standards were not high enough when compared with those of similar schools. Not enough pupils in either Year 2 or Year 6 reached the expected level or the higher level.

Inspection findings

90. Inspection findings show that standards have improved since the 2000 tests and, though they are still below average, they are higher than they were last year. This is mainly due to better teaching. Stringent and rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching, by the co-ordinator and the adviser from the local education authority, has ensured that all teachers are aware of their strengths and know what they need to do to improve their teaching.
91. Following an analysis of standards in mathematics, the school has begun to take steps to raise standards. Pupils in Year 6 are now taught in classes of similar ability. This is working well. The brightest pupils benefit from work that is more challenging, while pupils with special educational needs are taught in a small group, where they receive more individual attention and achieve the levels of which they are capable. Occasionally, average attaining pupils do not make fast enough progress when they are unable to keep up with more able pupils. In other junior classes, work is not always

pitched at the right level for pupils of different ability. This is most noticeable in classes with more than one year-group, where the spread of ability is very wide. Teachers have begun to tackle this problem by teaching pupils in groups of similar ability for one day a week and this is beginning to raise standards. The school has good procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' achievements in mathematics. However, in Years 3 to 6, this information is not used consistently to plan work to match the ability of each pupil and consequently, pupils of very differing abilities are, at times, given the same work to complete.

92. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall although the teaching in lessons is good. However, the analysis of pupils' work shows that they are not making fast enough progress. The reason for this is that teachers' planning does not ensure that work gets progressively harder from one term to the next. This means that pupils are sometimes repeating work and using skills that they have already mastered. For example, in October, pupils in a class in Year 2 calculated accurately how much change they would get from 20p. They did the same work in February of the following year. In addition, pupils of different abilities are often asked to do the same work. This is most noticeable when they are given worksheets to complete.
93. Teaching and learning vary from unsatisfactory to good in Years 3 to 6 but are satisfactory overall. Teaching was unsatisfactory when there was no clear focus to the lesson and average and lower attaining pupils did not make enough progress. For example, in one lesson they confused addition and multiplication when asked to choose which methods to use to solve problems. On the other hand, teaching was excellent when the teacher kept pupils *on their toes* throughout a lesson on measurement. This started with a fast and furious mental session, when work prepared pupils for the work they would do in the main part of the lesson.
94. Teachers in junior classes do not always plan work that meets the needs of pupils of different abilities. While those with special educational needs are often given the help and support they need to make steady progress, higher attaining pupils are sometimes given the same work as average attaining pupils. This prevents them from making the progress of which they are capable.
95. A strength of the teaching in Years 5 and 6 is the methods teachers use to teach the basic skills of number. In a Year 6 class when the teacher, to clear up a misunderstanding about factors of numbers, asked questions that made pupils think and then required them to explain their answers. By using their explanations as teaching points, she enabled them to solve 810 divided by 18 using the factors of each number. In an excellent lesson pupils made very good progress in reading scales because the teacher changed the way they had to read off the measuring stick and dial using different intervals. They enjoyed meeting his challenge and quickly understood the need to look at the intervals when reading scales. Another very good feature was the speed at which the lesson moved along. Pupils were highly motivated to complete the work as the tempo continually increased, thereby meeting their teacher's high expectations of them.
96. A strong feature of all teaching lies in the firm and consistent way that teachers manage pupils' behaviour. Teachers and pupils have very good relationships and this helps to create a pleasant, working atmosphere. Pupils are continually praised for their efforts which encourages them to *have a go* without fear of making mistakes. They generally take care when presenting their work, particularly pupils in Years 5 and 6. Sound provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. Their individual educational plans contain practical and achievable targets which teachers use to enable them to make satisfactory progress. Pupils respond well to the extra support they are given during numeracy lessons as they learn to work methodically in small logical steps.

97. Pupils put their mathematical skills to use in other subjects although opportunities, particularly in design and technology and information and communication technology, are limited. Gaps are being filled as the school gets to grips with its new resources for the subject. For example, pupils in Year 5 used a spreadsheet to calculate costs and price changes. In science, pupils in Year 6 measured the volume of water carefully and accurately when mixing solids with water. Homework is used well to support pupils' learning either as preparation for future lessons or to consolidate or extend current work.
98. The management of the subject is good. The school has moved forward since the last inspection and has taken positive action to raise standards. The co-ordinator examines the results of national tests to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. Steps are taken to remedy any deficiencies. For example, to develop pupils' limited use of mathematical language, teachers place more emphasis on this aspect of mathematics, particularly during the oral and mental sessions at the beginning of lessons. The same close attention is not given to monitoring the work and pupils' books. As a result, the fact that pupils occasionally repeat work of the same kind has not been identified sooner. This weakness in planning has been highlighted as a priority for development. With the support provided by the co-ordinator, and the improvement in the quality of teaching, the school is in a good position to improve standards.

SCIENCE

The results of national tests

99. In national tests for seven-year-olds in 2000, standards in science were lower than in most other schools and considerably lower than those reached by pupils in similar schools. This result was an improvement on standards in recent years and better than at the time of the last inspection. The results of national tests for 11-year-olds rose sharply in 2000 and showed a heartening picture; pupils did as well as those in most other schools and better than those in similar schools. This is a real success for the school especially as the proportion of pupils who achieved a higher level was similar to most other schools.

Inspection findings

100. Standards in Year 2 are below those reached in most schools. This is nonetheless an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were well below average. Standards in Year 6 are in line with expectations for pupils' age. Rising standards are due to improved teaching throughout the school and some very good teaching in classes in Years 5 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs do as well as they can and those who join the school part way through their education generally do as well as others in their class.
101. The main reason why pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not make fast enough progress is because teachers do not plan enough opportunities for them to experiment and investigate science for themselves. Their work shows that in most lessons teachers have guided pupils through the process of setting up an experiment, predicting what will happen, recording the results and making a conclusion. While this helps them set out their scientific experiments in a logical order it prevents them from obtaining and presenting evidence in their own way. This was evident in a lesson in a class in Year 1, when the teacher set pupils the task of finding which of a given set of objects a magnet attracted. While pupils enjoyed testing and finding out for themselves, they did not gain

as much as they could have from the activity because the teacher did not expect them to make their own predictions and compare these with what actually happened.

102. In contrast, pupils in Years 5 and 6 make rapid progress because teachers plan many opportunities for them to investigate and experiment in science lessons. For example, in a lesson in Year 6, pupils investigated the effects of mixing solids with water by setting up fair tests and observing the results closely. In these circumstances, pupils showed that they know how to make a test fair by altering one or more of the conditions and their predictions were sensible and based on what they already knew about the properties of solids and liquids.
103. Another reason why pupils do so well in Years 5 and 6, is that teachers are good at questioning pupils to find out what they know. This was evident in a good lesson in a class in Year 6, where the teacher used quick-fire questions about the properties of solids, liquids and gases to help pupils remember and use scientific terms such as *condensation* and *evaporation*. In another class in Year 6, the teacher's pointed questioning made pupils realise that some changes to materials are reversible while others are not.
104. Teaching was good in all the lessons observed during the inspection. Teachers are far more knowledgeable about the subject than they were at the time of the previous inspection and put this to good use to provide activities that are challenging. Pupils respond with high levels of interest in the subject and the motivation to work hard. Many say it is their favourite subject and they are prepared to go to great lengths to research facts for themselves. A group of boys said they had *spent all night* trying to find the name of the scientist Archimedes, but were obviously thrilled to have succeeded.
105. In general, teachers plan work that meets the needs of all pupils. Worksheets are graded so that the most able pupils have to do more recording of their data while lower attaining pupils often present their findings as simple charts or tables. When possible, pupils with special educational needs are given extra support with reading and writing. This helps them achieve their own personal best and ensures that they have an equal opportunity to take part in lessons and make progress.
106. Teachers get together to plan work and evaluate how well pupils are doing and whether lessons have been successful. However, they have not yet arrived at a solution to deal effectively with the wide spread of ability in the three classes of pupils from Years 3 and 4. Work in pupils' books shows that these pupils are not learning at the same fast rate as those in classes in Years 5 and 6.
107. Teachers make good use of the local library's *Homework Centre* to teach science. Classes visit the centre regularly, to research facts and use the facilities. During these lessons, teachers also make good use of the skills of two library assistants to help pupils find the information they need. A class in Years 3 and 4 visited the library as part of their work on living things and returned to school with much detailed information about plants as organisms.
108. Good leadership and management by the co-coordinator have helped to raise standards and to improve teaching since the last inspection. This is based on a thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. For example, a close analysis of the results of national tests showed that there were gaps in pupils' knowledge about sound. This has subsequently been remedied by planning more lessons on the topic. The co-ordinator has recently begun to monitor the quality of teaching in a more focused way than ever before. This has already highlighted some areas for continued improvement and puts the school in a good position to continue to raise standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

109. Standards have risen considerably in the last few months but remain below average for seven and 11-year-olds. Since the last inspection, the school has bought new computers and software and this is a factor in why standards are now rising so quickly. However, all of this is very recent and pupils in junior classes are a long way behind. The time that pupils have to work on computers is not long enough for 11-year-olds to make the gains in familiarity with programs and computer technology to be able to reach the expected standards.
110. The recent purchase of a number of laptop computers puts the school in a strong position to raise standards. The classroom currently used for information and communication technology will be taken over by a reception class in the summer term. Although this means that there will be fewer opportunities for pupils to learn as a class, pupils will be able to use laptop computers in classrooms. This is crucial because at present, teachers are not using computers to teach subjects other than information and communication technology. This is particularly noticeable in literacy and numeracy lessons. For example, pupils are taught to word-process but rarely have the opportunity to draft or produce a published version of their creative writing. Teachers are aware of this gap in teaching and have already begun to make the changes necessary to ensure that pupils learn information and communication technology skills alongside those in other subjects. They are in good position to do this as a result of adapting a good quality programme of work.
111. Teachers have not had the computers or software long enough to be familiar with all the programs they need to teach the curriculum. In order to ensure that they keep one-step ahead, the co-ordinator provides training and support in how to use each program before they are due to teach it to pupils. This is of some help but teachers will continue to need training if they are to raise standards. At present, pupils in infant classes make rapid progress because teachers are able to teach the basic skills of using computers to communicate information and control models. Despite this, very few seven-year-olds log on and off the computer unaided and none are able to load from menu or disk without support. Most pupils have satisfactory control of a computer mouse. They enter information by using the keyboard, but their keyboard skills are poor, and very few children can locate the letters easily or know how to type capital letters. Pupils have limited experience of computer control, and most are unable to sort, classify and present their findings.
112. Teachers make excellent use of the touch screen to demonstrate new techniques to pupils. This not only speeds the rate with which they learn, because everyone can see what is happening, it also increases pupils' enjoyment. For example, pupils in a class in Year 2 gasped in amazement as they watched the flood/fill control create instant colour when the demonstration screen was touched.

113. Very good teaching in junior classes is helping pupils use menus correctly and understand the use of icons. They have basic word-processing skills but their lack of previous experience means that their use of more advanced packages using multi-media is severely limited. For example, many pupils are unsure how to edit their work or move text around the page and have no idea how to add graphics, pictures or sound. However, they are very keen to use computers and know how to use the Internet to find information, although most still need support to find the required site or web page. Pupils use spreadsheets capably and they are learning to enter data and to use formulae with increasing confidence. Their understanding and use of control is weak.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

114. Standards in religious education have been maintained since the last inspection and meet those prescribed by the locally Agreed Syllabus for seven and 11-year-olds.
115. Teaching is satisfactory and as a result pupils learn at a steady rate. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of several religions, including Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism. Pupils with special educational needs do as well as others in relation to the knowledge they gain but sometimes write in less detail or length.
116. Teachers have a sound knowledge of religious education. This is evident in the wide range of religions studied and in the interesting activities planned for pupils. A particular strength of teaching is the good use teachers make of first-hand experiences to bring the subject alive. For example, pupils in classes in Year 1 learned about the importance of religious ceremonies as they acted out a Christian wedding ceremony. Pupils in junior classes visited a local church to find out how Christians worship and learned about the festival of Diwali by eating the food that Hindus use in their celebration. Teachers also make good use of visitors to talk to pupils about religion.
117. A good feature of the teaching is the way pupils are encouraged to make the link between moral teaching in any religion and their own actions. For example, pupils in a class in Year 5 learned about the Ten Commandments and discussed how these might be reflected in the rules of any society. Pupils enjoyed talking about laws and rules and came up with their personal versions of the commandments, such as *to keep my temper with my sister*. This element of teaching helps promote pupils' moral and social development at the same time as it increases their understanding of Christianity.
118. Teachers see discussion as an important part of religious education. Consequently, they plan many opportunities for pupils to explore concepts and ideas. For example, pupils in Year 2 were helped to see that thoughts can be as precious as objects by the teacher's sensitive questions about what they loved and why. As a result of giving pupils time to think and talk about their views, one pupil was able to distinguish the difference between her love for her guinea pig and treasured memories of her grandfather.
119. Throughout the school, teachers make good use of stories in religious education. Pupils in a class in Year 2 learned about forgiveness by listening to the parable of the Prodigal Son. They enjoyed listening to the story and were keen to give their views on saying *sorry*. Similarly, the teacher in a class in Year 3 and 4 made good use of the parable of the Good Samaritan as a starting point for discussions about helping others.
120. Sound management has helped the school maintain standards since the previous inspection. With the scheme of work now firmly in place the school is well placed to continue to improve provision, teaching and standards.

ART AND DESIGN

121. Standards are typical of seven and 11-year-olds. Pupils' achievements, including those with special educational needs, are satisfactory throughout the school but progress is not consistent from one year to the next.
122. In their study of the work of famous artists, pupils in Year 2 have examined the work of Miro and created images of their own to recreate the desired effect in paint and by using information and communication technology. The teacher encouraged imagination well by drawing attention to the probable starting points in Miro's work and demonstrating ways in which they might begin. Good support was offered to individuals to improve their technique, and pupils were encouraged to appraise the work of peers and to improve their own work accordingly. The pupils were very pleased to do this and showed high regard for the work of their peers. In another lesson, pupils used information and communication technology in art as they used a painting program to create the effects of Miro – all gasped *Ooh!* as the teacher touched the screen to flood an area with brilliant colour.
123. Pupils in Year 5 experience modelling with clay and card. Their work is of a good quality and pupils have developed skills very well under expert tuition. In one lesson, the teacher demonstrated very clearly three different techniques for clay work (thumb pots; coil pots; and slab work) and supported and encouraged the pupils very effectively to have confidence in themselves and to aim for greater attainment. Their self-esteem was raised quite noticeably in this lesson as well as their attainment.
124. Pupils' response to lessons is good. They enjoy art and are interested and involved. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, listen carefully, answer questions appropriately, and settle well to the tasks set. Pupils are able to concentrate for satisfactory amounts of time and talk enthusiastically about what they have learned. In a Year 6 lesson, where pupils were appraising the work of the artist Mucha, they worked very well in pairs and talked knowledgeably about their reasons for liking or disliking the art referring to the style, colours, and techniques of the artist to substantiate their opinions.
125. The teaching of art is satisfactory overall, and teachers demonstrate sound subject knowledge, although some members of staff are not as confident as others. This lack of confidence and expertise results in an unsystematic approach to the teaching of skills, and progress across year groups is consequently inconsistent. Lessons are appropriately resourced but assessment opportunities are not identified. Pupils' learning is enhanced by some weekend visits to local galleries but they have had no recent opportunity to work alongside a visiting artist and there is a resultant lack of creativity in a lot of their work. Resources are in need of refurbishment and centralisation in order that adequate supplies of materials may be made readily accessible to teachers.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

126. Standards of attainment are typical of seven and 11-year-olds. This is a similar picture to the time of the previous inspection. One or two weaknesses prevent standards from being higher; designs often lack detail about the making process and models are not always finished to a high enough standard.
127. The co-ordinator has made a sound start to managing the subject by ensuring that teachers have a good quality programme of work to help them plan. The effect of this is already being seen in the satisfactory teaching and steady rate of learning in classes throughout the school.

128. Sound teaching in Years 1 and 2 helps pupils learn the importance of designing and evaluating the models they make. By the end of Year 2, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, draw their designs as pictures. These often include labels of parts; for example, designs for finger puppets were labelled with the features *head*, *arms* and *beak*. One of the weaknesses of teaching in these classes is that teachers do not always expect average and higher attaining pupils to include details about the materials to be used or the dimensions of their models. As a result, designs are not as useful as they could be.
129. One of the strengths of the teaching in Years 1 and 2 is the clear descriptions and explanations given by teachers. In lessons in Year 2, pupils were quick to learn the difference between free and fixed axles, because teachers gave a clear demonstration of how each one works. This enabled pupils to go on and make wheeled models incorporating both types of axle. Teachers provide pupils with a reasonable range of tools and equipment with which to make their models. They show pupils how to use them safely and correctly. Consequently, pupils use scissors, glue and tape to cut and join materials accurately. Those in Year 1 know how to use split pins to make limbs on teddies move freely.
130. Although there is some good teaching in Year 6, this is not enough to make standards higher than they are. Pupils' designs continue to be fairly simple; they rarely show how the model will look from different angles or include three-dimensional views of the product. The interesting activities planned by teachers, motivate pupils and they try hard with their work. However, in their enthusiasm, pupils sometimes forget to apply the skills they have already learned. For example, pupils in Year 6 were far more interested in drawing the details of the slippers they were working with than labelling the materials used in their making.
131. A strength of the teaching in junior classes is the way teachers plan lessons to link with other subjects. This means that pupils understand the importance of designing models for a purpose. For example, pupils in classes in Year 5 designed a sarcophagus as part of a history topic on ancient Egypt and they realised that the lid needed to fit tightly and that the designs on the outside were an important picture of the dead person's life.
132. Throughout the school, teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their models. They plan time at the end of each lesson for pupils to look at what others have made and to say what they could do to make their own models better. This helps pupils understand where they have gone wrong. Teachers also enable pupils to evaluate their designs and products while working on them, so changes can be made if desired.
133. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and has a clear view of how to raise standards. There are no formal procedures in place for assessing and recording what pupils can do but the portfolio of pupils' work will help teachers make accurate judgements about levels of attainment. Teaching is not monitored although it is one of the areas that the co-ordinator has rightly highlighted as an area for development. This readiness to move forward puts the school in a sound position to be able to continue to improve.

GEOGRAPHY

134. Standards in geography have risen since the school was last inspected and are now typical of seven and 11-year-olds. The co-ordinator, who took over the subject in September 2000, has successfully adapted a national scheme of work to suit the particular needs of the school. As a result, the geography curriculum is now broad and balanced. Teachers have responded to criticisms in the previous report by planning more opportunities for pupils to learn through research and finding out for themselves.

135. The quality of teaching varies from satisfactory to very good. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 use the local environment, and what pupils know about Kirkby in Ashfield, as a starting point for much of the geography. A good feature of the teaching in Year 1 is the effective use of *Barnaby Bear*, a teddy bear used to help pupils to develop their understanding of the human and physical features of the local area. Pupils show him their route to school and write and draw pictures for him of their favourite places such as the park, the Festival Hall and the fish and chip shop. They learn of the wider world as he takes holidays in England and abroad. In a good lesson in a class in Year 2, the teacher used maps, atlases and globes effectively to develop pupils' geographical skills as they located Jodhpur in India. Because the teacher's good choice of resources, for example, items of Indian clothing, pupils began to be aware of the differences in lifestyle between their own and that of people who live in hot climates.
136. Very good teaching in Year 5 reflected the teacher's high expectations and ability to instil in pupils a desire for further knowledge. They enjoyed the challenge to meet deadlines set by the teacher for each activity and consequently made very good progress in the understanding of four-figure grid references. Higher attaining pupils worked out six-figure references and pupils with special educational needs used more simple co-ordinates to locate places on a map. Their enthusiasm bubbled over as they identified local points of interest on Ordnance Survey maps. Another good feature of the lesson was the way work was set on three levels so that all pupils made very good progress.
137. A strength of the teaching in Years 3 to 6 is the strong links with other subjects, particularly history. Pupils in a class in Year 5 compared a Tudor map of England with a modern one, to find areas of forests common to both, and used a map of the world to plot Sir Francis Drake's voyage. Pupils in Year 6, studying the ancient civilisation in the Indus Valley in India, used their information and communication technology skills to discover on the Internet the importance of the River Indus to crops and its influence on work patterns. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 used their mathematical skills to construct a bar chart to show their favourite holiday destinations. Another good feature of the teaching is the way in which teachers encourage pupils to suggest suitable geographical questions for study. Pupils are interested in geography, they take a pride in the presentation of their work, particularly their diagrams, which are detailed and accurate. They are especially enthusiastic about their residential visits to Derbyshire and Norfolk when they have the opportunity to take part in fieldwork.
138. The co-ordinator manages the subject well and has been successful in raising standards and addressing the issues from the previous inspection. A good start has been made towards improving teachers' assessment of pupils' knowledge by the introduction of a portfolio of pupils' work to set standards for the subject. Teachers' planning is checked regularly to fill gaps in pupils' achievements. Resources are adequate overall, although there are not enough Ordnance Survey maps and a number of atlases are out of date. Strong leadership and continuing improvements to the curriculum place the school in a good position to improve standards further.

HISTORY

139. Standards are higher than they were at the time of the previous inspection. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment is in line with expectations for seven and 11-year-olds. This improvement is the result of greater emphasis teachers give to the development of pupils' historical skills. Teachers now use national guidelines to take pupils in a structured way through an interesting and challenging programme year by year. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils who have joined the school part way through the year, make steady progress through the year groups in the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills.

140. Teachers show pupils how to find out information from a range of sources. The youngest pupils use objects and their families as primary sources in their introduction to historical enquiry. They gain a sense of time when they sequence teddy bears as *new, old and oldest*. A good feature of teaching is the use made of the locality for history lessons. Teachers give pupils in Year 2 an insight into local, national and international historical traditions and events when they visit and sketch the town's war memorial. Teachers introduce pupils in Year 5 to the local national census returns for research into changes between 1841, 1891 and the present. By the time they are 11-years-old they have a sound understanding of a wide range of historical sources. They know of the importance of objects as archaeological evidence in the study of the ancient civilisation of the Indus Valley. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the way of life of the people.
141. Teachers provide pupils with practical and purposeful activities, which they enjoy. In Years 3 and 4 teachers introduce them to the Roman occupation of Britain by making modern day comparisons within their own experience. In one lesson, the teacher led an interesting discussion that motivated pupils to distinguish between reasons for moving house, as *Had to move* or *Chose to move*. In another lesson on the same theme, the teacher did not motivate pupils by explaining what the purpose of the lesson was at the outset. This meant that they were unclear about why people moved around the country in Roman times. The history co-ordinator has not been in post long enough to make an impact on the subject. The new guidelines for teaching the subject give the school scope to develop standards further. However, in Years 3 and 4 teachers' planning is not effective enough to cope with the wide age and ability range of mixed age classes.
142. Most of the lessons planned are interesting to pupils and consequently they behave well and enjoy learning. Occasionally, however, teachers do not make the most of the activities they have planned. For instance, they sometimes accept untidy work from younger pupils. Chances for the pupils to improve and practise reading and writing are missed. Similarly, teachers sometimes miss opportunities for pupils to deepen their knowledge of history by research and finding things out for themselves. For example, pupils did not analyse census returns to identify changes in the locality in Victorian times.

MUSIC

143. Standards in music have been maintained since the previous inspection and are typical of those expected of seven and 11-year-olds. Higher attaining pupils, who have additional tuition to play the violin, perform confidently and read music notation accurately. Standards in composing are higher than they were, although there is room for more improvement, particularly in the use of computers to compose music.
144. Teachers ensure that pupils in Years 1 and 2 have regular opportunities to sing and play musical instruments. Pupils learn a number of songs by heart and sing them in a tuneful way; they play musical instruments to accompany their singing. By the time they are seven, pupils create musical patterns using symbols to record their ideas. In a good lesson in a class in Year 2, the teacher's high expectations led pupils to make good progress, using a variety of percussion instruments, in creating simple musical patterns. The good relationships between the pupils ensured that they worked together well, taking turns to play and record their patterns. Positive support from the teacher encouraged them to evaluate and to refine their patterns until they were ready to perform for the rest of the class.
145. When they are singing, 11-year-olds have good control of phrasing and can adapt both tempo and dynamics in a variety of styles. Their singing is tuneful and their diction is

reasonably clear. The subject leader provides a weekly lesson for all pupils in Years 3 to 6 to improve their singing and awareness of musical instruments. The lesson is marked by pupils' energetic enjoyment of music, particularly when singing songs in two parts. The teacher's very good relationships with pupils were particularly evident in the praise given for their performance. Work from this session was extended in the classroom. In a class in Year 5, pupils were encouraged to be more aware of dynamics in their singing performance, and at the same time, to add different patterns using percussion instruments to accompany their singing. By taping successive renditions, the teacher provided good opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work and to see how well their own performance fitted in with others to achieve the overall effect. Pupils were delighted with the final performance.

146. Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to listen to music. Pupils enter assemblies to a variety of recorded music, which is discussed at the beginning of the week. Listening to music by composers from many parts of the world makes a sound contribution to pupils' cultural development. The school choir is very popular and makes a significant contribution to performances in school. An after-school music club for pupils in Years 4 and 5 gives them the opportunity to take part in a percussion ensemble and all pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn to play the recorder.
147. The co-ordinator reviews planning regularly and is aware of the need to monitor teaching and learning to make a more positive impact on pupils' attainment. Resources are adequate and are beginning to include wider musical styles and influences. To boost their confidence and increase their expertise, all teachers have worked alongside a music specialist from an *Arts Support* group. This, together with the enthusiasm of the co-ordinator, places the school in a sound position to improve standards in music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

148. Standards in physical education are average for seven and 11-year-olds and have been maintained since the last inspection. There are no differences in the standards achieved by boys and girls. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in their learning. The school makes sound provision for swimming, and as a result, in 2000 the majority of pupils achieved their 25-metre certificate. This year however, availability of the local swimming pool has been restricted and has meant that pupils have missed a term's swimming lessons. While the problem will be remedied in the summer term, pupils will do less well this year.

149. Most of the teaching is satisfactory and some of it is good. In infant classes, teachers ensure that pupils develop sound gymnastic skills by demonstrating the moves and by encouraging pupils to watch what other pupils do. This works well because pupils get a clear idea of how they need to bend or balance and are subsequently able to improve their own performance. In a good dance lesson, the teacher encouraged pupils to evaluate the performance of others. This helped pupils think about their own dance sequences at the same time as it helped them gain confidence in performing for others.
150. A good feature of teaching throughout the school is the use teachers make of music to make warm-up sessions lively and fun. Pupils enjoy these parts of the lesson tremendously and join in enthusiastically. In contrast, teachers do not always use this part of the lesson well to focus on exactly what happens to the heart, blood supply and muscles during exercise. Consequently, an opportunity is missed for pupils to fully understand the health benefits of exercise. All pupils show a good attitude to their lessons and behave well. They work well either independently or in small groups, as they plan and perform a sequence of movements.
151. Another good feature of the teaching is the firm control that teachers' have over pupils' behaviour. This ensures that they behave in a safe way when moving at speed around the floor or with apparatus. This was evident in a good lesson with pupils in one of the Year 3 and 4 classes. Pupils were praised for trying different ways of travelling around the room and for behaving sensibly. This motivated them to try even harder.
152. In some lessons, teachers' dress prevents them from joining in or showing pupils what to do. Occasionally, they do not pay enough attention to whether pupils are properly dressed and this sometimes inhibits what pupils can do. For example, one pupil could not complete a forward roll because of the slides in her hair.
153. The school provides a well-balanced curriculum, which is enriched by a good range of after school sports. Good provision is made for junior pupils to experience outdoor and adventurous activities during residential visits, when aspects of personal and social education are also developed. Boys and girls have equal opportunities within the range of work in lessons, but too many pupils miss lessons because they have left their kit at home and no provision is made to enable these pupils to take part. Often the same pupils are missing lessons every week.
154. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory, but the co-ordinator does not have the opportunity to either monitor the quality of teaching throughout the school, or observe the standards pupils achieve. This has prevented most of the issues about kit and jewellery from being identified earlier.